

United Against GENOCIDE

Understand, question, prevent



Montreal Holocaust Museum

**Teaching tool for the
travelling exhibit**

Introduction

This activity allows students to gain an understanding of genocide, its various stages, and possible means of resistance. It is based on the Montreal Holocaust Museum's virtual exhibition, *United Against Genocide: Understand, Question, Prevent* (<http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/>). The exhibit looks at four genocides that have marked history (the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, the Genocide in Cambodia, and the Genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda). The activity will be used to examine various concepts related to the topic of genocide.

This activity can be done entirely in the classroom (foresee 2 or 3 periods) or partly at home (through research on the Internet).

Learning Objectives

To acquire an understanding of:

- The history of four genocides (the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, the Genocide in Cambodia, the Genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda).
- The stages of genocide
- Forms of resistance during a genocide
- The methods and mechanisms of genocide prevention since the 20th century

To develop the following skills:

- Interpret contemporary issues
- Analyze primary and secondary sources of evidence (written and visual)
- Critically analyze complex international social issues
- Situate areas of tension and zones of armed conflict on a world map
- Identify actors involved and perpetrators

To become familiar with the following central concepts:

- Genocide
- Intervention
- Resistance

This tool was produced in partnership with Jean-Félix Boucher and Aurélie Corriveau.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Defining genocide

Process:

Ask students how they would define the term "genocide" and to record their answers on their sheet (see page 6). Write the proposed definitions on the board.

Read the definition from the UN or on the page <http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/genocide-definition>. Then discuss the definitions with the entire class.

It is important that the definitions mention that a crime was committed, that there was an intention to commit the crime and that certain types of groups were targeted.

Additional information:

- The UN definition explained by Gregory Stanton: <http://www.genocidewatch.org/genocide/whatisit.html>
- A short video about Raphael Lemkin, the man who invented the word genocide: <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20141120-shining-a-light-on-genocide>

2. Documentary research on four cases of genocide

Process:

In pairs, students visit the website <http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/> to learn about four genocides. As they do so, they complete the chart and map in the booklet. Students then answer questions about similarities between perpetrators and reasons why the victims were targeted (this work can be done at home). Conclude with a wrap-up discussion to add additional information about each genocide.

It may be complicated to find answers for questions about victims. If we take the example of the Nazis, it is important to note that numerous groups were persecuted by them (homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.), but the Holocaust specifically refers to Jewish victims. Nazi crimes against Roma and Sinti also constitute genocide, and these crimes are not included in the definition of the Holocaust. This genocide is called Roma Genocide, Porajmos or Samudaripen.

The case of Cambodia is complex, since most victims were targeted for allegedly belonging to certain social, economic, or political groups—groups that are not recognized by the UN's definition of genocide. However, some specialists argue that the massacres of Cham and Vietnamese people constitute genocide because they were targeted based on their ethnicity. Therefore, the acts of persecution committed by the Khmer Rouge regime fall between genocide (Cham and Vietnamese people) and crimes against humanity (Khmer Cambodians). To simplify matters, in the exhibit and this activity, we have used the term genocide to refer to all the crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia.

All the perpetrators are ruling groups. They used the state apparatus to perpetrate genocide.

The targeted populations are ethnic, religious, and political minorities...

Additional information:

- A Brief History of the Holocaust : <http://museeholocauste.ca/app/uploads/2017/01/brief-history-holocaust.pdf> and <http://museeholocauste.ca/en/history-holocaust/>
- History of the Genocide in Cambodia : <http://museeholocauste.ca/app/uploads/2017/01/exploring-evidence-appendix.pdf#page=27>
- A Brief History of the Armenian Genocide : <https://genocideeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/A-Brief-History-of-the-Armenian-Genocide.pdf>
- A Brief History of the Genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda : <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/education/rwandagenocide.shtml>

3. The stages of genocide

Process:

In pairs, students visit the website <http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/genocide-etapes> to complete the table with a definition for each stage of genocide.

After each step of genocide has been defined, students in pairs of two are asked to associate each of the five documents with the correct stage. At the end of the activity, make sure every group has the right answers.

The purpose of this activity is for your students to discover and understand the stages of the genocide. Several answers are possible.

Stage	Name	Main answer	Other possible answer
1	CLASSIFICATION		# 2
2	SYMBOLISATION	# 3	
3	DISCRIMINATION		
4	DEHUMANISATION	# 5	
5	ORGANISATION		
6	POLARISATION	# 2	

7	PREPARATION	# 4	
8	PERSECUTION		# 4
9	EXTERMINATION	# 1	
10	DENIAL		# 1

4. Resistance

Process:

Make teams of four. Each member of the team will be responsible for researching one of the four genocides. On the webpage <http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/resistance>, each student chooses an act of resistance that took place during the genocide, and answers the first questions of the activity individually. Then the four students will come together, exchange their answers, and respond to the last two questions together. At the end of the activity, the teacher brings the class back together, and leads a discussion about the motivating factors of resistance.

5. Preventing genocide

Process:

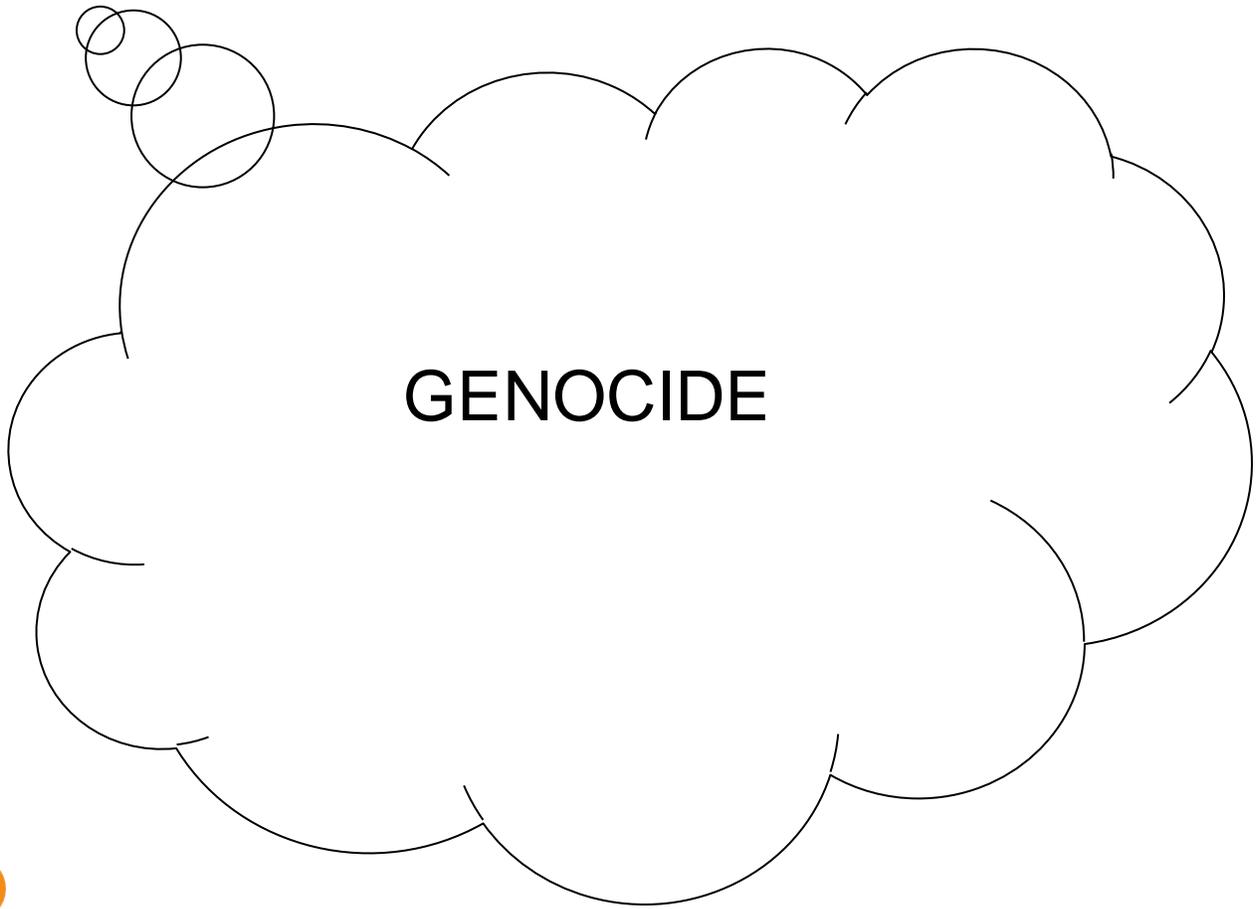
Provide your students with a list of international institutions and texts, as well as NGOs related to genocide prevention. You can use the list below or modify it as needed. Your students will have to independently search for the dates the organisations were created, missions and means of intervention and then create a timeline.

When creating the timeline, they should note (1) that the Holocaust marked a pivotal moment in the field of international justice (2) that the ever-increasing number of organizations, associations and institutions, does not stop genocides from occurring.

Institutions/NGO/Texts	date	Additional information
Red Cross	1864	https://www.icrc.org/en/who-we-are/history
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee	1914	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Jewish_Joint_Distribution_Committee
American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (renamed to Near East Relief)	1915	http://www.armenian-genocide.org/ner.html http://neareastmuseum.com/exhibit/ https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/near_east_relief
League of Nations (including a commission on refugees)	1919	
Oxfam	1942	
United Nations Organization	1945	
The International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg	1945-1946	https://www.ushmm.org/outreach/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007722
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	1951	
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	1948	
Geneva Conventions	1949	Video on the Rules of war
The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide	December 9, 1948	Explained by Gregory Stanton : http://www.genocidewatch.org/genocide/whatisit.html
Amnesty International	1961	
Doctors without Borders	1971	
Human Rights Watch	1978	
Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities	1992	http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/Minorities.aspx
International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	1994- 2015	http://unictr.unmict.org/en
Rome Statute	17 July 1998	
Creation of the International Criminal Court	2002	
Establishment of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia	2003	

STUDENT'S GUIDE

1 Understanding the meaning of genocide



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Define 'genocide' using the information gathered during the brainstorming session, and the resources given to you by your teacher.

Genocide:

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2 Four examples of genocide

Go to <http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/> to discover the four genocides presented by the Montreal Holocaust Museum.



Fill in the table below with the information you gathered from this webpage.

Genocide	Dates	Perpetrators	Victim Groups
Armenian Genocide			
Holocaust			
Cambodian Genocide			
Genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda			



Locate each of the genocides on the following map.





According to the text you read, what do the perpetrators of these genocides have in common?

In your opinion, why were these populations targeted?

3

The stages of genocide

Visit the following webpage: <http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/genocide-stages> to discover the different stages of genocide, and write down their definitions. Then consult the five following documents, and write down the numbers corresponding to the stage. A document can correspond to more to than one stage, while some stages do not have any corresponding documents.

Stage	Name	Document	Definition
1	CLASSIFICATION		
2	SYMBOLISATION		
3	DISCRIMINATION		
4	DEHUMANISATION		
5	ORGANISATION		
6	POLARISATION		
7	PREPARATION		
8	PERSECUTION		
9	EXTERMINATION		
10	DENIAL		

DOCUMENT 1: Crematory ovens in the Bergen-Belsen Camp. Germany, 1945.



Source : © Montreal Holocaust Museum

DOCUMENT 4: Deportation of Armenians during the genocide. Date unknown.



DOCUMENT 5: Wedding photo of Salomon and Flora Schrijver. Amsterdam, Netherlands, 1942.



Source : © Montreal Holocaust Museum, gift from Samuel Schryver

4 The resistance

During each genocide, individuals, groups and institutions sought to resist.

Get into groups of four with other students in your class. Each member of the group must choose a genocide, and find an example of resistance that occurred. In order to do this, each group must explore the *Against Genocide* section of the exhibition at <http://genocide.mhmc.ca/en/resistance>. Then answer the following four questions individually:

? Which genocide did you choose?

Who resisted?

What was the act of resistance?

In your opinion, what form of resistance is this?

Compare your answers with those of the other students in your group, and answer the following questions together:

What are the differences between the acts of resistance you chose? What do they have in common?

In your opinion, why do you think people resist despite the risks?

5 Preventing genocide

Is it always possible to prevent or stop genocide? What does it take? Have the means of prevention evolved throughout the 20th century?

To answer these questions, your teacher will give you a list of international institutions and texts, as well as NGOs (non-governmental organizations).

For each of them, research the following on the internet:

- Their date of creation
- Their mission / role
- Their field or types of intervention.

Then place them on a timeline, and add the four genocides you have just studied. What do you observe?

Timeline



United Nations flag