

Chapter 3. Human Rights Violations

Supplemental Resources

Activities, Study Questions, Critical Thinking, Research Suggestions, Discussion Topics, Readings

Chapter 3.1 An Introduction to Human Rights Violations

1. Do you think we must change our behaviors from trusting only small in-groups to more inclusive ways of acting? Explain.
 - a. What are the dangers of not changing our behaviors?
2. Conduction research to find a case heard by the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Chapter 3.2 The Crime of Aggression

1. How would define the crime of aggression?
 - a. What acts of aggression would you add to the list in your book?
 - b. What acts of aggression would you delete from the list?
2. Do you think the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was a crime of aggression? Explain

Chapter 3.3 War Crimes

1. Conduct additional research to find different cases of war crimes?
 - a. Why are war crimes cases so hard to decide?
2. Why do you think the U.S. has not joined the ICC?
3. Do you think that the My Lai Massacre was a war crime? Explain.
 - a. If you were a jurist deciding the case of those accused of the crimes at My Lai, what verdict would you have rendered? Why?

Chapter 3.4 Crimes Against Humanity

1. Conduct research to find different cases of crimes against humanity?
2. Was the Trail of Tears a crime against humanity? Was it a case of ethnic cleaning?
3. Do you think Charles Taylor was guilty of crimes against humanity?
 - a. What role did the “market women” play in Liberia during this time?
 - b. Do you think their recognition has been deserved?

Chapter 3.5 Genocide

1. How would you define genocide?
2. What obstacles did Ralph Lemkin face in his efforts to make known the atrocity of genocide?
 - a. Why do you think Lemkin encountered such difficulties in his efforts?
 - b. Why did he persevere in his efforts?
3. Conduct research to find a case of genocide and analyze it according to the eight stages it went through.
4. What theory of genocide do you think is the most compelling? Explain.
5. How do perpetrators get away with carrying out genocide?
6. What does Gregory Stanton of Genocide Watch mean when he says that genocides do not result from “state failure,” but from “state success, from too much state power?”
 - a. Is state success always the case?

7. Do you think that the acts of violence mentioned in the Old Testament were actually genocide? Conduct additional research to find out more information.
8. Do you think the Romans were guilty of genocide against the Christians?
 - a. How does their act compare to what the Mongols carried out?
9. Do you think the Spanish conquest of the Western hemisphere and the death of millions of indigenous peoples was genocide? Explain.
 - a. Conduct additional research to find out more about this controversial act.
10. Which of the five case studies do you think was genocide? Explain.

Chapter 3.7 Twentieth Century Genocides

1. The Holocaust is a somber topic and bound to arouse different feelings for each individual. Your feelings about the Holocaust can be expressed in different ways: journal writing, artistic creations, a play, or other creative ways. Select a way to express your feelings about the Holocaust.
 - a. Figure out how much is 181 calories of food a day; can you live on that much?
 - b. Think like a System! We often think that the Holocaust was the result of the cruelty of one man, Adolph Hitler. But this is not the whole story. We cannot discount the importance of the man, but we must be careful not to think that it was his actions alone that created this evil event. When studying this brief overview of the Holocaust, think of all the interconnected factors that merged together to create the event. Individually, or as a class, make a systems thinking web to show all the connections.
2. A similar project as above can be done for a study of the genocide in Rwanda.
 - a. If Jared Diamond's theory has merit, how would you have solved the problem of population pressures in Rwanda in order to avoid the genocide?
 - b. Figure out the difficulty of farming on small parcels of land in Rwanda.
 - c. Why do you think the international community didn't become involved in the Rwanda genocide?
 - d. How is Domina reacting to the killers responsible for the deaths of her husband and others? Do you think there is a cultural difference in the way she is responding to the genocide and the way you and your classmates would respond?
 - e. Why is confession and reconciliation so important to Pacifique? Would it be important to you? Explain.

Chapter 3.

1. As you examine human rights violations, think of a continuum. The continuum ranges from the point on the left where crimes are horrible but an individual lives to those on the right where the crime results in an unspeakable death. Through your own research and analysis, place each of the violations that you have studied on your continuum.
 - a. Use your own criterion to evaluate its placement on the continuum.