



REMEMBERING SREBRENICA

Srebrenica Memorial Day Assembly 2019

1. Ask students to think about 'What does a bridge mean to you?' Explain to students how building bridges between communities plays a crucial role in creating safer and more cohesive societies for all. Share the story of Jakob Finci, who acted as a 'human bridge' during the Bosnian War, bringing communities together. Jakob Finci print out attached – depending on size of assembly, can be printed and shared with students or read out.
2. Today (or July 11th) marks Srebrenica Memorial Day, when we commemorate the Srebrenica genocide which took place in Bosnia in 1995. It was the culmination of a campaign of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina that began in 1992. Today we remember the over 8000 mainly Muslim men and boys who were killed because of their identity 24 years ago.
3. Genocide is an act 'committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group'. But genocide does not begin with mass killing. It begins when people start to think of themselves in terms of us and them; when prejudice, discrimination and dehumanisation occur against a group of people.
4. The conflict in Bosnia began in 1992 with a campaign of ethnic cleansing which sought to remove individuals of a different ethnicity from large parts of the country. By July 1995, over 35,000 Bosnian Muslim refugees were living in the town of Srebrenica having sought refuge there from concentration camps, the destruction of their homes and mass killings. Srebrenica was supposed to be a 'safe area' for those who sought refuge there.
5. But in July 1995, Bosnian Serb forces mounted an attack on Srebrenica. Over 10,000 men, fearing for their lives, tried to escape through the woods on a treacherous 63 mile journey. This journey is now referred to as the death march. Only 3,000 survived. The rest along with those men who had remained in Srebrenica were killed in a brutal campaign which saw over 8000 men and boys murdered. Over 23,000 women and children were forcibly removed from the region.
6. Video Testimony from Siege of Sarajevo survivor, Rešad Trbonja.
7. We will now hold a minutes silence to remember the over 8000 victims of the Srebrenica genocide. *1 minute silence, light a candle to remember those who died.*
8. We learn about Srebrenica to remember the horrors of the past in order that we will not repeat them. However, we can, and should, draw inspiration from the acts of bravery, heroism and a determination to resist hatred. So today, as we remember the over 8000 victims of the Srebrenica genocide and their family members who survived, I would like you to make a pledge. To be courageous in your own lives, to stand up to hatred where you see it – to speak out against injustice and choose hope.

Living the Lessons Pledge - www.srebrenica.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Pledge-to-Remember.pdf

As a school, make the Living the Lessons pledge – 11 actions to mark the 11th of July. This can be done by lighting 11 candles or having 11 students/members of staff each reading a pledge.