

Holocaust Memorial Day Tutor Time activities for secondary schools



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Introduction

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) is on 27 January every year. It is the time to learn about the Holocaust, Nazi persecution of non-Jewish groups, and genocides that have happened since. We are learning from genocide, for a better future. Even in the UK, prejudice and the language of hatred must be challenged by us all.

This series of five short activities are designed for use in tutor time, as an introduction to the events commemorated on HMD and the themes of discrimination and social responsibility. They are suitable and adaptable for students aged 11-18.

They are provided in a suggested order. You could do them one per day for a week, or you can choose to do them in a different order, or over a longer period of time.

This PDF contains five activity sheets, these are for the teacher to help lead the session. There is also an accompanying PowerPoint with all the slides for all five activities, to display to your students. Please note which slide to start at on at the top of each activity. Some of the content requires you to be in Slideshow mode.

Timings on the activity sheets are suggested and can be adjusted. You can spend longer on activities if you have more time, or it has generated a good discussion.



Tutor Time activities:

What is Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD)?

An introduction to Holocaust Memorial Day, the Holocaust and Nazi Persecution.

What happened in Cambodia?

An introduction to the Genocide in Cambodia through the story of a survivor who now lives in the UK.

A life story from Rwanda

An introduction to the Genocide in Rwanda through a video of a survivor's testimony.

Justice in Bosnia

An introduction to the Genocide in Bosnia through discovering and debating the role of justice after the genocide.

What does 'refugee' mean?

An introduction to the Genocide in Darfur. Many survivors have arrived in the UK in recent years as refugees and this activity helps students to understand what that means.

Each activity ends with a 'What next?' slide. You could:

- Open this question to your students and see what they come up with.
- Continue on to the next activity in the series.
- Plan a commemorative activity for the group or the whole school.
- Take a look at and use HMD assemblies, lesson plans and classroom projects

hmd.org.uk/education.

And if you would like to find out more about ways young people can get involved with HMD, please visit hmd.org.uk/youth

Let us know!

Make sure that your school's involvement with HMD is recorded and part of the national picture of how the UK marks HMD. Please let us know if you have done this activity with your tutor group.

Email education@hmd.org.uk or visit hmd.org.uk/letusknow to record your involvement with HMD.

Find out more...

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Discover resources for educators and other materials for your activities: hmd.org.uk/resources

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What is Holocaust Memorial Day?

This short activity gives students an introduction to Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD), the Holocaust and Nazi Persecution. This activity sheet helps the teacher lead the session, and it is accompanied by a PowerPoint to display to your students.

Slide 1 - As the class enter

Slide 2 - What is HMD? (1 minute)

Each year on 27 January people across the UK mark Holocaust Memorial Day by putting on events, assemblies, candle lightings, performances and many other activities. These commemorations are held to remember:

- the six million Jewish people who were systematically persecuted and murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust.
- the Nazis' other victims, including Roma and Sinti people, disabled people, gay people, political opponents and many others who faced persecution and death at the hands of the Nazis.
- the millions of men, women and children, who have been murdered in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

Slide 3 - Definitions (5 minutes)

As a class discuss - can you define these words? Feel free to focus on chosen words from the list to adapt the discussion for your students' age and ability. The definitions are below, and these prompt questions may help to get the discussion started:

- Have you heard this word or phrase before, if so where?
- What do you think it means?
- Are there any you haven't heard of before? Can you guess what they might mean?

The Holocaust

The attempt by the Nazis and their collaborators to murder all of Europe's Jews. From when they took power in 1933 until the end of World War Two in 1945, the Nazis used propaganda, persecution and legislation to deny human and civil rights to Jews. From 1941, the Nazi's 'Final Solution' was developed. By the end of the Holocaust, six million Jewish men, women and children had been murdered in ghettos, mass-shootings, concentration camps and extermination camps.

Genocide

The crime of trying to wipe out a group of people based on an element of their identity, such as their nationality, race or religion. **(Note to teachers – the full legal definition is given on the next slide for you to talk through with your students.)**

Jewish

Relating to Judaism – a person who follows the religion of Judaism. Jews believe in one God, worship in synagogues, their leaders are called Rabbis and their holy book is called the Torah.

Nazis

Short for the 'National Socialist German Workers' Party' – the political party led by Adolf Hitler, which took power in Germany in 1933, and ruled until their defeat at the end of World War Two in 1945.

Persecution

The deliberate, cruel and unfair treatment of a person or group, especially because of their religious or political beliefs, their race, or another characteristic (for example disability or sexual orientation).

Nazi Persecution

We use this phrase on Holocaust Memorial Day to refer to the non-Jewish people targeted for discrimination, persecution and murder by the Nazis. This includes Roma and Sinti people, disabled people, gay people, black people, Jehovah's Witnesses, political opponents, and many other groups.

Roma and Sinti people

Nomadic groups found across Europe and the United States. Believed to have originated in India, these groups have historically been referred to as 'Gypsies'.

Slide 4 - Genocide (2 minutes)

Talk through the full legal definition of genocide and discuss it with your students. Key things to point out:

- To convict someone of genocide you have to prove **intent**. This can be difficult because evidence is normally destroyed.
- Examples of 'conditions of life' under the third bullet point would include starvation, denying access to medicine, poor living conditions.
- Sterilising people is an act of genocide.
- Only the first bullet point includes the act of killing – meaning a genocide doesn't necessarily include mass murder.

Slide 5 - What is Auschwitz? (2 minutes)

'Auschwitz' is the name given to the network of many camps, combining forced labour camps and extermination camps. Auschwitz-Birkenau was where the majority of the killings took place. Today it is the most infamous one, due to its size and the number of people murdered there. It was built in a small city in the south of Nazi-occupied Poland and grew into a complex of different camps.

People were taken here from all over Europe. On arrival they were separated into two groups - those who were kept alive to work as slaves, and those who were murdered immediately.

Activity continued →

People were killed in gas chambers, and their bodies burnt in large crematoriums. Over 1.1 million people were murdered at this site, and over 90% of them were Jewish.

We commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January - the date the camp was liberated in 1945.

Slide 6 - Quotes (10 minutes)

Read and discuss these two quotes. They are written by two survivors of the Holocaust, who were imprisoned in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Both went on to become famous writers and wrote about their experiences during the Holocaust.

Primo Levi: *'It happened, therefore it can happen again.'*

Elie Wiesel: *'To forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time.'*

You can do this as a whole class or split into small groups to discuss the quotes then feed back together. Here are some starter questions to help students analyse the quotes. You can select which questions to ask based on your students' age and ability level:

- What do the two quotes mean?
- Do they agree or disagree with each other?
- Do you agree or disagree with these quotes?
- Why might the two men have said these things?
- What can these quotes tell us about why we should learn about and remember the Holocaust and other genocides?
- What can we learn from these quotes that might impact our lives today?

Slide 7 - What next?

Ask your students what they would be interested in learning or doing next for Holocaust Memorial Day. Please see the introduction sheet for suggestions.

Find out more...

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust: hmd.org.uk

Discover resources for educators and other materials for your activities: hmd.org.uk/resources



What happened in Cambodia?

This short activity gives students an introduction to the Genocide in Cambodia through the story of a survivor who now lives in the UK. This activity sheet helps the teacher lead the session, and it is accompanied by a PowerPoint to display to your students.

This is the second activity in the Powerpoint, so begin at slide 8.

Slide 8 - As the class enter

Slide 9 - Sokphal Din (pronounced sock-pal) (5 minutes)

Display the image to the class in slideshow mode and ask the following questions for discussion:

- What is unusual about this photograph?
- Who do you think the man is?
- Why does a part of the photograph move? Why does that particular element move?

Example answers:

- It draws the audience's attention to the image.
 - It makes you curious about the image.
 - The wind chime makes it seem peaceful.
 - It looks like he is at home, or in a garden or temple.
 - It tells us something about his background.
- What does the moving part make you think about, and how does it make you feel?
 - What is he holding? Why do you think he chose that object?
 - Do you like the photograph? Why?

Slide 10 – Sokphal's story (10 minutes)

Read the text on the slide to introduce the background of the Genocide in Cambodia. Our information sheet for teachers on Cambodia will help you with any questions your students might have.

Read Sokphal's life story aloud or hand it out for students to read individually or in small groups. Two versions are provided in this PDF – the full life story would be suitable for older students, and the easy to read version is simplified for younger students, lower reading levels or if you are limited for time.

Slide 11 - Why do we learn stories like these? (5 minutes)

Discuss this question with your students. Some prompt questions:

- Have they learnt facts they didn't know before?
- How does Sokphal's story make them feel?
- Does it make them want to do anything differently in their own lives?

Example answers:

- Find out more about Cambodia and other genocides.
 - Be more welcoming to refugees.
 - Campaign against injustices like this.
 - Tell people I know about what happened in Cambodia.
- Why is Sokphal's story relevant to British society today?

Example answers:

- Sokphal came here as a refugee, like many people today.
- He had to learn English, and it can be hard to access adult English classes now.
- He may have faced discrimination and prejudice, both of which are still present in British society.

Slide 12 - What next?

Ask your students what they would be interested in learning or doing next for Holocaust Memorial Day. Please see the introduction sheet for suggestions.

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A life story from Rwanda

This short activity gives students an introduction to the Genocide in Rwanda through watching a video of a survivor's testimony and discussing it. This activity sheet helps the teacher lead the session, and it is accompanied by a PowerPoint to display to your students.

This is the third activity in the PowerPoint, so begin at slide 13.

Slide 13 - As the class enter

Ask students what they already know about Rwanda. Do they know where the country is, or how large it is? Have they heard anything about the history? Has anyone met anyone from Rwanda?

Slide 14 - Rwanda (2 minutes)

Talk through the facts on the slide about Rwanda and its population. Our information sheet for teachers on Rwanda will help you with any questions your students might have.

Slide 15 - Genocide in Rwanda (10 minutes)

Talk through the facts on the slide about the Genocide in Rwanda. Read the below summary if it is useful:

In 100 days in 1994 approximately one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were murdered in the Genocide in Rwanda. The genocide took place following decades of tensions between Hutus and Tutsis, and a recent history of persecution and discrimination against Tutsis.

On 6 April 1994 the plane carrying Rwanda's President was shot down. Extremist Hutu leaders accused Tutsis of killing the President, even though it is still unclear today who was actually responsible. Hutu civilians were told by radio and word of mouth that it was their duty to wipe out the Tutsis. Despite its colossal scale, this genocide was carried out almost entirely by hand, usually using machetes and clubs.

Tutsi men, women, children and babies were killed in their thousands in schools and churches. Frequently the killers were people they knew – neighbours, workmates, former friends, sometimes even relatives through marriage.

Questions for students:

- What is your reaction to this story?
- What do you think started the genocide?

Activity continued →

Example answers:

- A history of tension and discrimination between groups
 - Extremist Hutus not being happy with the Arusha Accords
 - The murder of the President
- How many years ago did it happen? Do you know anyone who might remember seeing this in the news?
 - What do you think Rwanda is like today, after an event like this?

Slide 16 - Appolinaire Kageruka (3 minutes)

Watch the film of Appolinaire telling us what happened to him during and after the genocide.

Slide 17 - Reactions (5 minutes)

In pairs or small groups, write down some things you would like to ask or say to Appolinaire. Some students could share their questions and comments with the class.

Slide 18 - Rwanda today (2 minutes)

End with sharing the facts on the slide about what Rwanda is like today.

Slide 19 - What next?

Ask your students what they would be interested in learning or doing next for Holocaust Memorial Day.

You can discover more stories from survivors of the Genocide in Rwanda and learn more at www.ishami.org. The Ishami Foundation uses the power of sport and storytelling to build equality, tolerance and lasting peace in Rwanda and the UK.

Please see the introduction sheet for other suggestions.

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Justice in Bosnia

This short activity gives students an introduction to the Genocide in Bosnia through discovering and debating the role of justice after the genocide. This activity sheet helps the teacher lead the session, and it is accompanied by a PowerPoint to display to your students.

This is the fourth activity in the PowerPoint, so begin at slide 20.

Slide 20 - As the class enter

Slide 21 - What happened in Bosnia? (5 minutes)

From 1992 there was a war in Bosnia. Bosnian Serb forces specifically targeted Bosnian Muslims for persecution. Ordinary people were forced out of their homes, held in concentration camps, threatened, beaten and killed.

In 1993 the UN sent peace keeping forces into Bosnia, and declared a town called Srebrenica (pronounced Sreb-ren-eet-za) to be a 'safe zone'. Tens of thousands of Bosnian Muslims went there, because they were in danger and they thought it was safe.

In 1995 Dutch soldiers were the peace keepers in Srebrenica to protect the people there, when the Bosnian Serb Army arrived, led by General Ratko Mladic. They were not stopped by the Dutch soldiers. The women and children were put on buses and taken to another place. Over 8,000 Muslim men and boys were murdered in just three days.

It was the worst massacre in Europe since World War Two.

Slide 22 - What is justice? (5 minutes)

In groups, come up with ideas for what justice you would want or expect to see for these crimes. Ideas might include:

- Those responsible for the killings are tried and put in jail
- Compensation for the families of the men and boys
- Consequences for the UN Dutch troops who were supposed to protect people
- The crimes are publicly admitted to and acknowledged. The world is aware of what happened

Please note that your students may suggest more extreme ideas of justice, due to the scale of injustice in a crime like this. This may lead to an interesting debate around issues such as capital punishment.

Slide 23-25 - The Mothers of Srebrenica (5 minutes)

The Mothers of Srebrenica is an activist group. They represent 6,000 women who lost family members in the genocide at Srebrenica.

This is what they aim to achieve (**Slide 24**):

- Bring a civil lawsuit against the UN for failing to protect people
- Bring a civil lawsuit against the Dutch government for their troops failing to protect people
- Establish a memorial to the people murdered in Srebrenica
- Identify the bodies and give them proper burials

This was the outcome of those aims (**Slide 25**):

- The UN was ruled to be 'immune' to prosecution
- The Dutch government was found to be responsible for the deaths of 300 people
- A permanent memorial and cemetery have now been built
- Thousands of victims have been identified and have received a proper burial, but there are many more who may never be identified

Slide 26 - Individual trials (5 minutes)

1. In 2002 former Serbian President **Slobodan Milošević** was charged with committing Crimes Against Humanity and genocide. He died of a heart attack in custody before a verdict could be reached.
2. In July 2008 former Bosnian Serb President **Radovan Karadžić** was arrested for ordering the Srebrenica Massacre to take place. He was charged with the murder of at least 7,000 male Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica. He was found guilty of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity and sentenced to 40 years imprisonment.
3. In July 1995, **Ratko Mladić**, the General who led the Army into Srebrenica, was charged. He was suspected to be in hiding and in 2010, his family filed a request to declare him dead. However, he was found in May 2011, hiding in a house belonging to one of his relatives and arrested. He was accused of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide in Srebrenica. The trial began in May 2012, he was found guilty in 2017 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Discuss - Have the families and the victims of Srebrenica received justice?

Slide 27 - Bosnia today (2 minutes)

There are still challenges in Bosnia today following the genocide.

- Justice has taken a long time to achieve, in some cases over 20 years.
- The genocide is not acknowledged in a lot of areas of Bosnia – there aren't monuments and there is a lot of denial.
- Many Bosnians fled to other countries at the time of the War, and as the community is still very divided, they still don't feel safe to return.

Slide 28 - What next?

Ask your students what they would be interested in learning or doing next for Holocaust Memorial Day. Please see the introduction sheet for suggestions.

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The Genocide in Darfur - What does 'refugee' mean?

This short activity gives students an introduction to the Genocide in Darfur. Many survivors from Darfur have arrived in the UK in recent years as refugees, and this activity helps students to understand what that means. This activity sheet helps the teacher lead the session, and it is accompanied by a PowerPoint to display to your students. This is the fifth activity in the PowerPoint, so begin at slide 29.

Please be aware that this activity asks students to consider traumatic events that lead people to become refugees. Some students may find the subject matter difficult, especially if they are refugees themselves or the children of refugees.

Slide 29 - As the class enter

Slide 30 - What is a refugee like? (5 minutes)

Talk through the questions on the slide, and take suggestions for answers, describing what students think a refugee will be like. Discuss your answers as a class.

This activity is designed to help students notice their own assumptions. It can be an open conversation. Some assumptions are fair – not all refugees can speak English when they arrive, they may not have many possessions with them. Some assumptions will be based on misunderstandings and stereotypes – for example, the idea that they are here for work or to earn more money.

Slide 31 - Who isn't a refugee? (5 minutes)

Match the terms on the screen to the correct definition. Answers below:

Refugee	A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape danger – e.g. war, persecution or natural disaster, and has found safety in a new country.
Illegal immigrant	Someone who lives or works in another country when they do not have the legal right to do this.
Tourist	A person who is travelling or visiting a place for pleasure.
Asylum seeker	A person who, from fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, social group, or political opinion, has crossed an international border into a country in which they hope to be granted refugee status.
Economic migrant	A person who travels from one country or area to another in order to improve their standard of living.

Notes for teachers – The word refugee is frequently used in the media and other places to mean asylum seeker. Technically, when someone first arrives they are an asylum seeker, and when they have received permission to remain they are a refugee, but the two terms are becoming interchangeable.

The term 'illegal immigrant' is used often, but considered by some to be offensive, as it suggests that the individual is 'illegal' in themselves. An alternative term is 'undocumented migrant'.

Some asylum seekers enter a new country illegally, if they are fleeing danger and do not have the correct documents to enter legally (eg passport or visa). In order to remain as a refugee, these people must apply for asylum, and prove that they are unable to return to their country due to fear of persecution. While an asylum application is being processed, the asylum seeker will not be asked to leave.

Slide 32 - Faiza - a case study of a refugee (10 minutes)

Read the text on the slide and answer any questions. Our information sheet for teachers on the Genocide in Darfur should help you with student questions.

Read Faiza's life story aloud, or hand it out for students to read individually or in small groups.

Two versions are provided, the full life story would be suitable for older students, and the easy to read version is simplified for younger students, lower reading levels or if you are limited for time.

Slide 33 - Does Faiza fit your description of a refugee? (5 minutes)

Discuss as a class:

- What different things might refugees feel?
- What would it be like to find safety after a traumatic experience?
- Did anything surprise you about Faiza?
- What are some of the difficulties of being a refugee?

Look at the questions again about what a refugee is like and compare your earlier answers with what we now know about Faiza.

If applicable, point out that any answers we discussed earlier were likely based on generalisations – all refugees are individual people with their own experiences.

Slide 34 - What next?

Ask your students what they would be interested in learning or doing next for Holocaust Memorial Day. Please see the introduction sheet for suggestions.

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