



# REMEMBERING SREBRENICA

## Ten stages of genocide workshop

Every time genocide happens, the world says 'never again', yet history shows that it happens again and again. Understanding why it happens, and how it can be prevented, is crucial in children's education.

Genocide may seem so far removed from the day-to-day experiences of pupils and that whilst of academic interest, it could easily be seen as irrelevant to their immediate lives. Yet we know that the conditions for genocide are built on a climate and culture where 'lower levels' of prejudice, discrimination, exclusion and intolerance go unchallenged. Such attitudes and behaviours can be part of many pupils' own experiences.

The purpose of this workshop is to help pupils understand the behaviours and influences around them that can either build or damage a cohesive community. If we can help pupils to recognise these behaviours and if we can equip them with the language, strategies, skills and confidence they require to challenge such behaviours, we help them take part in removing the essential foundations for intolerance to thrive. After all, before the genocide in Srebrenica, Bosnia had been a diverse, integrated society with different communities living alongside one another for hundreds of years.

Prejudice, discrimination, exclusion and intolerance **do not inevitably lead to genocide** nor is it likely that this will occur; however these behaviours diminish and degrade members of our community and may prevent them from taking and enjoying a full role in society. It is also sobering to reflect that every systematic genocide has been built on a failure to challenge these behaviours; failures which can become problematic in specific social conditions.

The story of Srebrenica is not ancient history, it is a recent event in a European country and a reminder that genocide isn't 'something that happens somewhere else': left unchallenged intolerance and prejudice can be manipulated and grow into a crime against humanity.

### Aims

- To develop understanding of genocide and events that can precede genocide.
- To raise awareness of the 1995 Srebrenica genocide and its relevance to the UK today.

### Outcomes

- Young people will understand the term 'genocide'.
- Young people will understand the behaviours that can precede genocide.
- Young people will be aware of the genocide which took place in Srebrenica and the discrimination and prejudice that preceded it.
- Young people are more likely to take positive action to create a more cohesive society and challenge hatred and intolerance.

### Equipment

- The stages of genocide cut out, one set for each group
- Computer to play video via YouTube and PowerPoint presentation

## Session 1 – Ten Stages of Genocide

<p>Starter (5 mins)</p>	<p>Explain that this workshop will be about understanding genocide and what can happen in the lead up to genocide. The first step is agreeing what the term ‘genocide’ means – ask students to discuss in their groups what they understand genocide to mean. (slide 2)</p> <p>Share the officially recognised definition of genocide:</p> <p><i>Genocide – defined in international law as an act ‘committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.</i></p> <p><i>Genocide is generally carried out through the attempted killing of all members of a group, but can also be classified as deliberately ‘placing a group in conditions calculated to prevent their survival’.</i> (slide 3)</p>
<p>Main Input (10 mins)</p>	<p>In this workshop we are going to be looking at the ten stages of genocide with a focus on the Srebrenica genocide which occurred 24 years ago in Bosnia. Provide an introduction to the Srebrenica Genocide:</p> <p><i>Bosnia-Herzegovina is a small country in Europe, less than 3 hours away from Britain.</i> (slide 4)</p> <p><i>In the 1980s, the decline of communism and a rise in nationalism led to the break-up of what had been known as Yugoslavia. The six republics of the former Yugoslavia disintegrated into civil war in 1991. (slide 5)</i></p> <p><i>Historically, Bosnia-Herzegovina had been a diverse and multi-ethnic society. This campaign of ethnic cleansing had the purpose of creating an ethnically segregated Bosnia. This resulted in a war which would turn neighbour against neighbour and where over 100,000 people were killed and thousands more traumatised. (slide 6)</i></p> <p><i>Fighting broke out within Bosnia as Serb nationalist forces waged a co-ordinated campaign of ‘ethnic cleansing’ intended to create a ‘Greater Serbian’ territory. Through this process Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats were driven out of many parts of the country. (slide 7)</i></p> <p><i>In July 1995, 8,372 Bosnian Muslim men and boys who had sought refuge in the UN safe area of Srebrenica were murdered by Bosnian Serb forces. This has been recognised as genocide. Srebrenica Memorial Day is on the 11<sup>th</sup> July each year and 2019 marks the 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the genocide. (slide 8)</i></p> <p>Share the BBC news video – Srebrenica in 2 minutes - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yf5p3LbCAE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yf5p3LbCAE</a></p> <p><i>(It is always recommended that you watch this video before sharing it with young people to ensure it is appropriate for the group you are working with)</i></p>

<p>Activity (15 mins)</p>	<p>Explain to students that the timeline of every genocide has been different, but there is a sequence that is common to most. Noticing that this timeline is beginning or that individuals are promoting these behaviours is really important if we are to challenge it and stop it progressing. <b>It is vitally important to reinforce that the early stages of this timeline do not mean that the next stages will inevitably happen.</b> (slide 10)</p> <p>In groups, students to sort the ten stages of genocide and match them to the corresponding Bosnian examples. (slide 11)</p> <p>Their task is to put them into a sequence or a timeline they believe leads eventually to genocide (different groups' timelines are likely to be slightly different and reassure pupils that there is no 'right answer'. The original sequence is provided in this pack for the facilitator)</p> <p><i>As the young people are carrying out their task, discuss their reasoning with them and draw out examples of the stages that they are already aware of (e.g. symbolisation – Jewish star in lead up to Holocaust)</i></p> <p><i>Use appendix on ten stages of genocide to facilitate discussion of each stage.</i></p>
<p>Feedback (15 mins)</p>	<p>Share the correct timeline – go through the correct order, giving examples of how the ten stages of genocide were observed in Bosnia (See appendix) Allow students to revise their order and discuss any discrepancies – emphasise that stages can happen simultaneously or reoccur at a later time. (slide 12)</p> <p>The most important thing to remember is that Srebrenica could have been prevented. The key indicators of genocide – concentration camps, torture and mass killings were happening as early as 1992 in Bosnia. As students to look back at the ten stages. In groups, discuss what could be done at each stage to prevent the situation from escalating – consider both the role of the individual and the role of political actors. <i>See appendix 'Living the Lessons guidance' for discussion points.</i> (slide 13)</p> <p>When we talk about Srebrenica it is also important to consider what lessons can be learnt from the genocide – using the 10 stages of genocide we can be more aware of the indicators and identify where individuals or the international community could have made different choices. (Slide 14)</p> <p>Play video footage of survivor testimony available on Remembering Srebrenica youtube channel. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WEhXjwFNhY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WEhXjwFNhY</a> (slide 15)</p>
<p>Plenary (10 mins)</p>	<p>In groups, ask young people what they could do to create a more united community – record answers on post-it notes and share with group.</p> <p>These could include community events, commemorations, sports events, fun days etc. Talk to students about their communities (school or local) and why it is important to create a more united community given what they have learnt today. (slide 16)</p> <p>Extension – take students ideas further to hold an event to raise awareness of Srebrenica genocide, and bring different members of the community together.</p>

## STAGES OF GENOCIDES STATEMENTS

**CLASSIFICATION:** People are seen as belonging to 'different groups': People talk about an 'us and them' dividing people their ethnicity, race, religion, or nationality. (This happens in many communities and need not necessarily lead to genocide)

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**SYMBOLISATION:** Names or symbols for different groups are created: These may be names associated with their skin colour, faith, community or style of dress. (Doing this need not necessarily result in genocide unless they lead to dehumanization.)

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**DISCRIMINATION:** Groups are discriminated against: A dominant group uses local customs, laws, and political power to deny the rights of other groups.

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**DEHUMANISATION:** One group 'dehumanises' or denies the humanity of the other group: The dominant group is taught to see the target group as less than human, not belonging to their community or society. The majority group are constantly told 'We are better off without them.' The target group may be labelled 'animals', 'vermin', 'insects' or 'diseases'. 'Dehumanisation' begins to overcome the normal human revulsion against murder.

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**ORGANISATION:** People in the dominant group start to organise themselves: Genocide is always organized, usually by the state, often using local groups so that governmental leaders can deny they were responsible.

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**POLARISATION:** The distance between groups is expanded: Extremists drive the groups further apart. Hate groups use the media to broadcast propaganda that strengthens divisions between groups of people.

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**PREPARATION:** Leaders of the dominant group starts to prepare for genocide: They often use different words to hide their intentions, for example the goals as 'ethnic cleansing', 'purification' or even 'counter terrorism'

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**PERSECUTION:** Members of the target group are persecuted: Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic or religious identity. Death lists are drawn up.

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**EXTERMINATION:** This quickly becomes the mass killing legally termed "genocide." It is "extermination" to the killers because they no longer believe their victims to be fully human.

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**DENIAL:** The people who took part in the genocide deny that they committed any crimes, and often blame what happened on the victims. This happens throughout and always follows genocide. It is among the surest indicators of further genocidal massacres.

Reference: The Ten Stages of Genocide, by Professor Gregory H. Stanton, Genocide Watch,  
<http://genocidewatch.net/genocide-2/8-stages-of-genocide/>.

## Alternative Version of 10 stages of Genocide

People say, 'I heard a great joke about 'one of them'' – lots of people laugh.

People say, 'They are not like us are they?' – lots of people agree – they think of each other in terms of us and them.

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People create 'names' or 'labels' for groups of people who are different - usually these names are insulting.

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People say, 'We don't allow 'their sort' to work in our organisation.'  
People say, 'I am not selling my house to 'one of them'. They wouldn't fit in round here and it wouldn't be fair on my neighbours!'

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People say, 'They are like animals – they are not like normal people!'

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People say, 'They need to be taught a lesson – they are not welcome round here!' - Local gangs target people from minority groups or damage their property. Local authorities do little or nothing to help. Leaders say, 'We have all have a right and responsibility to protect our communities and county from the damage they are causing! – We need to organise ourselves!' -

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Local and national organisations encourage hatred between groups. Governments do nothing to stop them. People say, 'Of course they are to blame! It says so in my newspaper!'

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People in authority say, 'We know where they live, we know where they work, we know where their children go to school. We can find them when we want to or we can help others find them.'

People use words like 'ethnic cleansing' or 'purification' to justify what they are doing.

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Leaders say 'We have set up 'special places' where minority groups must live. They will be physically separated from the rest of us.' These places are concentration camps where people are mistreated and many are killed.

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The majority begin to systematically kill the entire minority group – this is genocide.

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People say 'They brought it on themselves – they were asking for it!'

People say, 'There were some problems at the time and a few people could have got hurt but it was nothing like as bad as 'they' say it was.

## **STAGES OF GENOCIDE BOSNIAN EXAMPLES**

During Tito's reign of Yugoslavia, he had some success in creating an overarching 'Yugoslav' identity based on 'Brotherhood and Unity'. However, throughout this period, nationalism in federal states of Croatia and Serbia became increasingly dependent on unfairly criticizing 'the other', with Serbian media characterised Bosnian Muslims as 'Islamic fundamentalists'.

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On 31<sup>st</sup> May 1992, the Bosnian Serb authorities in Prijedor, a town in north western Bosnia and Herzegovina, issued a decree for all non-Serbs to mark their houses with white flags or sheets and to wear a white armband if they were to leave their houses.

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The former Yugoslavia, being a Communist regime, sought to suppress religion. However, Bosnian Muslims were worst affected by this form of discrimination as unlike Croats (Catholics) or Serbs (Orthodox) they were not permitted to register on the census as an ethnic group until 1971.

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Biljana Plašić, one of the first acting presidents of the self declared Serb Republic of Bosnia in Herzegovina, stated in 1994: "It was genetically deformed material that embraced Islam. And now of course with each successive generation it simply becomes concentrated. It gets worse and worse. It simply expresses itself and dictates their style of thinking, which is rooted in their genes. And through the centuries the genes degraded further."

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Serbian paramilitary units such as the Scorpions and "Arkan's Tigers" were founded as early as 1990. These militias played a key role in the fighting throughout the war. Direct video evidence presented to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia showed members of the Scorpions unit executing six young Bosnian Muslim men, whilst filming it.

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Anti-Islamic Serbian propaganda began in the early 1980s. Propaganda was vital to the project of Greater Serbian nationalism and was extremely effective to persuade ordinary Bosnian Serbs they needed to defend themselves against slaughter and rape from their Muslim neighbours. Dissenting journalists were removed from their posts – over 1,500 journalists were sacked in a single week in 1993.

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Anti-Muslim propaganda was instrumental in persuading Bosnian Serbs to turn against their Bosniak neighbours. The clearest and most chilling expression of this propaganda was a letter written by General Mladić on the day that Srebrenica fell. 'Crimes committed against the innocent (Serb) civilian population provoked the action by the Army of Republika Srpska which is aimed at neutralising Muslim terrorists.'

Despite petrol shortages, Bosnian Serb troops acquired many trucks and buses to deport women and children from Srebrenica.

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Images from Omarska concentration camp in Prijedor shocked the international community as early as 1992, years before Srebrenica. Survivors of Omarska concentration camp in Prijedor and others like it tell of unimaginable conditions – starvation, beatings, interrogations, mass murder and sexual violence.

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In July 1995, the UN safe haven Srebrenica fell to Bosnian Serb nationalist forces. Bosnian Muslims sought refuge at the UN base in Potocari and 15,000 men and boys who believed that they would not be protected by the UN chose to try to walk through the hills to reach a safe zone. At the UN base, Men and older boys were separated from the women and were driven to fields and large building nearby and killed. More than half of the men who had left through the hills were captured and killed. 8372 Bosnian Muslim men and boys from Srebrenica were killed.

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More than 20 years after the terrible events of Srebrenica, denial persists, even in the face of overwhelming forensic evidence and court judgements to the contrary. Denial has moved through many stages, from the hiding of bodies, to alleging that Bosnian Muslim forces killed each other, 'interpretive denial' and the denial of 'moral equivalence' – that all sides committed equal atrocities. The state's continued denial of genocide and ethnic cleansing will impact on future generations, who are not taught internationally recognised version of events at school.

## Living the Lessons Guidance

Stage	What can political actors do?	What can you do?
Classification	<p>At this early stage, the key preventative measure is to <b>foster universal institutions</b> that surpass racial and ethnic differences and encourage dialogue between groups.</p> <p>Promoting <b>common identities</b> through initiatives such as a common tongue (as in Tanzania) can also help to emphasise the similarities between people.</p>	<p>By reflecting on the <b>complexity</b> of our own identities, and using this self understanding to challenge the reduction of any people to one single facet of their identity (such as race or religion).</p> <p>By reflecting on our own complexity, we can find <b>common ground</b> with people from different backgrounds.</p>
Symbolisation	<p>Symbols of hatred (such as swastikas) and hate speech should be forbidden entirely by national governments, with the backing of the international community.</p> <p>For such initiatives to have real impact, they must be culturally enforced by ordinary people.</p>	<p>Becoming active citizens by <b>challenging</b> stereotyping, scapegoating and derogatory/ hate speech in our personal spheres, and offering <b>alternative positive narratives</b> and viewpoints around the targeted group.</p>
Discrimination	<p>Discrimination on the premise of race, religion, nationality, gender or ethnicity should be against the law. States should work to ensure that access to justice is both legally and practically possible.</p>	<p>By informing and engaging ourselves with issues of discrimination in our own environments and taking positive action to <b>challenge discrimination</b> and <b>promote equal access to opportunities</b> for all.</p> <p>Understanding broader systems of discrimination and privilege, our personal place within those structures and <b>positive collaboration</b> with special interest groups.</p>
Dehumanisation	<p>The use of dehumanising language, particularly by figures of influence, should be carefully monitored, bearing in mind the balance to be struck with freedom of speech.</p> <p>Where this descends into hate speech, hate propaganda and the incitement of violence or genocide, the individuals or organisations behind this should be punished according to the law.</p>	<p>We can <b>challenge dehumanising language</b>, including by sharing stories of the dehumanised group that emphasise our common humanity.</p> <p>We can report hate speech, hate propaganda and the incitement of violence to the relevant authorities.</p>

Stage	What can political actors do?	What can you do?
Organisation	<p>Membership in militias and terrorist organisations should be prohibited, and their leaders should be prohibited from foreign travel.</p> <p>The UN should levy arms embargoes on states involved in genocidal murders, and create new commissions to probe violations.</p>	<p>Where we become aware of people in our community being drawn to hate propaganda or quasi-military groups, we should act early to understand their motivations for doing so, and work to dissuade them from doing so.</p> <p>Where membership of such organisations is prohibited, or there are schemes to assist with the prevention of extremism, this should be done in co-operation with the authorities.</p>
Polarisation	<p>To prevent extremism from taking root, the funding for these organisations should be targeted, via asset freezing of individuals, or international sanctions against countries where coups d'état have led to extremists being in power.</p>	<p>We can challenge dividing propaganda and extremist viewpoints, by offering <b>counter narratives</b> and by offering a vision of a <b>shared future</b>.</p> <p>We can also <b>take action</b> to protect moderates and human rights defenders who are at risk from extremists, by drawing attention to the work of and dangers faced by e.g. human rights lawyers and teachers.</p>
Preparation	<p>National and international actors should pay attention to euphemisms such as “ethnic cleansing”, and be prepared to prosecute actors employing such euphemisms for of incitement and conspiracy to perpetrate genocide.</p>	<p>We can respond to propaganda intended to incite fear with a <b>critical mind</b>, by seeking to verify propaganda via a range of sources of information, as well as against our own experience and relationships with the group who is the target of the propaganda.</p> <p>Where there are <b>strong relationships</b> between members of the different groups, individuals and groups should <b>work together</b> to challenge propaganda and promote peaceful interaction.</p>
Persecution	<p>At this stage, a ‘genocide emergency’ should be acknowledged. If the great powers, regional coalitions or the UN security council is mobilised, armed international intervention should be ready to act in the victim group’s defence.</p>	<p>We must <b>speak up</b> when we see persecution, and do everything within our power to bring persecution to the attention of structures of power, including via the media.</p>

Stage	What can political actors do?	What can you do?
	Humanitarian aid should be organised by the UN and private support groups for the foreseeable surge of refugees.	
Extermination	<p>At this point, only prompt and overwhelming armed intervention can effectively stop genocide. Refugee escape corridors and safe areas must be established with armed foreign protection. Forces such as the UN Standing High Readiness Brigade and the EU Rapid Response Force should have authorization to act by the UN Security Council if the genocide is not extensive.</p> <p>For the purpose of larger interventions, a multifaceted force authorized by the UN should intercede. If the UN is unable to act, then regional alliances must take action. If troops are not provided for intervention, then they should give aid in the way of aircraft, equipment and financial means.</p>	<p>By the time that extermination has started, there is very little that we can do as individuals, which is precisely why it is so important to intervene at much earlier stages, where there are many choices open to us.</p> <p>However, we can call on our governments to assert pressure on the UN to intervene in situations that appear to have genocidal aspects, and hold the international community to account for any failure to act.</p>
Denial	<p>The international community should exert pressure, including via sanctions, on nation states that refuse to co-operate in international criminal investigations. International courts should be robust in their findings of genocide, and particularly in inferring genocidal intent in respect of the architects of hatred.</p> <p>Nation states should, as a minimum, punish genocide denial that equivocates to hate speech or the incitement of hatred.</p>	<p>We should resist genocide denial by consistently using the correct terminology to refer to Srebrenica. Using the term 'genocide' sends a powerful message to genocide deniers that the world recognises Srebrenica as a genocide.</p> <p>We can also ensure that future generations understand Srebrenica as a genocide through educating young people about Srebrenica.</p>