

Genocide Awareness Month

Announcements Scripts

Genocide Awareness Month is commemorated in April. The month was chosen because April contains many significant dates in the history of genocide. These include the beginnings of the Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the Armenian Genocide, and the Anfal campaign against Iraqi Kurds. The goal of Genocide Awareness Month is to share knowledge about what genocide is, about genocides that have happened in the past, and about the continuing scourge of genocide today. These announcement scripts are a good way to commemorate Genocide Awareness Month throughout your school.

We recommend these announcements for high school. We do not recommend talking about genocide with students younger than ninth grade.

Holocaust Museum Houston also offers virtual tours and opportunities to bring a museum educator to your school virtually (for free): <https://hmh.org/education/programs-and-curriculum/educator-in-motion/>. Whenever you talk about genocide, keep in mind the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's guidelines for teaching about genocide: <https://thgc.texas.gov/learning/best-practices/guidelines-for-teaching-about-genocides>.

Announcement 1

April is Genocide Awareness Month, so this month during announcements we are going to provide some information about what genocide is. Each time we talk about Genocide Awareness Month during the announcements we will end the section with a question that will be answered next time. Think about the questions and see if your classmates have the same answers.

Genocide means trying to destroy a group of people because of who they are. The word genocide is a neologism, which means it is still pretty new. It was created in the 1940s by Raphael Lemkin, a Polish-Jewish lawyer. Lemkin lost most of his family in the Holocaust, one of the most famous genocides. Why do you think we are talking about genocide? Why do you think we should commemorate Genocide Awareness Month?

Announcement 2

Today we are continuing our announcements to commemorate Genocide Awareness Month. Last time we talked about the definition of genocide and asked why we should commemorate Genocide Awareness Month. Learning about genocide can help us recognize the warning signs and maybe even prevent genocide in the future. This is a vital issue because there are multiple groups facing genocide or possible genocide today. These include a Muslim group called the Uyghurs in China and a Muslim group called the Rohingya in a country in southeast Asia called Myanmar.

What other examples of genocide can you think of? When else in history has there been an attempt to destroy a group of people because of who they are?

Announcement 3

Today we are continuing our announcements to commemorate Genocide Awareness Month. Last time we asked about other examples of genocide. Some examples include the Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda, a country in central Africa, in 1994; the Bosnian genocide that targeted Muslims in southeastern Europe in 1992-1995; the Anfal Campaign that targeted Kurdish people in Iraq in 1986-1989; the targeting of indigenous people in Guatemala in 1981-1983; and the destruction of Native American communities across the United States during and after our country's expansion.

There are many other examples of genocide throughout history. So now that we know genocide is a problem, what do you think are some measures we can take to help prevent genocide or help people experiencing genocide?

Announcement 4

Today we are continuing our announcements to commemorate Genocide Awareness Month. Last time we asked what we can do about genocide. We can't always prevent genocide in other countries, but we can pay attention to what is happening, share what we have learned, and even try to help people who are impacted. This doesn't just mean military intervention. It can mean things like helping refugees resettle in safer places or putting pressure on another country to change their behavior. We can also be careful with the words we use when talking about people from different groups. Genocide starts with words - it starts with saying an entire group of people are inferior or superior just because of who they are. We can try not to repeat that pattern.

What do you think happens after genocides end?

Announcement 5

Today is our final announcement commemorating Genocide Awareness Month. Thank you for learning about this important subject with us! Last time we asked what happens after genocides end. The goal of genocide is often to destroy not just a group of people, but any trace that they lived somewhere. Once the genocide is over, this often means that groups that committed genocide deny that a genocide happened. Other forms of genocide denial include blaming the victims for events or downplaying the number of victims. All of the genocides committed in the 20th and 21st centuries (including the Holocaust) are denied by some people. What do you think it means for a community to have someone deny a genocide that targeted them?

If you want to learn more about genocide, you can visit Holocaust Museum Houston. The museum is open every day except Mondays and students (that means you) are always free. Visit their website at hnh.org for more information.