

**Genocide Studies: The Armenian Genocide and The Holocaust Questions**

**Use the “Brief History: The Armenian Genocide” handout to answer these questions**

1. The United Nations defines genocide as “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

(a) Killing members of the group;

(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

Can you name some examples of genocides and provide details about them?

2. Describe the worst atrocity committed against civilians during the First World War.

3. The ruling political party in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War was the Committee of Union and Progress, known as the Young Turks. What was their ideology of “Pan Turkism”? Why were the Armenians an obstacle preventing them from achieving this goal?

4. The Ottoman rulers, like the majority of their citizens, were Muslim Turks. How were the people of non-Muslim faith treated within the Ottoman Empire?

5. April 24, 1915, known as Red Sunday, is generally considered to be the beginning of the Armenian genocide. What happened on that day? Why do you think it is referred to as Red Sunday?

6. Although the approximately 250,000 Armenians serving in the Ottoman Army generally fought bravely and loyally, how were they treated by the Ottoman Government?

7. What horrors occurred under the guise of a “deportation” of the Armenian population?

8. Who were recruited as fighters for the “Special Organization”? How did these individuals fulfill their orders to kill Armenian civilians?

9. What injustices did surviving Armenians endure?

10. Did Young Turk leaders and other government officials ever face justice for their heinous crimes against the Armenians?

11. In September 1939, before the Nazi invasion of Poland and the beginning of the Holocaust, Adolf Hitler asked his generals, “who after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” In your opinion, what is the significance of this statement?

12. To this day, the Government of Turkey has denied that the Armenian Genocide ever happened. They reject the conclusions of historians and the term “genocide” used to refer to the mass-murder. Review the United Nations definition of genocide, your responses to the questions, and examine the following document (written in December 1914 or January 1915) known as the “Ten Commandments of the Committee of Union and Progress” which outlines the Ottoman Government’s plan for massacring Armenians. Justify why this dark chapter in world history should be recognized as a genocide.

#### THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF THE COMITÉ UNION AND PROGRES.

- (1). Profiting by Arts: 3 and 4 of [the Committee of Union and Progress], close all Armenian Societies, and arrest all who worked against Government at any time among them and send them into the provinces such as Baghdad or Mosul, and wipe them out either on the road or there.
- (2). Collect arms.
- (3). Excite [Muslim] opinion by suitable and special means...
- (4). Leave all executive to the people in the provinces such as Erzeroum, Van, Mouuret, U. Aziz, and Bitlis, and use Military disciplinary forces (i.e. Gendarmerie) ostensibly to stop massacres, while on the contrary in places as Adana, Sivas, Broussa, Ispidj and Smyrna actively help the [Muslims] with military force.
- (5). Apply measures to exterminate all males under 50, priests and teachers, leave girls and children to be Islamized.
- (6). Carry away the families of all who succeed in escaping and apply measures to cut them off from all connection with their native place.
- (7). On the ground that Armenian officials may be spies, expel and drive them out absolutely from every Government department or post.
- (8). Kill off in an appropriate manner all Armenians in the Army—this to be left to the military to do.
- (9). All action to begin everywhere simultaneously, and thus leave no time for preparation of defensive measures.
- (10). Pay attention to the strictly confidential nature of these instructions, which may not go beyond two or three persons.

**Use the “A Brief History of the Holocaust: A Reference Tool” handout to answer these questions**

13. Which events contributed to the rise of Nazism in Germany?

14. What is antisemitism? Identify and explain examples of antisemitism that took place in Nazi Germany.

15. Describe the racist Nazi ideology of the “master race”.

16. When was Kristallnacht, which group organized it, where did it take place and what happened? Why do you think it is referred to as the Night of Broken Glass?

17. How were Polish Jews treated by the Nazi regime following the German occupation of Poland?

18. What is meant by the “Final Solution”? When and how did this begin?

19. On January 20, 1942, Nazi leaders gathered together at the Wannsee Conference in Berlin and agreed upon a murderous scheme known as the “Final Solution”. Read the following document excerpt of the minutes of this meeting. What do you think is the significance of this document?

Approximately 11 million Jews will be involved in the final solution of the European Jewish question, distributed as follows among the individual countries:

	Country	Number
A.	Germany proper	131,800
	Austria	43,700
	Eastern territories	420,000
	General Government	2,284,000
	Bialystok	400,000
	Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia	74,200
	Estonia	- free of Jews -
	Latvia	3,500
	Lithuania	34,000
	Belgium	43,000
	Denmark	5,600
	France / occupied territory	165,000
	unoccupied territory	700,000
	Greece	69,600
	Netherlands	160,800
	Norway	1,300
B.	Bulgaria	48,000
	England	330,000
	Finland	2,300
	Ireland	4,000
	Italy including Sardinia	58,000
	Albania	200
	Croatia	40,000
	Portugal	3,000
	Rumania including Bessarabia	342,000
	Sweden	8,000
	Switzerland	18,000
	Serbia	10,000
	Slovakia	88,000
	Spain	6,000
	Turkey (European portion)	55,500
	Hungary	742,800
	USSR	5,000,000
	Ukraine	2,994,684
	White Russia excluding Bialystok	446,484
	Total	over 11,000,000

20. What were the names of the six killing centres (also known as extermination camps)? How was the "Final Solution" carried out at these facilities? Approximately how many people perished there?

21. How did other governments collaborate with the Nazis to assist them with their murderous scheme?

22. What extraordinary deeds did rescuers accomplish?

23. How and when were the concentration and extermination camps liberated?

24. How many Jews were murdered during the Holocaust?

25. Following liberation from camps, what challenges did survivors encounter?

26. What were the Nuremberg Trials? Do you think that the Jews received justice? Explain.