

Lesson 2

Need:

Students must first know the eight stages of genocide as defined by Gregory H. Stanton. Introduce them to these stages. More elaborate examples and definitions can be found online at: <http://www.genocidewatch.org/eightstages.htm>

Classification	Us and Them
Symbolization	Attaching a symbol to separate them from us. Not a problem, unless symbol is used to spread hatred and inflame.
Dehumanization	They are made out to be inhuman. They are equated with animals, less than animals. With this process, killing becomes psychologically more accessible. See <u>On Killing</u> .
Organization	Anti-them groups are organized to deal with the growing threat.
Polarization	Extremist propaganda force moderates to pick sides, silencing or castigating the middle.
Preparation	They are push out of society, separated from society, and propaganda pushes them to the edge of society.
Extermination	Killing begins, and is often state sponsored, or at least state sanctioned.
Denial	Perpetrators deny their actions and blame the victims, concocting huge stories to cover the truth. Often, as the state supported the actions, or the majority supported the genocide, the media and all information sources will continue to blame the victims.

Option:

By applying the stages to the Shoah, as a part of an entire Holocaust studies course, or for a short lesson, we can see examples of these stages in play during a clearly defined genocide. This well-known situation would provide concrete, well-documented facts to illustrate the eight stages for the students. It is highly recommended that teachers use this event in history as a springboard to understanding the eight stages in practice. Students can be given the task of finding examples to the stages in groups, in a jigsaw formation. Or, students can find examples of all eight stages independently. It is critical, though, that all students have complete understanding of the eight stages before moving on.