

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 4

Case Study: Australia

In this unit learners will learn the following:

- Australia's racial and eugenicist policies in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries

In this Unit, learners receive an explanation of Australian Eugenicist policies and their plans to 'breed blackness out'. By the end of the Unit, all learners should be able to understand:

- *How the Australian government stole Aboriginal children from their families to have them grow up to 'breed' with European settlers to make and keep Australia 'white'.*
- *The Social Darwinist and Eugenicist roots of this policy*

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 4:

1. What policies did the Australian government create to ‘Keep Australia White’? [2]

They had ‘whites only’ immigration policy. [1]

They had a ‘biological absorption’ policy to ‘breed blackness out’. [1]

He devised the natural classification system.

2. Summarise in your own words, how Social Darwinist principles were invoked in Australia in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. [2]

The colonial government argued that the poverty and death faced by Aboriginal communities were the result of Social Darwinism (i.e. indigenous Australians were **inferior** [1] and therefore ‘dying off’ as Spenser would have said and the implication was that they were ‘**unfit.**’ [1]

This belief was used to motivate cruel policies like the ‘biological absorption’ ones, as it implied that Aboriginals were not as ‘human’ as the European settlers and did not experience the same emotions. [1]

Any other reasonable answer can be given as long as the learner demonstrates an understanding of the concept of Social Darwinism and the particularities of the Australian context in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

3. Summarise in your own words, how Eugenic principles were invoked in Australia in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. [2]

The ‘breeding blackness out’ policy was rooted entirely in Eugenics as it implied that ‘**breeding**’ ‘**purier**’ **blood** with other ‘**pure blood**’ [1] would lead to people who are better equipped at dealing with the challenges of society

This is different from Social Darwinism as it was no longer about supposed ‘natural’ trends being observed but rather about the policies that were put into place in order to supposedly ‘purify’ the nation as per pseudoscientific thought. [1]

4. Remember that all histories are unique. With that in mind, identify and critically reflect on two parallels that you can find between the policies as described in this Unit and the policies of the South African Apartheid government. [4]

A range of possible responses can be given, as long as an understanding of both histories is adequately shown for example:

The South African Apartheid government also distinguished between 'coloured' citizens and 'black' citizens, giving the former additional rights (which resulted in the formation of the Tricameral parliament). This can be paralleled by Australia's policy of 'half castes' being treated as better than pure Aboriginal Australians. [2]

In both cases colonial settlers were in power from latest 19th Century and displaced the indigenous population. These displacements were then used as justification for Social Darwinist thinking, which informed racist policies in both countries; however, South Africa implemented Apartheid whereas the Australian government's racist policies were rooted in 19th and early 20th Century pseudoscience and were dismantled in the early 1970s.[2]

Any other reasonable response can be given as long as it shows an understanding of the similarities and differences in the two cases.

[10]

Enrichment

Content should focus on the consequences of these policies. The 2002 film Rabbit Proof Fence is highly recommended for educators and learners alike.

Caught up in a scientific racism designed to breed out the black:

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/caught-up-in-a-scientific-racism-designed-to-breed-out-the-black-20080214-gds108.html>

Killing Without Murder: Aboriginal Assimilation Policy as Genocide:

<https://preserve.lehigh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=cas-lehighreview-vol-13>

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

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwVBUs5VqvsumuwDdzYIAaQ>