

Grade 9

The Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre is pleased to offer a series of eight (8) units covering the following Grade 9 CAPS topic:

Failure of the Weimar, the rise of Nazi Germany, outbreak of WW2 in Europe, the Holocaust, people's experiences and resistance.

Unit 2

- Rise of Nazi Germany as a racist state part 1
By the end of the unit Learners should be familiar with
 1. Meanings of : Genocide, Holocaust, prejudice, stereotyping, scapegoating
 2. Nazi ideology and understanding of race

**Nazi Germany
1933 – 1945**



- WW2 (1939-1945)



- Genocide



- Holocaust

In this unit we are looking at the rise of Nazi Germany as a racial state.

Nazi Germany was a racist state from 1933 to 1945. That is actually only 12 years, which historically is not a very long time, but within those 12 years, they were responsible for a second world war, which took place between 1939 and 1945, and they were responsible for a genocide known as the Holocaust.

A genocide always has the backing of the government of the day, whether that backing is overt, which means you know the government is backing it or covert, which means it's hidden.

The word genocide, did not exist until 1945. This doesn't mean genocides didn't happen we just didn't have a word for it. The word was coined or invented by Raphael Lemkin, a Polish Jewish lawyer who put together "genos" from Greek meaning "race, tribe or group and "cide" from Latin meaning "killing"

The word "genocide" was first used during the Nuremberg trials after WW2

Genocide

- The deliberate and systematic destruction of a group of people because of their ethnicity, nationality, religion, or race.
- It always has the backing of the government.

HOLOCAUST

Greek word - “holo” meaning complete, and “kaustos” meaning burning.

It is the term given to the genocide of the Jewish people during World War 2

The Holocaust

This was the planned and systematic mass murder of six million Jewish people, two-thirds of European Jewish people, by the Nazi government and their collaborators during World War 2

This was not the only genocide perpetrated by the Nazis. They also perpetrated a genocide against the Roma and Sinti, known as the Porajmos. Between two hundred and fifty thousand and five hundred thousand Roma and Sinti were murdered by the Nazis.

GENOCIDES HAPPEN WHEN PEOPLE ARE “OTHERED” AND DEHUMANISED

Consider these words:

- Ethnicity
- Race
- Socio-economic status
- Gender
- Age
- Religion
- Health
- Occupation
- Marital Status
- Other (e.g. sexuality)

Looking at those words, think about what is the **most important** traits features or qualities in you?

How do you identify yourself?

- If you think about yourself and then look at those words and choose two or three that are **most important** to you as a person, might it be your gender? Might it be your religion? Might it be your race? How would you want to identify yourself?
- Now think about what you use to identify **other** people.
- When you see somebody walking down the street towards you, you don't know them, but they might be dressed in a certain way, they might walk in a certain way, they might look a certain way, they might be behaving in a certain way.
- Which ones of those things do you use to identify that person and put them into sort of a “box” in your mind?
- Finally, what do you think **other** people use to identify **you**?

Prejudice

- A judgement or opinion about a person, good or bad, formed without knowing the person, or having a reason for your opinion.

Stereotype

- A generalisation about a group of people based on an opinion, attitude, or belief. A stereotype is usually negative.
- Stereotypes are often learned or culturally transmitted, and make no allowances for differences between individuals of a certain group.

Without even knowing people, we **prejudge** them based on external, characteristics that we look at and that we use to identify others.

We don't know any facts about the person. We know nothing about them. We just see a certain look or a certain style or a certain race or a certain age or a certain gender. And then we put all those things together, and say to ourselves, "I know about you because you belong to this group or you belong to that group."

So we don't have to talk to them, we can tick certain boxes about people who look a certain way or talk a certain way. That is known as **prejudice**, making judgements about people before you've even gotten to know them.

Then we might take it a step further because then we apply these prejudices to an entire group.

And that is called **stereotyping**. Sadly we stereotype people in our country very often particularly people who come from other parts of Africa. We decide that a certain group is a certain way without getting to know the people, without making any attempt to find out about those people.

We just **stereotype**.

Prejudice and stereotyping often lead to something called scapegoating

- A scapegoat is a person or in most cases a group of people who get blamed for someone else's mistake or wrongdoing
- For example, people from other countries in Africa are used as a scapegoat, and blamed for things that are wrong
- Instead of taking responsibility for one's own actions people often create scapegoats because they are unable to understand the cause of their misfortune or a problem
- Having a scapegoat also provides a group with a sense of being united against another group. So we are the "in" group, they are the "out" group, and we can behave towards them in whatever way we like because we are strong against them
- It's "us", against "them" and that leads to dehumanization.
- If you've got a group that you've scapegoated, then you've assigned to them certain traits, certain behaviours, certain personalities that are not attractive and so you can dehumanize them- take away their humanity
- If you have taken away someone's humanity, then you can treat them in a way that you wouldn't want to be treated
- Scapegoating is very useful for leaders. Leaders often use scapegoating to rally groups to their side.

Scapegoat

- A person or group of people blamed for the problems or faults of others

In Nazi Germany, as with most governments, but particularly with the Nazis, this scapegoating was tied up with racist ideologies

Racists believe that...

- Race is the primary determinant of human capacities
- A certain race is inherently superior or inferior to others
- Individuals must be treated differently based on their racial classification

Despite the fact that it's been **scientifically proven that all human beings have the same or 99,9% the same DNA , that beneath the skin we are exactly the same biologically, that we can share blood, that we can share children, people still believe in race and therefore there is racism.**

The Nazis were racists.

There are racists in our country today; people who will look at another person and because of the way they look, they will apply certain characteristics to them.

All racists have certain things in common.

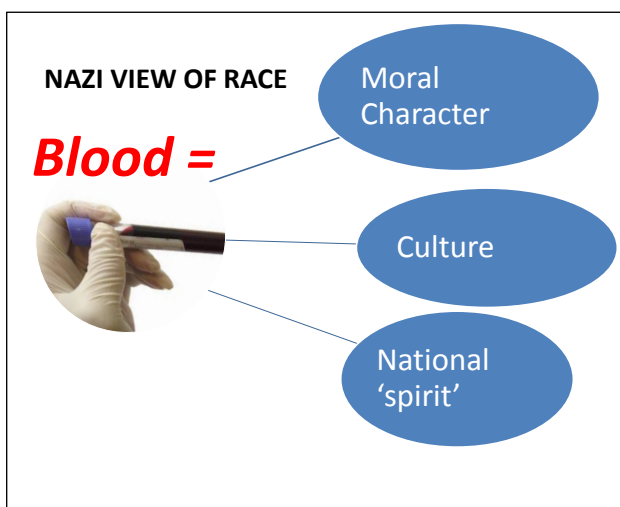
Racists believe that their group is superior, better than and can do more than the other group. They believe that a certain race is fundamentally superior to the other race, so one race is superior, one race is inferior, and that because of this, individuals need to be treated differently because they have to be treated according to what their racial classification is. Now, we know this from South Africa. We know that this is what happened in South Africa and sadly, in some cases still happens.

While South Africa was very specific about skin colour, Nazi Germany had a **different view of race** they saw race **in terms of blood.**

- They believed your blood, contained your moral character in other words, whether you were a good human or not a good human
- Your blood contained your culture, whether or not you were a good "pure" German or not a good "pure" German
- Your blood contained your national spirit, if you were for the country or against the country

This is what they believed existed in your blood. And if you were a good German, a good so-called "Aryan", then you had good "pure" blood that could be traced back three generations. However, according to the Nazis, some people *did not* have and *could not* have good German blood.

So they believed their blood was superior and they believed that certain people's blood was inferior.



Ideology: Nazi Worldview

“inferiors” by blood

Jews Had “bacterial” blood

Roma Had “criminal” blood

People of colour Had “impure” blood

The disabled Had “diseased” blood

According to the Nazis Jews had the worst blood; according to the Nazis their blood had bacteria in it. The Roma and Sinti, the Nazis said, were criminals, they had criminal blood. They said that people of colour had impure blood, and the disabled had diseased blood.

Understand that for the Nazis, it was all about “purity” of *blood* which is why although there were Jewish people in Germany, who looked like everybody else, many had blond hair and blue eyes, many looked like their neighbours; for the Nazis, it wasn't necessarily about skin colour. It was blood.

Those people who had darker skins the Nazis believed it was because their blood was impure.

In the next unit, we're going to unpack further these ideas of Nazi ideology and how it gets implemented.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain *in your own words* the meaning of the following terms:
 - a) Genocide
 - b) Holocaust
 - c) Prejudice
 - d) Scapegoat
2. Why do you think it is sometimes useful for governments to create scapegoats?
3. How do you think we can avoid stereotyping and scapegoating people?
4. South Africa used skin colour to separate people. What did the Nazis say made people different?
5. Do you think different people have different blood? Give a reason for your answer.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre:

<http://ctholocaust.co.za/>

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwVBU5VqvsumuwDdzYIAaQ>

United Nations

<https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>

Encyclopedia Britannica

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Holocaust>