

Antisemitism and discrimination lesson plan



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST

*Learning from genocide -
for a better future*

This lesson plan is designed for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, religious education lessons, or as a part of citizenship education for students aged 13 to 15, which corresponds with higher Key Stage 3 and lower Key Stage 4 in England. It can also complement a history learning programme on the Holocaust.

This learning resource explores antisemitism (anti-Jewish hatred) and discrimination during the Nazi era and today. The content of the lesson is designed to encourage reflection on identity-based discrimination that has taken place and continues to occur. Due to the variety of examples that relate to the Holocaust (the murder of 6 million Jews), Nazi persecution of other groups, such as disabled and black people, and present-day identity-based discrimination, it is particularly important to use clear and consistent terminology when referring to different examples of hate and prejudice. This resource with activities and ideas for extension activities is meant to offer options that allow teachers to tailor the content to support their students' needs and learning.



Learning objectives:

- Students will gain knowledge of antisemitism in the past and today
- Students will understand what discrimination is and what to do when witnessing it
- Students will be able to identify causes and potential consequences of discrimination



You will need for learning activities:

- PowerPoint presentation
- A video produced for HMD 2017: *How Can Life Go On?*

Optional for extension activities:

- Bea Green's life story
- Selected videos and life stories
- Selected reports on antisemitism

Activity	Summary	Time	PowerPoint
Holocaust Memorial Day	This brief opening introduces students to Holocaust Memorial Day.	2 mins	Slide 1
Identity and discrimination	Students will discuss their own identities and then watch a video that shows identity-based discrimination. Slide 4 provides a definition of discrimination.	15 mins	Slides 2, 3 and 4
Antisemitism	This section introduced the concept of antisemitism, focusing first on the Nazi period and then on the present. Two extension activities allow you to discuss the impact of antisemitism on the lives of Jews in more detail or explore present-day antisemitism further.	15-20 mins	Slides 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9
Nazi Persecution of other groups	The Nazis also discriminated against other groups, and this activity opens up a space to discuss these groups and the impact of ongoing discrimination on their lives.	5 mins	Slides 10, 11, 12 and 13
Discrimination today in the UK	This section teaches about the Equality Act 2010, enabling them to understand when discrimination is illegal.	5 mins	Slides 14 and 15
Anti-Muslim hatred	Anti-Muslim hatred is prevalent, and this activity teaches what it is and asks students to read a case study before discussing it.	5-10 mins	Slides 16 and 17
Reporting hate and discrimination	This slide tells students how to report hate crime.	2 mins	Slide 18
Plenary	The plenary asks students to reflect on their learning.	5-10 mins	Slide 19

Holocaust Memorial Day: slide one

Each year on 27 January we mark Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) to remember:

- the 6 million Jews murdered during the Holocaust
- the millions of people murdered under the Nazi persecution of other groups, including Roma and Sinti, disabled and gay people, and political opponents
- the millions of people murdered in more recent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur

Schools, students and communities across the UK learn from genocide on or around this day and take action to create a better future.

Identity and discrimination: slide two

This activity has two components that allow students to consider their own identity and how identity can affect people's lives.

The first part of the activity focuses on identity and encourages students to consider who they are and which components of their identity they can choose or have chosen.

What characteristics, beliefs, attributes, and traits does your identity comprise?

Ask your students to list a variety of their different identities. These can include their gender, school, hobbies, appearance, age, ethnicity, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, health, or class.

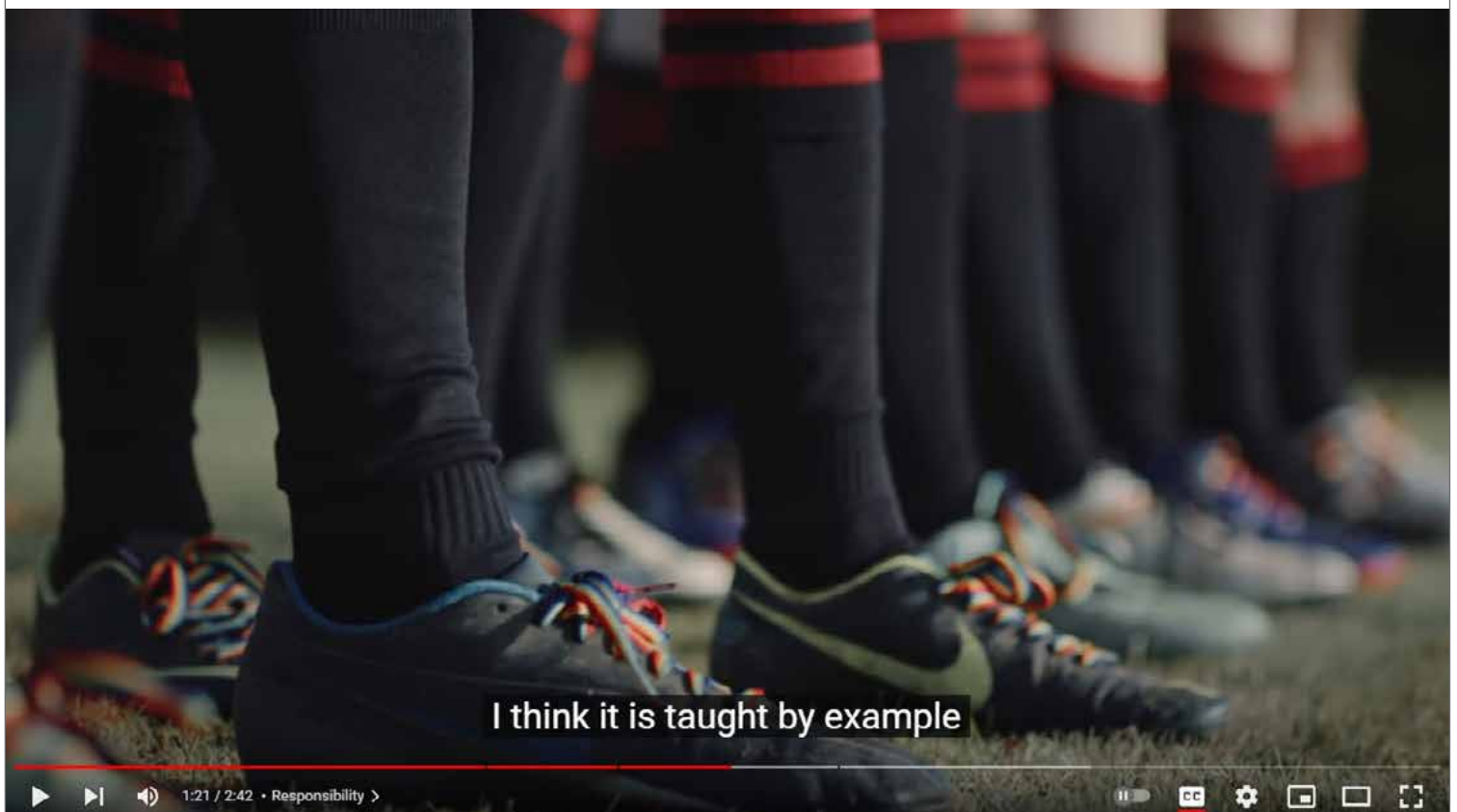
In small groups and as a whole class, please discuss:

- Which of these identities are visible/invisible?
- Which identities have you chosen?
- How do your different identities shape your life? What do they mean to you?

Slide three

The second part of the activity extends discussion to identity-based discrimination.

Explain to students that you are going to watch a short film about ways in which different identities can affect people's lives. It is embedded in the PowerPoint presentation and can be found online on our [Youtube channel](#).



Discussion points and some suggested answers:

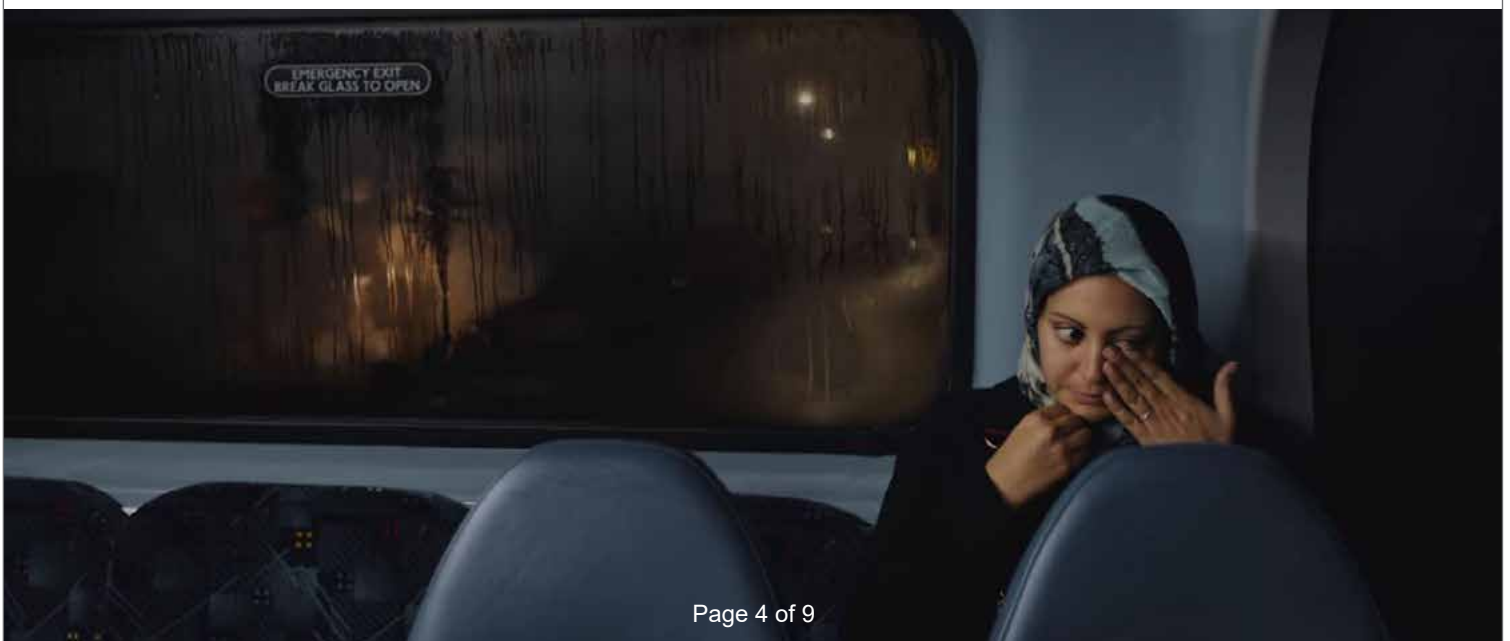
- What examples of hatred and prejudice are shown in this film?
 - Jewish gravestones have been vandalised.
 - A young gay man is bullied and beaten because of his sexual orientation.
 - A Muslim woman is intimidated because of her faith whilst waiting for a bus.
 - Bea Green's father was humiliated and attacked in Nazi Germany because he was Jewish.
- What is the link between what the Nazis did to Bea's father and the contemporary hate crimes shown in the film?
 - Whilst the government-backed, anti-Jewish hatred - antisemitism - that Bea's father experienced is different to the contemporary hate crimes we see in the film, in both examples people are being discriminated against and attacked because of an aspect of their identity.
- How are humans shown to support those who face hate and prejudice due to their identity?
 - A group of helpers clean up the vandalised Jewish cemetery.
 - Team mates of the young gay man wear Rainbow Laces in an act of support.
 - A man comforts the Muslim woman on the bus by offering a tissue

The conversation about the film establishes an understanding that humans have discriminated and continue to discriminate against other people on the basis of their identities. We can choose to reject hate and support those who have been discriminated against.

Slide four

What is discrimination? Discuss how students define discrimination, show students the definition and remind them that discrimination against some identities is illegal, as stated in the film.

- Discrimination means treating someone less favourably or unfairly, or causing disadvantage to someone, because of some characteristics of their identity.



Antisemitism: slide five

Antisemitism (anti-Jewish hatred) is a particular type of discrimination that includes rhetorical and physical acts against individuals and/or their property, Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. Remind the class that this is what Bea and her father experienced.

Antisemitism has been referred to as 'The Longest Hatred', and it has survived and mutated throughout history:

- Antisemitism began as religious discrimination. The Jews were accused of killing Jesus and it led to persecution of the Jewish community.
- Over time this changed into racial antisemitism. This manifested itself in the Holocaust, when the Nazis believed Jews to be of an 'inferior race'. They targeted and killed Jews just because they were born Jewish.
- Antisemitism today connects those religious and racial elements. It is expressed in verbal or physical attacks on Jewish people, institutions, or property, and in the promotion of anti-Jewish conspiracy theories.

Antisemitism during the Holocaust: slide six

The Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933 led by Adolf Hitler.

The Nazis used propaganda and centuries of antisemitism as their foundation to justify changing laws to deny human rights to Jews.

In 1935, the Nazis passed two laws called the Nuremberg Laws that defined who was a Jew. According to the Reich Citizenship Law, anyone who had three or four Jewish grandparents was labelled a Jew, regardless of whether or not that person saw themselves as Jewish or practiced Judaism. The Nuremberg laws took away people's freedom to self-identify. The Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour prohibited marriage between Jews and non-Jews.

Jews had already earlier been forbidden from working for the government and serving in the army. Later laws prevented Jewish people from going to cinemas or concerts and Jewish children from attending state schools. The Nazis and their collaborators attempted to murder all Jewish people in Europe during their rule between 1933 and 1945.. In total the Nazis murdered 6 million Jews, and this is known as the Holocaust.

Discussion points and some possible answers:

- What impact did antisemitic laws have since 1933 on the lives of Jewish people in Nazi Germany?
 - Jews may have been fearful
 - Many became unemployed
 - Jewish children couldn't go to school
 - The laws passed by the Nazis fundamentally changed the lives of Jews. Encourage your students to think of all the different ways that the new laws impacted the Jews.

Extension activity

If you have time, you can ask students to read Bea Green's life story that allows them to learn more about her experiences of antisemitism. This offers students more examples to draw on in the discussion about the impact of antisemitism on the lives of Jews. Bea's life story is available at <https://www.hmd.org.uk/bea>.

Propaganda and restrictions of freedoms: slide seven

Nazis and their collaborators used propaganda to establish an idea that Jews were dangerous and not human. There are two example posters on slide number seven.

Discussion:

- How do these posters convey the idea that Jews are dangerous or non-human?

Image: Nazi propaganda

By Hans Schweitzer (Mjölner). From Library of Congress

Prints and Photographs Division
Washington, D.C. 20540 USA



Antisemitism today: slide eight

Antisemitism continues today and antisemitic speech increasingly takes place online. Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 1,652 antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2022 and 2,261 in 2021. Online hate speech constituted 25% of antisemitic abusive behaviour.

On the slide, the quote uses 'Shabbos day' to describe the Jewish day of rest.

Slide nine

Please ask students to identify:

- Where does antisemitism take place?
- Why is antisemitism common online?
- What impact or consequences does it have?
- How can you report online abuse on social media?

Extension activity

If you have more time and your students desire a greater challenge, you can explore why it is difficult to record antisemitic crime and how it is done, or to evaluate the following sources and what is done to address the present situation.

The reports that you can use for this activity include:

- Community Security Trust, *Antisemitic Incidents Report (2022)*
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), *Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism: Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU (2018)*
- HM Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism Lord John Mann, *Anti-Jewish Hatred: Tackling Antisemitism in the UK 2023 – Renewing the Commitment*

Nazi Persecution of other groups: slides 10 and 11

In addition to Jewish people, the Nazis also discriminated against and persecuted other groups of people. They were detained, forcibly sterilised and used for slave labour, taken to concentration and death camps, and murdered. Ask students if they know which groups the Nazis discriminated against.

The Nazi persecution of other groups

White people

The Nazis targeted Eastern European Jews and political opponents, many of whom were white. They were not targeted because of their race.

Black people

The Nazis' racist policies meant that many black and mixed-race Europeans were persecuted by the Nazis.

The Nazis believed that Germans were a superior race, and that their race needed to be kept 'pure'.

Racism continues today.

Mixed race people

Roma and Sinti

The Nazis targeted Europe's Roma and Sinti population for total destruction. Estimated 200,000-500,000 people were murdered.

Roma communities still face discrimination today in the UK.

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Nazi persecution of other groups: slides 12 and 13

Extension activity

If you want students to focus on experiences of some of the groups mentioned in this activity, you can show them these films about:

Nazi persecution of disabled people

Nazi persecution of gay people

Nazi persecution of black people

Alternatively, ask them to read **life stories** available on our website.

Questions about these resources can include:

- Do we know why the Nazis discriminated against these groups?
- What happened to members of these groups?
- How are these groups still discriminated against today?

Discrimination today in the UK: slide 14

The Equality Act 2010 made it illegal to discriminate against specific protected characteristics. Ask students to brainstorm in small groups which characteristics they believe are protected. You can list students' responses on a white board and compare their responses to the list on the slide.

Slide 15

The protected characteristics: race and ethnicity, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, gender, gender reassignment, disability, and marriage and civil partnership.

Discussion:

Discuss with your students why these characteristics are protected and whether there are other characteristics that are not listed but your students believe could be included.

Anti-Muslim hatred: slide 16

Muslims face discrimination today in the UK. There were 3,496 anti-Muslim hate crimes reported in 2021. Read with students the definition of anti-Muslim hatred and discuss similarities between this definition and that of antisemitism.

Slide 17

Please ask students to read the short case study on slide 16 and ask them to consider:

- How do you think other Muslims who pray at this mosque feel when they hear that some of the other members have faced abuse because of their identity?
- Most anti-Muslim attacks happen by men towards women, why do you think this is?
- If you witness or experience something like this, what can you do?

Reporting hate and discrimination: slide 18

Discussion:

Please discuss what students should do if they witness discrimination at school or outside it, and in what situations to contact the organisations on the slide. You can ask students to think of examples of situations when they would report hate and discrimination. You can also explore together the websites of cst.org.uk, tellmamauk.org, galop.org.uk, kickitout.org, or report-it.org.uk and find out more about their work.

Plenary: slide 19

The plenary is designed to support students in reflecting on their learning.

- What is one thing you have learnt during this lesson?
- How has this lesson changed your thinking about discrimination?
- Is there anything that we discussed that you want to learn more about?

Writing pledges

Ask students to write down a pledge about how they will address discrimination. These pledges can also become a part of a school display or classroom poster to showcase learning and celebrate kindness and inclusivity.



This lesson is based on an earlier resource developed in partnership with Stand Up! Education Against Discrimination. Find out more: standupeducation.org.

Take the learning further:

Learn more about genocides at hmd.org.uk/holocaustandgenocides.

Find secondary school assemblies and lesson plans at hmd.org.uk/schools.

Find more resources such as life stories, films and activities at hmd.org.uk/resources.



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Find out more...

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust: hmd.org.uk
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