

Holocaust Memorial Day Secondary school assembly



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST

Teachers please note this assembly is suitable for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, or equivalent.

It explains what Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) is and why we should mark it. We have not separated out for different age groups, to give you the flexibility to deliver the message to various types of assembly groups on and around 27 January, as suits your school and needs.

We have provided a script and accompanying PowerPoint to support teachers in the delivery of this assembly. Please deliver the core content of this assembly as it is provided, but if you would like to add slides, for example showing work that your students have done, please feel free to do so.

Involving students in the assembly

Several students could be involved with the teacher in reading the script that we have provided below.

On our website are a drama lesson plan, a poetry lesson plan, a Rwandan dance tutorial and a set of song sheets. All of these resources offer opportunities for groups of students to prepare something in advance to deliver as part of the assembly.

You can find these resources at hmd.org.uk/education.

Assembly script:

Slide 1 - Title

Display as students enter.

Slide 2 - The Holocaust

Today (or 27 January) is Holocaust Memorial Day.

Holocaust Memorial Day is the day each year when we remember the six million Jewish people who were systematically persecuted and murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust.

Slide 3 - Why 27 January?

27 January is the day Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp, was liberated.

Slide 4 - Susan Pollack

Susan grew up in Hungary, and experienced antisemitism from a young age. In 1944 Susan was sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where she was separated from her family. After the war, she found out that more than 50 of her relatives had been killed and that only she and her brother had survived.

Slide 5 - Nazi Persecution

On Holocaust Memorial Day, we also remember other groups of people who were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis. These include: Roma and Sinti people (sometimes referred to as 'gypsies'), disabled people, gay people, Jehovah's Witnesses, political opponents and many others.

Slide 6 - Rudolf Brazda

Rudolf Brazda was the last known concentration camp survivor deported specifically for homosexuality. He was sent to prison twice, and then deported to Buchenwald concentration camp in 1942 where he was subject to forced labour for 32 months.

Slide 7 - Genocides around the world

After the Holocaust, the world said 'Never Again'. But humanity has failed to learn lessons from the Holocaust, and genocides continue to happen around the world, to this day. On Holocaust Memorial Day we remember the millions of men, women and children, who have been murdered in the genocides which followed – in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

Slide 8 - Eric Eugene Murangwa

Eric played for Kigali's top football team. During the Genocide in Rwanda, his fellow players protected him from the killing. Today Eric runs an organisation which uses football to promote tolerance, unity and reconciliation in the UK and Rwanda.

Slide 9 - What is genocide?

Genocide is when a group of people is targeted for destruction just because of who they are, such as their race or their religion.

Slide 10 - The ten stages of genocide

Genocide does not happen out of the blue – it is the result of prejudice and persecution which sees a group treated differently from the rest of society. On Holocaust Memorial Day, we are reminded of what can happen when prejudice and persecution are left unchallenged, and of our responsibilities to stand against these processes when we see them in our own communities. This image shows 'the 10 stages of genocide' and helps us to know what warning signs to look out for. The stages may occur simultaneously or in a different order.

Teacher note:

The ten stages of genocide is based on research by Dr Gregory H Stanton: genocidewatch.com. If you would like more information about the stages, you can view and download the full poster at hmd.org.uk.

Slide 11 - What happens on Holocaust Memorial Day?

Across the UK, thousands of local events and activities take place every year, in schools, communities, libraries, prisons, museums and galleries, in faith groups and many more. These activities include candle lightings, performances, art projects, readings, talks and much more. Each event is an opportunity for people to reflect on the lives of people affected by genocide, and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and hatred in our own society today.

Slide 12 - Why is this important to us?

People are still discriminated against today because of their religion, their race, their sexuality, or another element of their identity. Whilst we are not at immediate risk of genocide here in the UK, hate speech and prejudice are frequently seen online, and the number of hate crimes recorded each year has been increasing. Outside of the UK, at this very moment genocide is taking place in the region of Darfur, which is part of the country of Sudan in Africa.

Slide 13 - What can we do?

On the screen are lots of ideas of things that individuals, groups and schools have done in the past to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, and remember the people murdered. By holding this assembly, we are already doing something to mark the day, learn about genocide and remember all those affected. Do you have any ideas of something else you would like to do?

Slide 14 - Poem - *Auschwitz*, by Charles N. Whittaker

Teacher note:

Below is a poem. Audio is provided on the slide, or it can be read by a student or teacher. If your students have prepared something else to perform or read, please also add it here.

The semiquaver chugging of the train on the track
And the people on board who will never go back
And the terror in the eyes of all the young ones to go
With no one knowing as the train comes to slow

Those men at the station as the ramps drop down
Where humanity lost is the only crippled sound
Hope gone for those who stand behind the hard sharp wire
And the smoke in the towers rises just a little higher

And the blue ink stabs a little harder in the skin
Above the veins of despair where murder let it in
And the terror in the eyes of all those about to leave
Another train on the track no last minute reprieve

And the slow, crot...chet chugging of the train on the track;
And the people on board. Who will ne...ver go.

Back.

Slide 15 - Youth programme

Young people can get involved in Holocaust Memorial Day, through a youth programme. As part of this programme you will learn more, take part in challenges, and be supported to do your own activity for Holocaust Memorial Day. The web address is on the screen for anyone who is interested in finding out more.

Slide 16 - Holocaust Memorial Day

Let us all today commit to do something ourselves, in your class or as a school, to mark HMD and stand up against prejudice. Let's find out about where genocide is taking place, learn about those affected by it and tell others what we learn.

Slide 17 - Your voice is amazing

We will end with a short film, reminding us of the power we all have to stand up and speak out against hatred and prejudice today.

Slide 18 - End

Find out more... HMDT's resources for educators: hmd.org.uk/education
Life stories of those affected by genocide: hmd.org.uk/lifestories