

GRADE 11 EDUCATOR GUIDE

The Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre is pleased to offer a series of eight (8) units covering the following Grade 11 CAPS topic:

Ideas of Race in the late 19th and 20th Centuries – *What were the consequences when pseudo-scientific ideas of race became integral to government policies and legislation in the 19th and 20th Centuries?*

*Case studies: **Australia** and the indigenous Australians; **Nazi Germany** and the Holocaust*

Unit 3

Eugenics

In this unit learners will learn the following:

- The Pseudoscience of Eugenics

In this Unit, learners receive an explanation of the theories of Eugenics, and chart the growth in popularity these theories had in the early 20th Century. By the end of the Unit, all learners should be able to understand:

- *What* Eugenics is and *where* its roots are
- *How* Agrarian (farming) Science formed the basis for Eugenics
- *The differences* between *positive* Eugenics and *negative* Eugenics
- *The worldwide popularity* of the Eugenics Movement

You may choose to award marks for the Q&A below – if so suggested mark allocations are provided, of course you are free to allocate marks as suits your learning outcomes. Alternatively you may wish to use the questions as revision, self-study or extension work.

Questions and Answers for Unit 3:

1. From which provable science did eugenicist pseudoscientists borrow heavily? [1]

Agrarian/ Farming Science.

2. Briefly describe how eugenicists planned to rid society of social ills [2]

Eugenicists planned to **'breed'** the best with the best/ wanted to prevent 'unfit' from having children/wanted only **'good stock'** to be born/ believed that there would be no social problems – as eugenicists believe that such problems were transmitted through **'blood'**.

Alternative wordings are acceptable but full marks should be awarded if learners use the 'farming' terminology preferred by eugenicists.

3. Compare and contrast Social Darwinist principles with Eugenicist principles [5]

Social Darwinists used Darwinist or evolutionary terminology, like 'survival of the fittest'. Eugenicists drew on Agrarian Science in order to formulate their arguments so in their terminology words like 'breeding' and 'genetic stock' were used.

Although the conclusions were very similar, a range of possible responses can be given as long as the former distinction has been clearly made.

Possible responses are:

Both Social Darwinists and Eugenicists believed that the 'unfit' should be eliminated from society for progress to be possible.

Social Darwinists argued that they were noting a *natural process in society*.

Eugenicists stressed the artificiality of their science (hence they emphasised positive Eugenics since they did not think this would happen naturally).

Both movements were international and while racist thinking informed both they crossed borders and became popular everywhere – with 'fitness' often measured in accordance with social class or socioeconomic status rather than blood or skin colour.

Both movements have roots in provable science but their application to human beings and human society are pseudoscientific and have been used to justify discriminatory policies throughout the 19th and early 20th Centuries.

Both movements were responding to massive change in society and social ills that came as a result of the Industrial Revolution.

Marks may be awarded to any of these answers to a maximum of [5] or for any other reasonable and well-argued answer.

4. Do you believe any Eugenicist principles filtered through to the 21st Century? Give reasons for your answer. [3]

Learners have to say Yes or No [1] and provide two [2] reasons for their answer.

Possible answers in the affirmative can include but are not limited to:

Many positive Eugenicist principles inform family planning today.

Gene editing of unborn children in as example of Eugenicist principles as is pre-screening for genetic conditions in an unborn child.

Forced sterilisations continued into the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, as evidenced by the recent inquiry into the sterilisation of women with HIV in South Africa.

Any other reasonable response.

Possible answers in dissent can include but are not limited to:

Negative Eugenics has been made illegal and consent must be obtained for all procedures.

The Scientific community has discredited Eugenics.

Social problems were not solved through the existence and implementation of such policies.

Any other reasonable response.

5. Research one of the countries listed in Image 10 (excluding Australia and Germany) and give:

a) An example of a positive eugenics programme that existed in the early 20th Century (please provide a reference for your information). [2]

b) An example of a negative eugenics programme that existed in the early 20th Century (please provide a reference for your information). [2]

Learners have to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of positive and negative Eugenics and to link to a reliable source of information

[15]

Enrichment

Learners can be encouraged to debate whether or not certain commonly held beliefs and scientific movements today could be essentially eugenicist in nature (for example performing procedures on pregnant women to discover if the unborn child has a disability)

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre: <http://ctholocaust.co.za/>

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwVBUs5VqvsumuDdzYIAaQ>

Eugenics Archives: <https://eugenicsarchive.ca/>

The Eugenics Movement: Good Intentions Lead to Horrific Consequences:
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/science/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/eugenics-movement-good-intentions-lead-horrific-consequences>

White Supremacy, Eugenics and the History of Selective Breeding:
<https://youtu.be/7n180eG92gc>

Eugenics is trending. That's a problem:
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/02/17/eugenics-is-trending-thats-problem/>