

Instruction and Assessment Units





UNIT 8: GENOCIDE

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Overview

The aim of this unit is to enable students to

- comprehend the historical significance of acts of genocide
- analyse historical evidence to assess reliability, bias, and point of view
- assess the injustices inherent with genocide
- apply knowledge of historical events to current issues
- assess the cause and effect of these acts of social injustice.

Prescribed Learning Outcomes

This unit can be used to help students achieve the following prescribed learning outcomes in whole or in part:

Defining Social Justice

A1 demonstrate understanding of concepts and terminology of social justice, including

- anthropocentrism
- equity and equality
- ethics
- diversity
- dignity and worth
- hegemony
- human rights
- oppression
- peace

A2 demonstrate effective research skills, including

- accessing information
- assessing information
- collecting data
- evaluating data
- organizing and presenting information

A3 apply critical thinking skills to a range of social justice issues, situations, and topics

Recognizing and Analyzing Social Injustice

B2 analyse causes of social injustice

B3 describe consequences of social injustice

B5 analyse the roles played by legislation, the courts, public policy, and other forms of government action in promoting or failing to promote social justice in Canada





Awareness

In small groups, have students brainstorm or web the significance of the following terms in relation to social justice:

- anti-Semitism
- Aryan supremacy
- double-speak
- genocide
- Holocaust
- intolerance
- mass extermination
- nationalism
- prejudice
- propaganda
- racism.

Students may also add further terms to this list as they brainstorm.

As a whole class, discuss these key terms, and use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- What would allow these acts to occur?
- Could they have been stopped?
- What types of atrocities occurred?
- Have acts such as these ceased?

In small groups, have students list examples of genocide that have occurred in the 20th century. As a whole class list the examples on the board. Ensure the following are included: the Holocaust (Nazi Germany), Stalinist Russia, Nanking Massacre, Cambodia (Pol Pot), Bosnia, Armenia Massacres, Darfur, Rwanda.

Have students look up the United Nations response to the Holocaust (United Nation Declaration of Human Rights). Read this aloud to the class then pose the following questions for discussion:

- Why does genocide still continue if it is outlawed?
- What do you think is the role of the United Nations? The World Court? What should they be?

Ask students to write a short prior learning paragraph to record what they know about the Holocaust. Students will create a reflective journal in which they will incorporate notes, charts, and definitions, on the classroom discussion. These will summarize the key issues and their interpretations of the events.

Research Acts of Genocide

Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the motives of the participants involved in acts of genocide, and determine how they were able to commit these acts. When researching, students should be guided by the following questions:

- the economic conditions that existed in the region
- the form of government that was in power at the time
- how they were able to carry out the acts without outside intervention.

Students may work independently or in groups. Students are to be assigned two acts of genocide which they will compare. The intent is to have students complete the following:

- The atrocities occurred because _____.
- The participants were able to act callously because _____.
- The two events are similar because _____.
- The two events are different because _____.
- The human rights violations (according to the UN Declaration of Human Rights) are _____.

Research should include both primary and secondary resources from a range of sources. Students should be able to assess the sources they access for reliability, and bias, to determine the accuracy and intent of the material being chosen.





Follow up by having students create an Empathy Journal for the people who were affected by the genocides studied.

Empathizing with the Survivors

Provide students with a wide arrangement of materials, including print, video, and photographs. In groups or individually, have students jot down their emotions and thoughts upon hearing, reading, or seeing images that pertain to the horrors of genocide.

Students should ask the following questions while looking at the material presented:

- What type of characteristic would one need to survive such a horror?
- Who could allow themselves to conduct such horrors?
- Is the whole society to blame that allowed such atrocities to occur?
- What scars would they still have and how if at all could they overcome these scars?

Have students create a short story that incorporates information researched in regards to genocide, racism, prejudice, and other social injustices that occur in the event of such horrors. The story should focus around the life of one character and their struggle to survive the horrors of genocide. Alternatively, students may choose to reflect their learning in another format (e.g., play, video, song, collage, graphic novel).

Formal Research Project

Review the proper format for essay writing, including thesis statement, citing sources, appropriate bibliographic style, appendix, title page, footnotes, etc.

Have students brainstorm the possible topics to be researched, then submit their topics for approval. The essays should focus on one or more acts of genocide that have occurred in the 20th or 21st century. Upon completion of the research on the chosen topic, the

student should now look at the role Canada and the rest of the world played or did not play in the historical event chosen.

Students should focus their research using the following questions:

- How would you expect Canada and the United Nations to react to such an event?
- What does the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights* say?
- What does *Canada's Charter of Rights* say?
- Based on these two documents, did we act accordingly?
- How can we now and in the future deal with racism, prejudice, and other social injustices?
- What role did government and the economy play in dealing with such horrors?
- What were the consequences of this event(s) for all parties involved?

Students should assess the role of internal forces in aiding the events of the past (this can be done via class discussion).

Students are to take their data and create a well developed essay, video, web site, or slide show presentation that incorporates the key factors, participants, survivors, horrors, and changes that have occurred over time to rectify these injustices. Students should also create a 1-2 page response in answer to the question, "What can we do to stop such atrocities?"

As a summary, have students revisit their original mind map, and modify it to add new knowledge.

Extensions

Students interested in learning more about this topic may choose to investigate any or all of the following extension questions:

- Do you think genocide will increase or decrease in the future? Why?





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- To what extent does Canada have the responsibility to deal with acts of genocide in other parts of the world?
- Consider the causes of genocide. Connect these to events, issues, and beliefs in Canadian society.
- What NGOs deal with genocide? How successful are they?
- What can be done to achieve a world without genocide?





Assessment Instrument

Reflective Journal and Note Taking

Name: _____ Date: _____

Note your participation in each classroom activity and assign a rating according to the following:

- 3 Excellent (frequent, regular, and thoughtful participation)
- 2 Satisfactory (some participation)
- 1 Needs Improvement (little or no participation)

Activity	Rating	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining terms, and listing events 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in classroom brainstorms and discussions 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notes taken during class discussion, library research 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • daily summary of lessons, understanding the injustices of genocide 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actively participate in group activities 		





Assessment Instrument Research Assignment

<p>4 Excellent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submitted an extensive and detailed outline of research project • used an extensive variety of sources in researching and writing assignments on genocide and the social injustices of the event • demonstrated an excellent level of understanding and insightfulness of the issues • included at least 5 primary sources and 5 secondary sources of evidence on the issue • included an extensive appendix (e.g., graphs, pictures) • included an extensive and well developed bibliography • work shows evidence of extensive editing
<p>3 Very Good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submitted a complete and detailed outline of research project • used a wide variety of sources in researching and writing re: project on genocide and the social injustices of the event • demonstrated a very good level of understanding and insight of the issues • included a range of primary and secondary sources of information • included a developed appendix • included a developed bibliography • work shows evidence of editing
<p>2 Satisfactory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submitted a satisfactory outline of research project • used a variety of sources in researching and writing re: project on genocide and the social injustices of the event • included at least 2-3 sources of evidence • included an appendix • included an adequate bibliography • work shows some evidence of editing
<p>1 Poor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submitted an incomplete outline • used a few sources in researching and writing re: research project on genocide and the social injustices of the event • included one or two sources of evidence on the issue • did not include an appendix • included an incomplete bibliography • work shows little or no evidence of editing

