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# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide



A Newspapers In Education program in partnership with

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**HOLOCAUST  
EDUCATION**  
RESOURCE CENTER  
*teaching & learning for humanity*

**Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide**

Written by Ilana Cone Kennedy, Director of Education,  
Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center

**Cover Photo:** A group of Gypsy children in the  
Rivesaltes Internment Camp in France, 1941-1942.  
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# NIE Program Evaluation

We value your feedback on our programs.

Please complete and return this form to NIE at the address listed below.

PROGRAM NAME: **Stories Among Us**

GRADE LEVEL TAUGHT: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (OPTIONAL): \_\_\_\_\_

## Program/Educational Objectives

1. Did you feel the educational materials for this program:

- Exceeded expectations
- Met expectations
- Did not meet expectations

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Did you feel the learning materials met state standards/aligned with your curricula?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you feel this program challenged your students and developed their skills?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What learning materials from this program were you able to use in your classroom?

- Newspaper
- In-paper curricula (NIE articles)
- Lesson plan
- Teacher/student guide
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Newspaper Use

1. Did the use of the newspaper enhance your students' learning experience?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't Know

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you feel that the newspaper-based activities in the in-paper NIE articles helped support the learning objectives of the program?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. How often did you use the newspaper with this program?

- Daily
- Three times a week
- Twice a week
- Once a week
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Return completed evaluation form ...

### By mail:

NIE  
The Seattle Times  
P.O. Box 70  
Seattle, WA 98111

### Or by fax:

206/515-5615

**Thank you.**

## Essential Academic Learning Requirements

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The study questions and activities in this guide use the following Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) to meet Washington state learning objectives.

Build vocabulary through reading (**Reading 1.1**)

Comprehend important ideas and details (**Reading 2.1**)

Expand comprehension by analyzing, interpreting and synthesizing information and ideas (**Reading 2.2**)

Think critically and analyze authors' use of language, style, purpose and perspective (**Reading 2.3**)

Read to learn new information (**Reading 3.1**)

Use listening and observation skills and strategies to focus attention and interpret information (**Communication 1.1**)

Understands, analyzes, synthesizes or evaluates information from a variety of sources (**Communication 1.2**)

Uses communication skills and strategies to interact/work effectively with others (**Communication 2**)

Use communication skills and strategies to present ideas and one's self in a variety of situations (**Communication 3**)

Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of formal and informal communication (**Communication 4**)

Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping United States, world and Washington state history (**History 1.2**)

Examine the influence of culture on United States, world and Washington state history (**History 1.3**)

Compare and contrast ideas in different places, time periods and cultures, and examine the interrelationships between ideas, change and conflict (**Social Studies: History 2.1**)

Understand how ideas and technological developments influence people, culture and environment (**Social Studies: History 2.2**)

Understand and apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills to make informed and reasoned decisions (**Social Studies Skills 3.1**)

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# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

## About **Stories Among Us** and Oral Histories

by NIE Program Specialist Elizabeth Cole Duffell

Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide is a Newspapers In Education (NIE) series offered in partnership with the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center. The articles mentioned in this teacher's guide are running as a series in The Seattle Times on Wednesdays, April 9-June 11, 2008. To find the daily in-paper locations of these articles, visit us online at [seattletimes.com/nie](http://seattletimes.com/nie).

NIE is proud to partner with the Holocaust Center to bring your students these firsthand stories from recent history, told by the survivors of genocide living in our community. We hope that the stories told in these articles and the lessons in this guide can help to bring home the reality of genocide happening in our world today and help us all to bring hope to the future through the education of our future global citizens.

### Why Oral History?

When studying primary source documents, students often find a new appreciation for the subject of history. They begin to discover that history — what they may have previously taken for granted as “fact” — is really a collection of stories that are interpreted and reinterpreted by people. They learn that human memories are as important as facts in the reconstruction of history, and that both can be seen from different perspectives depending on the individual. Not only can a firsthand narrative carry the past out of the textbook and bring it to life in your classroom, but bringing oral history into your classroom can help students to think more critically about how history itself is constructed. It gives them a sense of the individuals behind the events, and makes them more invested in the outcomes. Teaching students how to conduct their own oral histories can help to reiterate the importance of primary source documents while helping them to meet state standards in language arts, social studies and communication.

We are pleased to provide the following lesson plan and resources to help you integrate the theory and practice of oral history into your subject area learning.

## Oral History Lesson Plan

### Learning Objectives

- ❖ Students will understand the value of primary source documents
- ❖ Students will think critically about how historical fact is constructed
- ❖ Students will practice recording an oral history

### Personal Connections

1. Ask students to think of a story that happened to them in their past, and write a journal entry about the experience. Have them trade journals with a partner and ask them to write summarizing statements about their classmates' stories. Compare how the summarizing statements are different from the stories themselves. What is different? How has the story changed? What details have been left out or confused? Have them discuss how a textbook entry about an event is different from a journal entry about an event — explain that the journal entry is known as a “primary source” document while the textbook would likely be a “secondary source.”
2. Ask students to keep a record of their daily activities throughout one day. At the end of the day, ask them to consider how a historian might piece together the events that took place to create a story. Have them review what pieces of evidence (written or otherwise documented) they left behind throughout the day that a historian might be interested in analyzing. How would these documents help to tell the story? How would the story be different if the historian did not have this evidence but instead relied on secondhand accounts of the students' experiences?



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## Discussion

1. Introduce students to the concept of an “oral history,” a personal account of an event told by an individual and recorded for history by another.
2. Have students discuss the differences and similarities between an “oral tradition” and a “written tradition” of storytelling. Create a Venn diagram together as a class to help illustrate this comparison.

## Activities

1. Interview several family members about a shared memory. Record these stories and compare how they are different and how they are the same. Use other primary and secondary sources to create a more complete picture of the event or story.
2. Work in small groups to create oral histories of older citizens in the community. Before interviewing these community citizens, research the history of the community to create a list of questions to help frame your discussion. Record these stories and create a presentation for your classmates, integrating the oral records with other primary and secondary source documents to tell a comprehensive story about your community’s history.

## Suggested Web sites

The following resource list was compiled to help you to integrate oral history into your classroom.

### **[www.archives.gov/education](http://www.archives.gov/education)**

The National Archives has a variety of resources for teaching with primary source documents.

### **[www.loc.gov/teachers/tps](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps)**

The Library of Congress Web site features the “Teaching With Primary Sources Program” to help teachers to integrate primary sources into their history lessons.

### **[www.folklife.si.edu/resources/pdf/InterviewingGuide.pdf](http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/pdf/InterviewingGuide.pdf)**

The Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide

### **[www.storycorps.net](http://www.storycorps.net)**

A project developed by Sound Portraits Productions in collaboration with the Library of Congress and public radio stations nationwide to record personal histories across the country

### **[www.tellmeyourstories.org](http://www.tellmeyourstories.org)**

Developed by the Living Legacies Historical Foundation out of Los Angeles, California, this site provides curriculum on recording oral histories with a family elder.

## Introduction to the Teaching Guide

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I sat down one evening to finally look at that day's edition of The Seattle Times. As I read through the World Report, I felt disheartened by the news of the continued atrocities and conflicts occurring throughout the world.

And yet, these stories felt far away — distant places, people I didn't know, and conflicts I didn't understand.

It occurred to me then, that people directly affected by these conflicts and genocides were probably living right here, in Washington state. If they were affected, then those around them now are affected too. These atrocities and conflicts are not distant — they are much closer than I imagined.

My work at the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center over the past few years has taught me that stories are priceless. They are the most valuable things we each possess. But if not told, if not listened to, if not remembered, they can, and do, disappear. This is a great loss for all of us.

I believe that each person today is the product of all of his or her experiences, no matter how big or how small. These experiences affect the way we treat others, the choices we make and the jobs we choose. We all have stories, and our stories affect the people around us.

At the Holocaust Center, we focus on preserving the stories of Holocaust survivors while helping teachers, students and the community to connect these lessons of the past to the present. This project, this series of articles, seemed only a natural extension of the work we do.

The Holocaust Center is a nonprofit organization in Seattle dedicated to inspiring teaching and learning for humanity in the schools and communities of this region, through the study of the Holocaust. Programs and resources include Holocaust teaching trunks, writing and art contests, a speakers bureau, a library, traveling exhibits, poster sets and community programs.

What began as a small project turned into a large undertaking, and I am deeply appreciative to all of those people who were willing to share their personal experiences so publicly.

This series would not be possible without the help of the following contributing writers: Morgan Ahern, Marie Berry, Laurie Warshal Cohen, Melissa Cushman, Aida Kouyoumjian, Agnes Oswaha, Salina Salihovic, Delila Simon and Frieda Soury. Thank you!

And thanks to you for reading these stories and for taking the time to think about how each of these stories connects with our own lives.

*Sincerely,*

Ilana Cone Kennedy, Director of Education  
Washington State Holocaust Education Resource  
Center

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Web site: [www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org)



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

## Teaching the Holocaust: not just for experts

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*Here's how The Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center can help:*

### Resources

- ❖ Curricula, Lesson Plans, Activities
- ❖ Speakers Bureau\*\*
- ❖ Web Site & Online Resources
- ❖ Videos/DVDs
- ❖ Library
- ❖ Newsletter & Monthly E-Newsletter
- ❖ Writing & Art Contest
- ❖ Teacher Seminars & Professional Development
- ❖ Teaching Trunks
- ❖ Artifacts
- ❖ Exhibits for Classroom & Community
- ❖ Community Programs

*\*\*Request an eyewitness to the Holocaust to come to your classroom to share his or her experiences.*

For more information, or to make a request, visit [www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org), or call 206-441-5747.

## Guidelines: Teaching About the Holocaust

*As determined by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). For a complete text of the guidelines with details please visit [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org).*

*Staff at the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center would be happy to answer questions, provide consultation and assist in finding appropriate resources and lessons. Visit [www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org) or e-mail [info@wsherc.org](mailto:info@wsherc.org).*

### Define the term “Holocaust.”

The Holocaust refers to a specific genocidal event in 20th century history: the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims — 6 million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

### Avoid comparisons of pain.

One cannot presume that the horror of an individual, family or community destroyed by the Nazis was any greater than that experienced by victims of other genocides.

### Avoid simple answers to complex history.

Allow students to contemplate the various factors that contributed to the Holocaust; do not attempt to reduce Holocaust history to one or two catalysts in isolation from the other factors that came into play.

### Just because it happened does not mean it was inevitable.

The Holocaust took place because individuals, groups and nations made decisions to act or not to act.

### Strive for precision of language.

Encourage students to distinguish the differences between prejudice and discrimination, collaborators and bystanders, armed and spiritual resistance, direct orders and assumed orders, concentration camps and killing centers, and guilt and responsibility.

### Make careful distinctions about sources of information.

Students should be encouraged to consider why a particular text was written, who wrote it, who the intended audience was, whether there were any biases inherent in the information, whether any gaps occurred in discussion, whether omissions in certain passages were inadvertent or not, and how the information has been used to interpret various events.

### Try to avoid stereotypical descriptions.

Though all Jews were targeted for destruction by the Nazis, the experiences of all Jews were not the same.

### Do not romanticize history to engage students’ interest.

People who risked their lives to rescue victims of Nazi oppression provide useful, important and compelling role models for students. However, given that only a small fraction of non-Jews under Nazi occupation (estimated at 0.005 percent) helped to rescue Jews, an overemphasis on heroic tales can result in an inaccurate and unbalanced account of history.

### Contextualize the history you are teaching.

Frame your approach by considering when and where an act took place; the immediate consequences to oneself and one’s family of one’s actions; the degree of control the Nazis had on a country or local population; the cultural attitudes of particular native populations; and the availability, effectiveness and risk of potential hiding places.

Students should be reminded that individuals and groups often behaved differently depending upon changing events and circumstances. (A person who was a bystander in 1933 may become a rescuer in later years.)



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Include a discussion of prewar Jewish culture and life. By exposing students to some of the cultural contributions and achievements of 2,000 years of European Jewish life, you help them to balance their perception of Jews as victims and to better appreciate the traumatic disruption in Jewish history caused by the Holocaust.

### **Translate statistics into people.**

Show that individual people are behind the statistics, and emphasize that within the larger historical narrative is a diversity of personal experience.

### **Be sensitive to appropriate written and audiovisual content.**

Graphic materials should be used judiciously and only to the extent necessary to achieve the objective of the lesson.

### **Strive for balance in establishing whose perspective informs your study of the Holocaust.**

Often, too great an emphasis is placed on the victims of Nazi aggression rather than on the victimizers who forced people to make impossible choices or simply left them with no choice to make.

### **Select appropriate learning activities.**

Avoid simulation activities and activities that attempt to re-create situations. Such activities oversimplify complex events and can leave students with a skewed view of history. Even worse, they are left with the impression at the conclusion of the activity that they now know what it was like during the Holocaust.

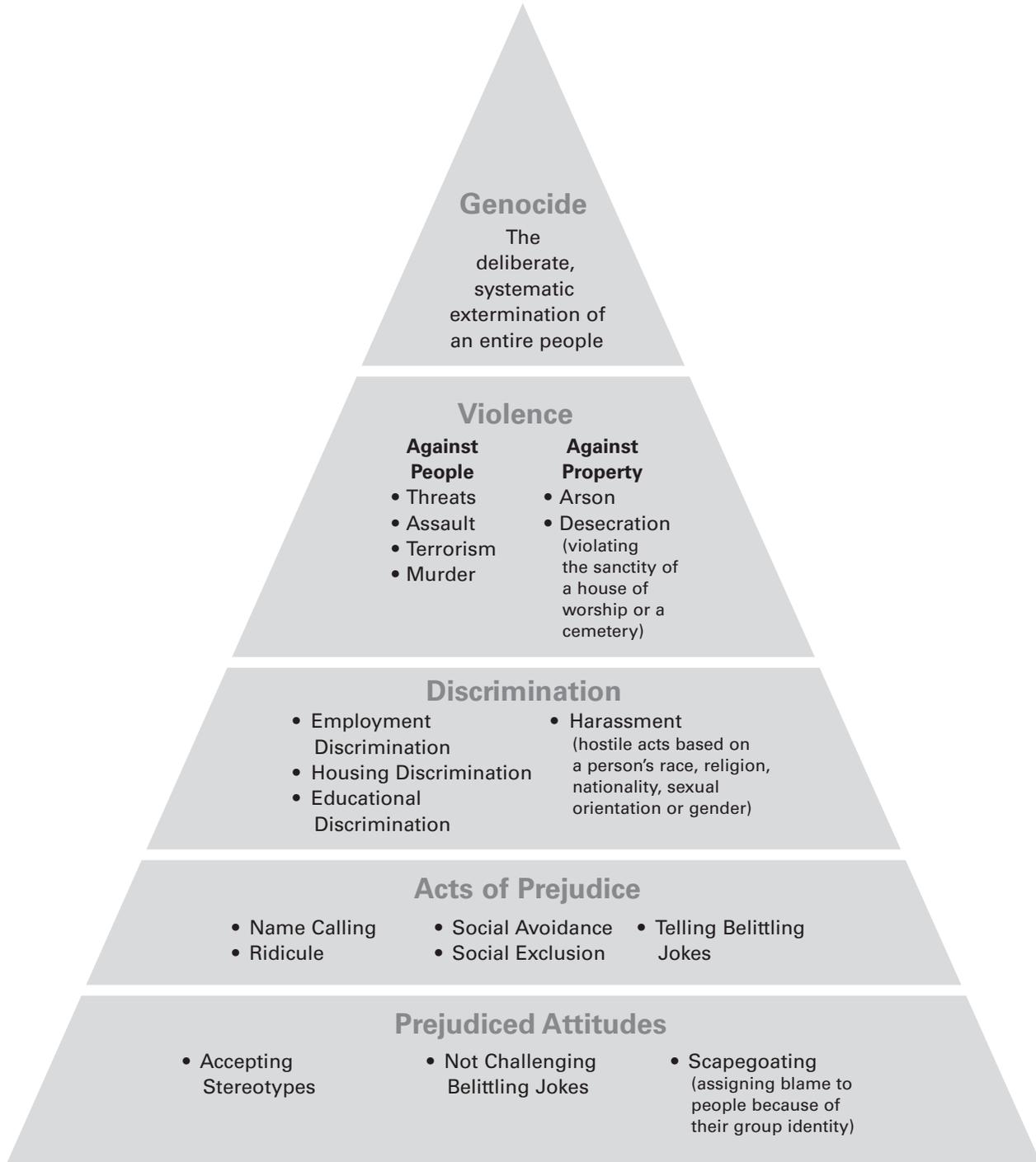
### **Reinforce the objectives of your lesson plan.**

A strong closing should emphasize synthesis, by encouraging students to connect this history to other world events and to the world they live in today. Students should be encouraged to reflect on what they have learned and to consider what this study means to them personally and as citizens of a democracy.



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

## Student Handout: Pyramid of Hate



© 2003 Anti-Defamation League and Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide



*Some [children] were there [when I arrived] and some came later ... There was one group that came in when I was there. They were very thin and undernourished. About eight to 10 children, where the oldest child was 13, and they'd been in the woods for about a year or two, by themselves, and managed to survive.*

– John Rock in a 1996 interview with the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center.

**Photo:** Orphans who survived the Holocaust. Taken in a Displaced Persons camp in Germany, probably in 1946.

## Article One: Introduction

In 1996, Gregory Stanton, the president of Genocide Watch, presented a paper to the U.S. Department of State, outlining "The Eight Stages of Genocide." The following is an excerpt of his paper.

*"Genocide is a process that develops in eight stages that are predictable but not inexorable. At each stage, preventative measures can stop it ..."*

**Classification** All cultures have categories to distinguish people into "us and them" by ethnicity, race, religion or nationality.

**Symbolization** We give names or other symbols to the classifications.

**Dehumanization** One group denies the humanity of the other group.

**Organization** Genocide is always organized, usually by the state ...

**Polarization** Extremists drive the groups apart. Hate groups broadcast polarizing propaganda.

**Preparation** Victims are identified and separated because of their ethnic or religious identity. Death lists are drawn up.

**Extermination** Murder quickly becomes the mass killing legally called "genocide."

**Denial** Perpetrators deny they have committed any crimes.

The full document of the "Eight Stages of Genocide" can be found at the Genocide Watch Web site [www.genocidewatch.org](http://www.genocidewatch.org).

# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Raphael Lemkin found it necessary to create the new word “genocide”?
2. Why did the United States delay support for the Genocide Convention? What effect did this have on the enforcement of the Genocide Convention? (Hint: Check the “Facing History and Ourselves” Web site [www.facing.org](http://www.facing.org). Enter “Raphael Lemkin International Law in the Age of Genocide” into the search box to find the related article.)
3. What do you think is meant by Gregory Stanton’s sentence: “Genocide is a process that develops in eight stages that are predictable but not inexorable”?
4. What do you think is meant by the author’s sentence: “Genocide has a ripple effect: It starts in one place and then begins to spread, over miles, continents, years and decades”? Can you give an example?

## Photo and Discussion

See photo on previous page.

John Rock was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1922. As a young Jewish man in the 1930s, he faced increasing restriction and persecution from the Nazis. In 1939, John Rock escaped to England alone and joined the British Army and later the British Navy. His parents, who remained in Austria, were murdered in Auschwitz.

In 1946, after WWII had ended, John Rock began to work with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. He became a director of the Displaced Persons (DP) Program. Throughout his life, he described this as the most important work he ever did.

John Rock immigrated to the United States in 1951, and lived in Seattle until his death in 2005. John Rock’s photo album is on display at the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center.

## Photo Questions

- Q. What do you notice about this photo?
- Q. Why are these kids orphans? Why do you think they are in a DP camp?
- Q. Eventually all of these kids will need to leave the DP camp. Where do you think they might go? What might they need to live outside the DP camp?
- Q. Why do you think John Rock described his work in the DP camp as the most important work he ever did?
- Q. Are there areas in the world (and in our country) where conflict and violence might result in orphans? What do you think happens to them?

## Suggested Web sites

### Genocide Watch

[www.genocidewatch.org](http://www.genocidewatch.org)

At this site you can find Gregory Stanton’s entire paper on the “Eight Stages of Genocide” and other fine resources and documents on genocide.

### United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia

[www.ushmm.org/wlc/en](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en)

Click on “What is Genocide?” Provides detailed information on Raphael Lemkin and the history of the term “genocide.”

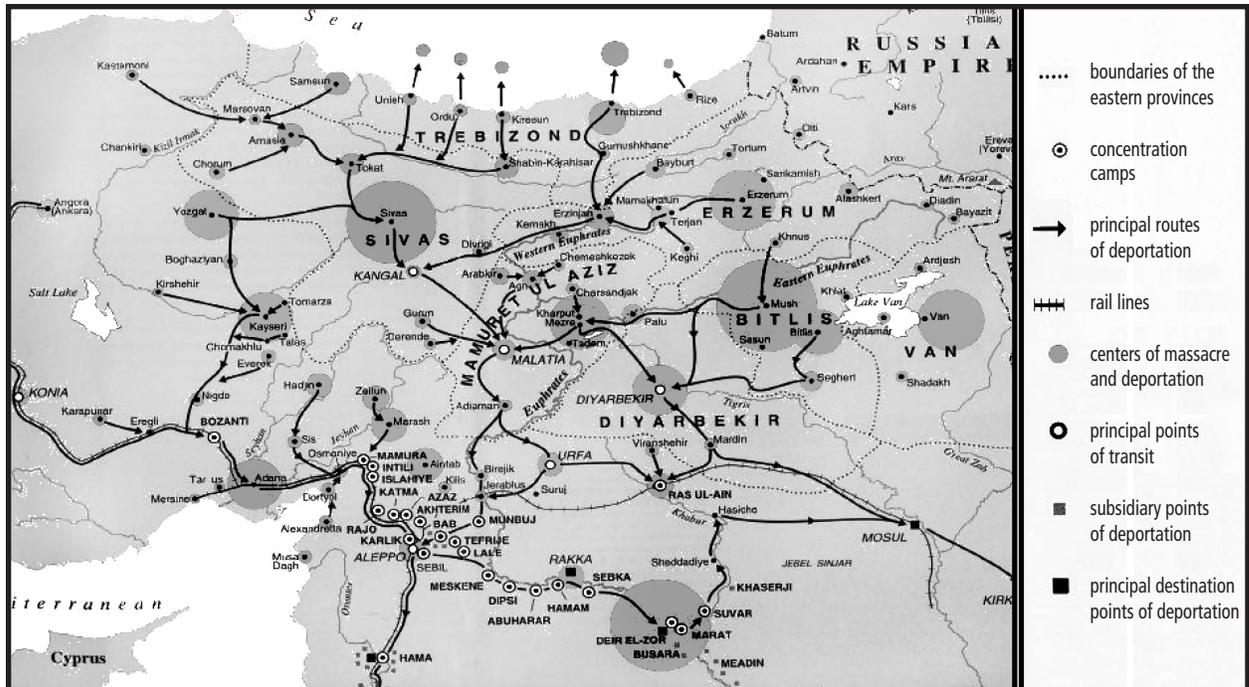
### Facing History and Ourselves

[www.facing.org](http://www.facing.org).

Click on “Online Campus” and then “Lessons and Units.” — Scroll down the alphabetical listings to the “Raphael Lemkin” links. Lessons include “Identifying Lemkin’s Outrage,” “Exploring Lemkin’s Actions,” and “Continuing Lemkin’s Legacy.”



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**Map:** 1915 Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Turkish Empire. Used with permission of the Genocide Education Project. This map can be viewed in color at [www.genocideproject.net](http://www.genocideproject.net).

## Article Two: Mannig’s Story: A Survivor of the Armenian Genocide

Armenians, an affluent Christian minority, had lived peacefully with the Muslim majority of Ottoman Turkey for centuries. During World War I, in 1914, the Ottoman Empire was defeated by the Russians. The Turks, which then ruled the Ottoman Empire, blamed the Armenians for the defeat. Since Armenians lived in the Ottoman Empire as well as in Russia, they were accused of being disloyal to the Ottoman Empire and siding with the Russians. In the spring of 1915, the Young Turks (the governing party) ordered the systematic deportation of the Armenian people. Able-bodied Armenian men were taken away from their homes and murdered. All others were sent on death marches: forced to cross the Syrian desert on foot with no provisions and subject to beatings and humiliation.

On August 18, 1915, The New York Times reported that “the roads and the Euphrates are strewn with corpses of exiles, and those who survive are doomed to certain death. It is a plan to exterminate the whole Armenian people.”

From 1918 to 1920, the Armenian people experienced a relative calm. Between 1920 and 1923, the violence, persecution and expulsion of the Armenians resumed under a new political movement, the Turkish Nationalists. Although the Turkish Nationalists opposed the Young Turks, they agreed with their policy toward the Armenians. Between 1915 and 1923, approximately 1.5 million Armenians were murdered in what is now widely regarded as the first genocide of the 20th century, according to the Armenian National Institute.

Just 16 years later, as Hitler was planning to rid Poland of its Jewish population, he is recorded in a speech as saying,

*“I have issued the command ... that our war aim does not consist in reaching certain lines, but in the*



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*physical destruction of the enemy. Accordingly, I have placed my death-head formation in readiness — for the present only in the East — with orders to them to send to death mercilessly and without compassion, men, women and children of Polish derivation and language. Only thus shall we gain the living space which we need. Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"*

— August 22, 1939. According to reports received by the Associated Press Bureau Chief in Berlin, Louis Lochner (Armenian Genocide Resource Library).

## Discussion Questions

1. The Armenian genocide was widely covered in the Western media while it was occurring. Can you find online copies of articles reporting on it?
2. What do you think Hitler meant when he said, "Who after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"
3. What did the United States do? What do you think it could have done? Should have done?
4. Why does Turkey refuse to recognize the Armenian genocide? What has been the response of the United States on this issue?

## Suggested Web sites

**Armenian National Institute**  
[www.armenian-genocide.org](http://www.armenian-genocide.org)

Photos, documents, maps, chronologies and educational materials

**Armenian Genocide Resource Library for Teachers**  
<http://www.teachgenocide.org/>

Includes teaching guides, documents, maps, U.S. news accounts and survivor testimony

**Facing History and Ourselves**  
[www.facing.org](http://www.facing.org)

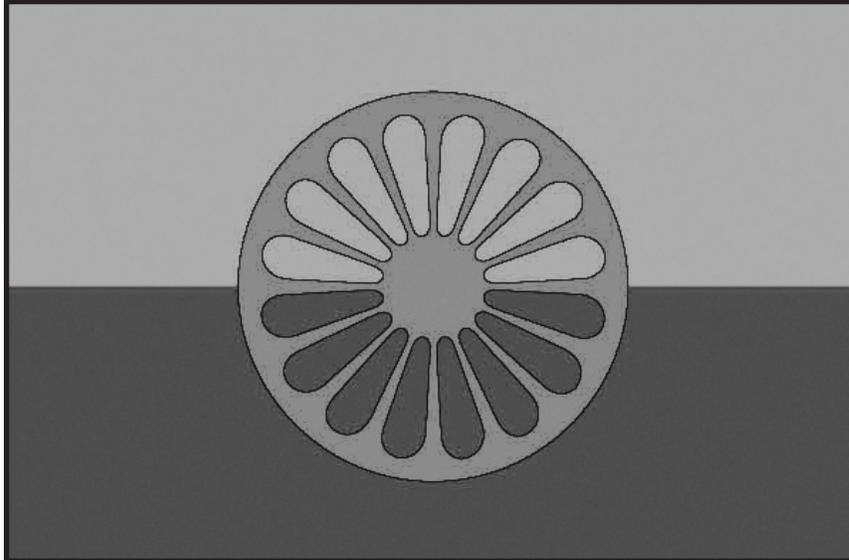
Educational materials, background information on the Armenian genocide, and connections between these lessons and today's world

**The Genocide Project**  
[www.genocideproject.net](http://www.genocideproject.net)

Includes an exhibit of personal accounts of witnesses to, and survivors of, the Armenian genocide



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The Romani flag is the international symbol of the Romani people. It was approved at the first World Romani Conference in 1971. The flag's background is blue (on the top half) and green (on the bottom half). The blue represents the heavens; the green represents the earth. In the center is a wagon wheel (chakra) representing the heritage of the Romani people. The flag of India also contains a chakra.

## Article Three: Morgan's Story: The Roma/Sinti

The Roma/Sinti people, or Gypsies as they are commonly called, left their native India circa 1000. They arrived in Europe in the early 1300s.

Between 1933 and 1945, the Roma/Sinti people were targeted by the Nazis. The Nazi regime viewed the Roma/Sinti people as "racially inferior" and subjected them to deportation, imprisonment in concentration camps, forced labor and mass killings.

According to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), the Nazis and their collaborators killed between 220,000 and 500,000 Roma/Sinti men, women and children across Nazi-occupied Europe. Approximately 60 percent of Europe's Roma/Sinti population was murdered. The Roma/Sinti refer to this time period as the "Porrajmos," or The Great Devouring.

Today the situation of the Roma/Sinti in Europe remains bleak. The majority live in desperate poverty and they are constant victims of individual and institutional racism, discrimination and violence.

## Discussion Questions

1. What laws were made against the Roma/Sinti during the Porrajmos? (You might need to search for Roma and Sinti during the Holocaust. Use the Web sites suggested on the next page.)
2. A great deal of thought goes into designing a flag and choosing symbols that represent the values and history of a people. If you were to create a flag for your family or for a particular group to which you belong, what might it include?
3. Why do you think the Roma felt it was important to include a chakra on the flag?
4. How do you think the Roma/Sinti are regarded today in Europe? In the United States? Look online for articles to back up your claim.



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

## Suggested Web sites

### United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

<http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/resource/>

Scroll down to "Victims of the Nazi Era." There is a small booklet specifically on the Roma and Sinti during the Holocaust that can be viewed and downloaded.

### United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Online Encyclopedia

<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/>

Enter "Roma" in the top right search box "FIND ARTICLES."

### The Patrín Web Journal: Romani Culture and History

<http://www.geocities.com/Paris/5121/patrin.htm>

Includes articles about Romani culture, tradition, rights and experiences during the Holocaust. Search for related articles by country.



A group of Gypsy children in the Rivesaltes Internment Camp in France, 1941-1942.

**Photo:** Used with permission of the USHMM.

## Article Four: Magda's Story: An Auschwitz Survivor

### Background on the Holocaust

Jewish people have lived in Europe for more than 2,000 years. Jewish communities existed in Eastern Europe, Western Europe and in countries such as Greece and Turkey. These Jewish communities were diverse, varying in traditions, customs and language.

In 1933, the Nazi party was elected in Germany; Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor. Hitler and the Nazi party quickly put into practice their belief that Germans were "racially superior." The Jewish people of Germany (less than 1 percent of the population) were not only defined as "inferior," but became the primary target for Nazi hatred.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland and World War II began. The Polish Army was quickly defeated and the German forces continued on to occupy Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Yugoslavia and Greece.

In 1941, the German army invaded the Soviet Union, and between 1941 and 1942, six major killing centers were established in Poland: Belzec, Chelmno, Sobibor, Treblinka, Majdanek, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. These camps existed only or primarily for the purpose of killing people. Other camps — concentration camps and labor camps — were used for holding people and/or slave labor.

The Germans occupied Hungary in March 1944. Ghettos were rapidly established and only one month later, Hungarian Jews began to be deported. According to the USHMM, between April and July of 1944, approximately 444,000 Hungarian Jews were deported, most to Auschwitz. The Hungarian Jews were the last large group to be deported to Auschwitz. Approximately 825,000 Jews lived in Hungary in 1941; 255,000 survived the war.

In January 1945, the Russian armies moved west, overtaking many of the areas that had been occupied by the Germans. Auschwitz, along with several other camps, was liberated. In May 1945, the war came to an end as the Allies marched into Germany and Poland and the German army surrendered. Six million

**Photo 1:** Magda S. received this bowl from a woman who had been in Allach, a subcamp of Dachau.



**Photo 2:** This bowl from Allach has an imprint on it. Under the lip of the bowl are engraved the letters "BMW." A capital letter "E" is on the right of this.

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of the 9 million Jews in Europe were murdered in what is now called "The Holocaust."

## About the Photos

**Photo 1:** Magda S. received this bowl from a woman who had been in Allach, a subcamp of Dachau. Allach was a slave labor camp connected to the larger camp of Dachau in Germany. After the camp was liberated in 1945, the woman no longer wanted or needed her bowl. She gave it to Magda.

Magda, a survivor of Auschwitz and two slave labor camps, used the bowl as a cooking pot while in Feldafing, a DP camp in Germany. When Magda left the DP camp and came to Seattle, she brought this bowl with her.

**Photo 2:** Under the lip of the bowl are engraved the letters "BMW." A capital letter "E" is on the right of this.

BMW is the logo for Bayerische Motoren-Werke. In Allach, Jewish inmates were forced to work in the BMW factories. The factories produced and built parts for Nazi warplanes. BMW operated factories in the subcamps of Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps.

In 1944 there were as many as 5,000 concentration camp inmates working at the BMW factory at Allach, Germany. Today BMW is best known for their cars.

## Discussion Questions

1. What does this artifact tell us about the Holocaust?
2. Why do you think Magda kept this bowl?
3. To what extent do we hold corporations responsible for their actions? What corporations today are accused of human rights violations?

4. What is the responsibility of consumers?

## More Questions

5. What is an artifact?
6. Does your family have any artifacts?
7. What do your family's artifacts say about your family's history? How has this history affected you?

## Suggested Web sites

### Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center

[www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org)

Read Magda's story and the stories of other Holocaust survivors in Washington state. Local Holocaust survivor stories are located under "Center Resources."

### United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

[www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

Includes teacher resources, an online encyclopedia and online exhibits

### "Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State"

[www.pbs.org/auschwitz](http://www.pbs.org/auschwitz)

This Web site complements the PBS series through in-depth information on Auschwitz, the rise of the Nazi party, and the Holocaust. Includes timelines, interviews and study guides. DVD is available to borrow from the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center at [www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org) or [info@wsherc.org](mailto:info@wsherc.org).

### Dig Deep/Analyze Artifacts

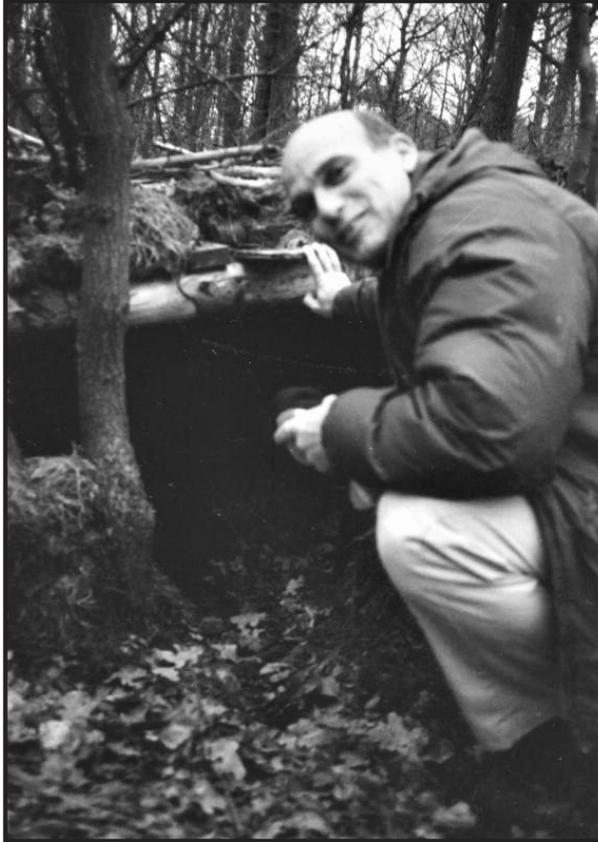
[http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/WASL/](http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/WASL/SocialStudies/default.aspx)

[SocialStudies/default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/WASL/SocialStudies/default.aspx).

Part of the Washington Social Studies Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs). Teacher guides available



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## Article Five: Peter's Story: A Dutch Holocaust Survivor

Peter M. is an active member of the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center's Speakers Bureau. Read his story online at [www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org).

In 1993, Peter M. returned to the Netherlands to try to find Klaas and Roefina Post, the couple who hid Peter and his mother for nearly two years on their farm during the Holocaust. Peter and his mother were the only survivors of his family. Below, Peter describes his return and his efforts to honor the family that saved the lives of him and his mother.

*In 1993, I went back to Amsterdam for the first time since 1949. I wanted to try to find the Posts and the little farm we stayed on. I couldn't even remember the name of the little town where the farm was, but I was determined. I went to the library, looked at a map of Holland and found the name of a town called Makkingha that sounded familiar. With only this name, we set out and found the farm, which no*

**Photo 1:** 1993, Peter M. returns to Holland and finds the farm and the cave in which he and his mom hid during the Holocaust.



**Photo 2:** "Jood," the Dutch word for "Jew." This star was worn by Peter's mom, Elli, in Amsterdam in 1942.



**Photo 3:** Peter's mom, Elli, with the star on her coat.



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*longer belonged to the Posts. We even found the cave that my mother and I hid in. I couldn't believe it was still intact. It was an unbelievably emotional experience for me to see the farm, cave, and relive those times.*

*Klaas and Roefina died nine years prior to my visit. This is one thing I regret — I never got to thank them for saving my life.*

*Since that visit, I could not put the Posts out of my mind. I finally managed to trace down the Posts' two daughters. They remembered my mother and me, and sent photos of their parents as I requested.*

*It took two years, but Klaas and Roefina are now recognized by Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Museum in Israel) as "Righteous Among the Nations."\* The Post's daughters and their family members attended a special ceremony in Rotterdam and received their parents' grandparents' award and medal. Klaas and Roefina Post are also listed as rescuers on a plaque in Israel.*

*I once asked the Post's daughter why she thinks her parents did what they did for us. She responded, saying that her dad never gave it a second thought, and that he felt like it was the right thing to do.*

*They saved our lives.*

\* In 1963, Yad Vashem began an international project. They wanted to recognize the non-Jewish people who risked their lives to save Jewish people during the Holocaust. These individuals, called the "Righteous Among the Nations," would be honored for their deeds. To date, over 21,000 men and women have been recognized as Righteous Among the Nations.

## Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Read stories of other rescuers during the Holocaust. Are there any similarities? You can find stories of rescuers at the following Web sites:

Righteous Among the Nations  
[http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous/index\\_righteous.html](http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous/index_righteous.html).

Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR)  
[www.jfr.org](http://www.jfr.org).

2. What risks/complications/barriers did rescuers face? *Think about:* What did rescuers need? What things might they need to provide to those they are helping? What might happen to them or their families if they were caught?
3. Why do you think those who rescued others did what they did?
4. According to Nechama Tec, professor of sociology at the University of Connecticut and expert on the rescue of Jews during World War II, there is "a set of interdependent characteristics and conditions that Holocaust rescuers share."\*\*

Read the characteristics below. Do you agree with her? Why or why not?

Read stories of rescuers available at the two Web sites mentioned previously. Do these rescuers seem to have the characteristics mentioned by Nechama Tec?

### Characteristics of Rescuers

**They don't blend into their communities.** This makes them less controlled by their environment and more inclined to act on their own principles.

**They are independent people and know it.** They do what they feel they must do, what is right, and the right thing is to help others.

**They have a long history of doing good deeds.**

**Because they have done the right thing for a long time, it doesn't seem extraordinary to them.** If you consider something your duty, you do it automatically.

**They choose to help without rational consideration.**

**They have universalistic perceptions that transcend race and ethnicity.** They can respond to the needy and helpless because they identify with victims and injustice.

\*\*Taken from "Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust," by Gay Block and Malka Drucker. Holmes and Meier, 1992.



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## Suggested Web sites

### **Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center**

**[www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org)**

Read Peter's story and the stories of other Washington state Holocaust survivors. Local stories are located under "Center Resources."

### **Jewish Foundation for the Righteous**

**[www.jfr.org](http://www.jfr.org)**

Stories and statistics on non-Jewish people who helped to rescue Jewish people during the Holocaust

### **Righteous Among the Nations**

**[http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous/index\\_righteous.html](http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous/index_righteous.html)**

Rescuers who have been nominated and honored for their efforts to save Jewish people during the Holocaust

### **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**[www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)**

Includes teacher resources, an online encyclopedia and online exhibits

# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

## Article Six: Frieda's Story: A Czech Holocaust Survivor

### Background

In 1941, the Germans established a ghetto in the town of Terezin, Czechoslovakia. The town's name was changed to a German name, Theresienstadt, and this name was used until the end of the war in 1945. This ghetto also served as a transit camp on the route to Auschwitz.

Theresienstadt had two faces. It had the real face of a ghetto, with starving, imprisoned people. In 1942, the death rate in the ghetto was so high that the Nazis built a crematorium next to the ghetto. According to the USHMM, the crematorium could burn up to 200 bodies a day.

It also had a mask, a false face created by the Nazis. The Nazis made parts of the camp look nice

with large clean rooms and comfortable beds, art programs and happy, well-dressed people. The Nazis did this for the media —so that when the world press questioned the Nazis about their treatment of Jews, or asked them where Jews in Germany were being sent, they would show pictures that were staged in Theresienstadt.

In June of 1944, under international pressure, the Nazis allowed the International Red Cross to tour part of Theresienstadt. However, what the Red Cross saw was a façade. Shortly before the visit from the Red Cross, the Nazis increased deportations (they sent more and more people out of Theresienstadt to slave labor camps and death camps in order to reduce the crowding) and worked to "beautify" Theresienstadt. The Nazis planted trees and flowers and painted the buildings.

After the visit from the Red Cross, the Nazis continued the deportations until October 1944.

Despite the terrible conditions in Theresienstadt, arts and culture within the camp flourished. Imprisoned in



**Photo:** Frieda's 1940/1941 school photo.



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

Theresienstadt were many artists, writers, musicians, actors and teachers. Within the ghetto, they created performances and incredible artwork that has survived the ghetto.

Although it was not officially allowed, a school was set up for the children in the ghetto. They wrote poetry, painted and tried to create a sense of a normal childhood. The USHMM estimates that 15,000 children passed through Theresienstadt. Ninety percent of them were murdered in death camps.

## Photo and Discussion

- Q. Look at the photo carefully. What do you notice about this photo? Why do you think some of the faces are cut out of the photo?
- A. *This is Frieda's 1940/1941 school photo. Frieda is standing just to the left of the instructor in the middle of the photo. She is wearing a white shirt.*

*You might notice that all of the students and the instructor are wearing Jewish stars sewn onto their clothing. This was a Jewish school. After the Nazis occupied Czechoslovakia, Jewish students were no longer allowed to attend public schools.*

*Some of the people in the photo are cut out. After Czechoslovakia was liberated from Nazi control, Frieda found that only a couple of her former classmates survived. These survivors had nothing left: no photos of themselves, their families or their friends. Frieda cut their pictures out of this photo to give to them.*

- Q. Frieda was sent to Theresienstadt without her parents. Why was her mother not sent to the camp? How did the Nazis define who was Jewish?
- A. *Hint: Go to <http://motlc.wiesenthal.com> and click on "Teacher's Resources." Then click on "36 Questions" on the menu across the top of the page.*

Q. Frieda's children and grandchildren live in the Seattle area. How do you think they might be affected by Frieda's experiences?

Q. Why do you think the Nazis thought it was necessary to make part of Theresienstadt look beautiful and comfortable for the Red Cross?

Q. What is a ghetto and why did the Nazis create them for Jewish people?

A. *Hint: Go to [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org) and click on "Holocaust Encyclopedia" in the left column.*

## Suggested Web sites

**Museum of Tolerance Multimedia Learning Center**  
<http://motlc.wiesenthal.com>

Click on "teacher resources" and then click on "36 Questions" in the top menu. Pay special attention to questions #9 and #10. How did the Nazis define who was Jewish?

**United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia**

[www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/)

Enter "Terezin" and/or "ghetto" in the "FIND ARTICLES" box near the top of the page.

**Brundibar**

<http://www.pbs.org/now/arts/brundibar.html>

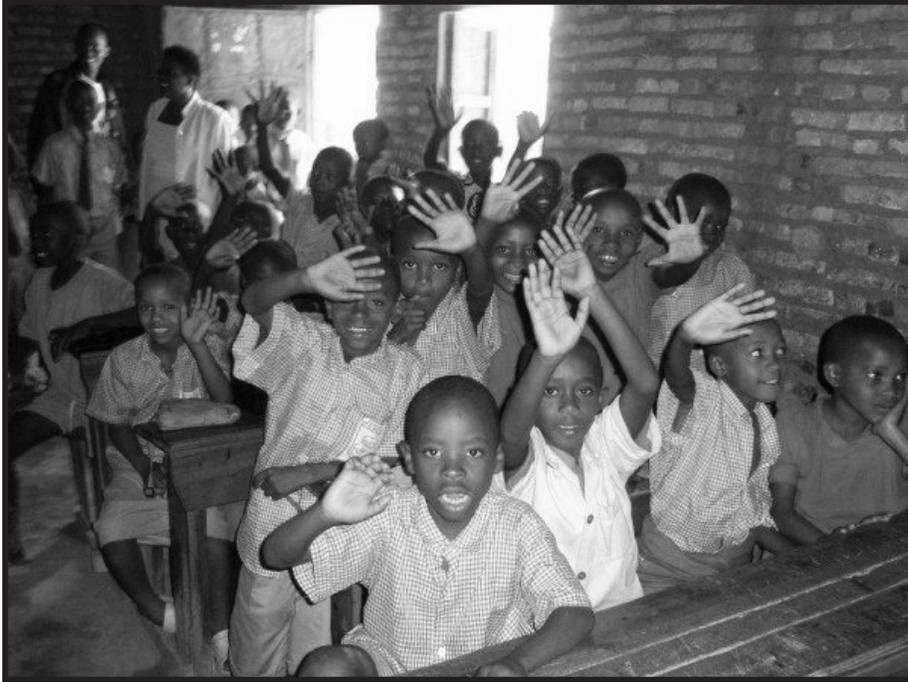
A Czech opera that was performed by children in Terezin 55 times

## Suggested Books

"...I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942-1944" Volavkova, Hana. (Ed.) Schoken Books, NY, 1993.



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide



**Photo:** Students at Gisozi Elementary School. 4 students sit at desk, 70 students to a classroom. 2,500 students attend this school, of which 600 are orphans. Some students in the photo are not wearing uniforms. Uniforms cost \$5 and many students cannot afford them. This is one of the schools Marie visited.

## Article Seven: Marie's Story – Witness to the Long-term Consequences of the Rwandan Genocide

### Brief Background

Throughout 100 days in 1994, an estimated 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed in Rwanda during the fastest genocide in modern history. At that time, approximately 84 percent of Rwandans were Hutu, 14 percent were Tutsi, and 1 percent were Twa.

On April 6, an airplane carrying the presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi, both Hutus, was shot down as it began to land in the Rwandan capital of Kigali. The assassination served to quickly mobilize Hutu extremists; within hours, Hutu militias called on every Hutu citizen to eliminate the entire Tutsi population.

The government and the military coordinated the killing process by distributing weapons, disseminating

anti-Tutsi propaganda, and publishing lists of known Tutsis to be killed. Before long, civilians became involved in the murdering process as neighbors turned on neighbors with machetes and clubs. The wave of killings spread rapidly across the countryside, as murderous Hutu militias and ordinary Hutu civilians established road blocks to prevent Tutsis from escaping.

Hutus from every profession participated in the killing, including doctors, jurists, politicians and even clergy. Churches and schools became sites of some of the most horrific massacres as men, women and children sought refuge en masse behind their walls. The international community did nothing to stop the genocide; the United Nations even withdrew the majority of its peacekeeping force from the country. By July, bodies were a common sight floating down Kigara River towards Lake Victoria, and mass graves dotted the countryside.

The genocide was ultimately terminated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a Tutsi rebel army congregated in Uganda. The Rwandan Patriotic Front advanced into Rwanda and suppressed the militias. Many of the Hutu perpetrators fled into neighboring



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Congo (formerly Zaire), Tanzania, Uganda and Burundi, where they currently perpetuate the destabilization of the region.

A Human Rights Watch analysis estimates that 77 percent of Rwanda's Tutsi population was murdered in the genocide.

The Rwandan genocide did not occur in historical isolation; violence between Hutu and Tutsis dates back to the colonial era. When Rwanda was ruled by Belgium (1923-1962), Tutsis were given favored status and more power than the Hutu majority. The Belgians also implemented an identification card system, listing each person as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa (an ethnic group making up 1 percent of the population); these cards were later used during the genocide to determine if someone would live or die.

When Rwanda gained its independence from Belgium in 1962, political power shifted to the Hutus, sparking animosity and riots. Many killings occurred by each group between the colonial era and 1994, prompting a mass exodus of Tutsis from Rwanda into neighboring countries. Violence between Hutus and Tutsis was not exclusive to Rwanda: for example, in neighboring Burundi, an estimated 200,000 Hutus were murdered by Tutsis in 1972. The legacy of violence and forced migration in Rwanda and the surrounding region created the environment conducive to the genocide which occurred in 1994. Without decades of classification, dehumanization and polarization, the preparation for extermination would not have been possible. (See the "Eight Stages of Genocide" outlined in the Teacher's Guide section for Article 1. Or, visit [www.genocidewatch.org](http://www.genocidewatch.org) to read the complete document online.)

## Discussion Questions

- How much do you think people in the United States knew about the Rwandan genocide while it was occurring? Research The Seattle Times and The New York Times online for articles written during the 100 days of genocide.
- Did any outside countries or groups intervene to try to stop the genocide? Why did some choose not to get involved?
- Why did the U.N. withdraw the majority of their peacekeeping troops during the genocide?
- Why do you think an organization that helps orphans in Rwanda (like the one Marie worked for) is needed?
- What happened to the people that committed murder during the genocide? Are/were they tried or held responsible? Research online.
- How are we today, in Washington state, affected by the Rwandan genocide?

## Suggested Web Sites

**Online Exhibition:** "Documenting Reconciliation and Reconstruction in Rwanda"

<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/kimberlee/>

In 2001, photojournalist Kimberlee Acquaro traveled to Rwanda, meeting and photographing women who survived the genocide. This photo essay documents Rwandan women's emerging rights and roles in the country's reconciliation and reconstruction.

**Amnesty International: Rwanda**

[www.amnesty.org/](http://www.amnesty.org/)

Enter "Rwanda" into the "Select a country" search box. This Web site includes updates on the state of human rights in Rwanda today, as well as challenges facing the country as it tries to rebuild.

**"PBS Frontline: Ghosts of Rwanda"**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/>

Documentary with Web site that includes interviews with government officials, NGO workers, journalists, Rwandan Patriotic Front members and more. Additional resources on the site include an analysis of the genocide and a timeline of events.



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide



Map: Bosnia and the Balkans

## Article Eight: Selená's Story: A Survivor of the Bosnian Genocide

### Short History of Bosnian Genocide

Between 1992 and 1995, the Muslim population of Bosnia, a country located in Eastern Europe, fell victim to a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Bosnia was formerly part of Yugoslavia, which had been created by the Allied powers after WWI. Yugoslavia was home to a diverse population comprising Serbian Christians, Croatian Catholics, and ethnic Albanian Muslims — all of whom had historically been bitter rivals.

During WWII, Germany took control of Yugoslavia. Between 1941 and 1945, Communist leader Josip Tito led a resistance movement against the Nazis. In April 1945, with the support of the Allied powers and the Red Army, Yugoslavia was free of German control. In

the process, Tito united much of the Balkans including Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia and several other countries. In 1945, Tito was named the Prime Minister of the Democratic Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In January of 1946, Yugoslavia was renamed the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, which consisted of six republics and two provinces. In 1963, the name was officially changed again to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Each republic and province had its own constitution and prime minister. Tito remained at the head of the entire SFRY, and was named President for Life. Tito died in May 1980.

In the late 1980s, Slobodan Milosevic took control of Yugoslavia. Milosevic was a Serbian who used long-standing tensions between groups to gain power. He played on the tensions between Serbs (Orthodox Christians), Croats (Catholics) and ethnic Albanians (Muslims).

In 1992, Bosnia, a predominantly Muslim nation, declared itself an independent state. Milosevic responded by invading Bosnia's capital city of



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Sarajevo. He then commanded Serbian snipers to shoot down civilians of all ages. Over 3,500 children were killed, according to the United Human Rights Council.

Throughout the country, Serb soldiers made lists of Croat and Muslim professionals, intellectuals and musicians. They rounded up non-Serbs, beating and executing many of them, and forcing many more to move. Cultural and religious sites were destroyed to erase any trace of the Muslim and Croat presence. Non-Serbian men and boys were brought to concentration camps where they were starved, tortured and murdered. Rape became rampant and was used as a weapon to terrorize women and girls into fleeing the country.

In 1993, six Muslim towns were established as "Safe Havens" under the protection of United Nations peacekeepers. Serbs attacked the Safe Havens and the U.N. peacekeepers.

In Srebrenica, a Safe Haven, Serbs systematically selected and murdered nearly 8,000 non-Serbian men and boys between the ages of 12 and 60.

On August 30, 1995, in response to the mass murder in Srebrenica, the United States led a massive NATO bombing campaign. Bosnian forces started receiving weapons from several Muslim countries, and this helped them push back Serbian forces. With attacks from both NATO and the heavily armed Muslim-Croat alliance, Milosevic and the Serbian population were forced to participate in peace talks.

On November 1, 1995, leaders of the warring factions (including Milosevic), traveled to the United States to participate in peace negotiations. The treaty called for Bosnia to split into two sections, the Bosnian-Serb Republic and the Muslim-Croat Federation. The treaty called for democratic elections and the prosecution of war criminals.

In the end, over 200,000 Muslim civilians had been systematically murdered and 2 million had become refugees. The U.N. Security Council set up a war crimes tribunal, the first of its kind, to prosecute perpetrators of the genocide.

## Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Create a chart with boxes. Within each box write the name of a different group involved in this conflict. Draw lines between groups that might be allied or working together. What box does Selena fit into?
2. The U.N. Security Council set up a war crimes tribunal to prosecute perpetrators of the genocide. What happened? Were people prosecuted? Are cases still being tried today?
3. Milosevic went to trial for war crimes and charges of genocide. What happened during his trial?
4. Can you find articles published recently (in the last six months) about Bosnia or Serbia? What is happening in these countries today? How do you think the people there might still be affected by the genocide?

## Suggested Web Sites

### "Frontline" Online

[www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/karadzic/atrocities/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/karadzic/atrocities/)

Focuses on the story of one indicted Serbian war criminal. Includes maps, information on concentration camps, information on bringing war criminals to trial, and world responses

### Prevent Genocide International

<http://preventgenocide.org/edu/pastgenocides/formeryugoslavia/resources/>

### United Human Rights Council

[http://www.unitedhumanrights.org/Genocide/bosnia\\_genocide.htm](http://www.unitedhumanrights.org/Genocide/bosnia_genocide.htm)



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## **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Committee on Conscience**

<http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/analysis/>

(Click on "Balkans" on the right menu.) Includes photos, speeches, video clips of Milosevic's trial, Srebrenica today and the lessons which might be learned from this genocide

## **Suggested DVD**

### **"No Man's Land" (2001)**

Oscar®-winning film directed by Danis Tanovic. Bosnia and Herzegovina during 1993 at the time of the heaviest fighting between the two warring sides. After various skirmishes, two wounded soldiers, one Bosnian and one Serb, confront each other in a trench in the no man's land between their lines.



# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide



**Map:** Sudan, with Darfur region in heavier box.

## Article Nine: Agnes' Story: From Sudan to Seattle

### Background

Since its independence from the British in 1956, Sudan has been plagued by violence.

Historically, northern Sudan was predominantly Arab and Muslim and southern Sudan was a mixture of Christianity and Animism.

Prior to Sudan gaining independence, the southern Sudanese feared the newly independent Sudan would be ruled by the North. The First Sudanese Civil War, between northern and southern Sudan, began in 1955 and ended in 1972.

After only a decade of peace, the civil war restarted. President Gaafar Nimeiri carried out several actions that went against the peace agreement established in 1972. He also decided to implement Sharia Law (Islamic religious law). The non-Muslim population in Sudan, the majority of whom lived in southern Sudan, both feared and were angered by the president's decision.

In opposition to the government, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) formed in the south. The Second Sudanese Civil War was fought between 1983 and 2005. The conflict ended when southern Sudan was granted autonomy.

In the Darfur region of western Sudan, another conflict rages. In 2003, rebel groups in the Darfur region created an insurgency against the Sudanese government, demanding a greater share of power and a fairer distribution of wealth. Within Darfur, a split developed between nomadic herders and settled farmers. This division was in part due to massive, ongoing droughts creating competition over diminishing resources.

To counter this insurgency in Darfur, which was gaining more and more momentum among prospering peasant tribes in the region, the Sudanese government trained and armed militias called Janjaweed who were made up of poorer nomads. The rebel groups, including the SPLA, have been accused of serious war crimes since their initial insurgency. The Janjaweed and the Sudanese military have also been accused of gross human rights violations against not only the rebels, but civilians within Darfur. Executions, kidnappings and massive rape have been reported throughout the region. The ongoing violence has created a climate where humanitarian aid workers and human rights organizations have had trouble staying in Darfur to keep a close eye on the conflict and help the millions of internally displaced persons.

Thousands of villages have been destroyed and more than 230,000 refugees have fled to neighboring Chad. Most refugees remain displaced within Darfur, according to the USHMM's Committee on Conscience. Janjaweed militias have also been penetrating the borders of Chad, creating dangerous conditions for civilians and Darfuri refugees displaced within the country.

# Stories Among Us: Personal Accounts of Genocide

A joint United Nations/African Union peacekeeping mission was deployed this year to help in negotiations and to protect civilians. Originally, the United Nations and Sudanese President Omar al’Bashir agreed to allow 26,000 peacekeepers into the region. However, Bashir has continually delayed opening Sudan’s borders to more than the 9,000 troops already there, according to the United Nations. Bashir has neglected to allow in western U.N. peacekeepers, only letting in African Union troops and U.N. troops from countries such as Thailand. Bashir has continually denied involvement with the Janjaweed, and says his government has committed no acts of genocide.

Meanwhile, the death toll in Darfur continues to rise with numbers estimated by the United Nations and the Save Darfur Coalition to be between 200,000 and 400,000.

## Discussion and Research Questions

1. How have Agnes’ experiences in Sudan shaped our community in Washington state?
2. Why do you think it is important for Agnes to get involved with Sudanese relief organizations? Why do you think she wanted to share her story in the newspaper?
3. What is the current situation in Darfur? (*Hint: Visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Committee on Conscience at [www.ushmm.org/conscience/](http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/) for up-to-date information on Darfur and other areas of the world considered at risk for genocide*)
4. What possible actions could you, as a student in Washington state, do to help the situation and/or the people in Darfur?

## Photo Essay Web sites

The following essays use photographs and captions to give us a glimpse into the lives of Darfur civilians displaced by the violence, and who are now forced to live in refugee camps.

### UNICEF

[www.unicef.org/photoessays/25400.html](http://www.unicef.org/photoessays/25400.html)  
 “Daily Life and Education in Darfur’s Camps”

[www.unicef.org/photoessays/27311.html](http://www.unicef.org/photoessays/27311.html)  
 “Health and Nutrition in Darfur’s Camps”

[www.unicef.org/photoessays/27333.html](http://www.unicef.org/photoessays/27333.html)  
 “Water and Sanitation in Darfur’s Camps”

### United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

[www.ushmm.org/conscience/alert/darfur/staring\\_genocide\\_in\\_the\\_face/](http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/alert/darfur/staring_genocide_in_the_face/)

“Staring Genocide in the Face” – Photo essay and commentary by Jerry Fowler

## Discussion Questions for Photo Essays

1. How do these photos tell the stories of the Darfurian people?
2. What is life like for Darfurian children?
3. What do you think keeps the Darfurian people’s spirits up in the refugee camps?
4. What problems do the refugee camps face?
5. In what ways do the Darfurian people show courage and strength?
6. Is there anything about these photos, or one photo in particular, that surprises you?



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## Suggested Web sites

### **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM)**

#### **Committee on Conscience**

[www.ushmm.org/conscience](http://www.ushmm.org/conscience)

Includes history, maps, news, photos and ideas for how to take action

### **Save Darfur Coalition**

[www.savedarfur.org](http://www.savedarfur.org)

The Save Darfur Coalition works to raise awareness and create action for the situation in Darfur. Web site links include maps, history, interviews, taking action and more

### **"Update on Peace, Protection and Punishment in Darfur."**

<http://blogs.ushmm.org/index.php/coc2/540/>

USHMM co-chair John Prendergast provides an update on the situation in Darfur. Download the podcast or read the transcript.

### **Facing History and Ourselves**

[www.facing.org](http://www.facing.org)

Lesson plans, discussion questions and suggested readings

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