

Comparative Genocide Pedagogy and Survivor Testimony: Lessons from a Unit on the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide

Stephanie F. Reid, *University of Montana*

Taylor M. Kessner, *Arizona State University*

Lauren McArthur Harris, *Arizona State University*

Volker Benkert, *Arizona State University*

Jason Bruner, *Arizona State University*

MS. BROWN gathered her high school students together at the conclusion of a curriculum unit in an elective course, “Holocaust Literature,” that focused on analyzing survivor testimonies from both the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide.¹ Teaching goals were for students to identify thematic connections that linked the testimonies across time and space, while also remaining cognizant of the differences between the personal experiences and sociopolitical contexts of the survivors whose narratives formed the center of their analytical work. Ms. Brown asked for her students’ thoughts on the curriculum unit. One student stated that they had never heard about the Rwandan Genocide until this unit. Another student reflected that it was “sad that we go through history only for [genocide] to happen again.” A third student was adamant regarding the importance of the survivor testimonies: “It’s important that we see the other stories. So we know that others have gone through this.”

The conversation between Ms. Brown and her students revealed the students' prior lack of access to learning experiences that addressed genocides beyond the Holocaust. Still, their responses also showed the importance that they saw in doing this comparative work.

In this article, we detail the curriculum unit that Ms. Brown and a second English Language Arts (ELA) teacher, Ms. Smith, used with their high school students. The unit centered on a comparative genocide framework developed by the Comparative Genocide Project at Arizona State University (**Appendix A**). The framework detailed seven key themes common across genocides and was designed to extend genocide study beyond investigating single genocide events. Students analyzed survivor testimonies from the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide for evidence of those seven themes. They also completed a "reporting form" and a graphic organizer as part of the unit. While this article identifies aspects of the comparative genocide framework that we found were beneficial for the students in this study, we also make clear the limitations of this study and our plans for future iterations of this work.

In a previous article, we examined how the two teachers used the comparative genocide framework and accompanying curricular materials provided by the Comparative Genocide Project in their elective "Holocaust Literature" classes.² Here, we focus upon the student work we collected during the classroom study in an attempt to understand how students used the comparative genocide framework in their analyses of survivor testimonies from the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide. In trying to understand both the affordances and constraints of our comparative genocide framework based on survivor testimony, we developed the following research questions:

1. How did students understand the themes at the center of this study?
2. How did students apply the themes to their analysis of the Holocaust and Rwandan Genocide survivor testimonies?
3. How did the comparative genocide framework support and/or hinder students in constructing knowledge regarding the historical and cultural contexts of each unique genocide?

In what follows, we first provide justification for centering survivor testimonies within our comparative genocide framework and explain the curricular materials we developed. After detailing our

research methods, we present excerpts of student work to illustrate our findings regarding how students took up our comparative genocide framework when examining survivor testimonies from the Holocaust and Rwandan Genocide. We conclude the article by considering the implications of our findings and determining ways in which our framework can be further developed to support teachers and students in this critical undertaking.

Developing a Framework of Comparison through Survivor Testimony

Justice for past injustices—as well as prevention of future genocide—depends upon present-day genocide education. Importantly, calls for comparative approaches to genocide education are increasing in volume.³ Although some scholars argue that comparative genocide education initiatives may diminish the magnitude and uniqueness of particular genocides, other scholars and organizations posit that adopting a comparative approach to genocide education may help students understand how genocides happen and generate ideas regarding genocide prevention.⁴ For example, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance recently reported on an international increase in comparative genocide programs that study the Holocaust in comparison to at least one other genocide event.⁵ The report called for a worldwide exchange of information regarding best practices in comparative genocide education, making clear that the Alliance assigns responsibility for genocide prevention upon the international community—not the citizens of any given country.

The comparative approach “assumes that the causes of each particular genocide should be sought in its specific (primarily domestic) context, and whose genocidal characteristics should be established by comparison with established cases.”⁶ Comparative genocide study asks that students understand the differences—what makes each genocide unique in its specific cultural context—as well as the commonalities between genocides separated by geography and time. The importance of focusing on both differences and commonalities during comparative genocide study cannot be ignored. Too much emphasis on the unique tragedy of one genocide may stifle students’ ability to understand the particularity and

horror of other genocides. Alternatively, too much emphasis on the similarity of particular genocides may diminish the individual significance of each genocide. Therefore, any comparative framework must ensure that students are supported in studying the specifics of each genocide as well as in identifying the commonalities that span genocides.

Furthermore, we have found that, with remarkable stability across different genocides and their cultural contexts, survivors describe and organize their agony using common themes such as the quest for survival and the presence of divisive and harmful ideology. We believed these common thematic patterns across survivor accounts would allow students to establish differences in intent and outcome while also recognizing the similarities in human experiences across genocides. Therefore, we identified and defined the seven key themes that form the structure of our comparative genocide framework: (1) prejudice, (2) violence, (3) survival and resistance, (4) perpetrators, (5) conformity, (6) ideology, and (7) coming to terms with the past (refer to **Appendix A** for descriptions of each theme). Each of these thematic aspects offers a lens through which genocides can be analyzed and understood. The framework has the potential to be beneficial for two reasons: (1) analyzing genocide through seven thematic lenses allows analysts to understand more completely the complexity of any genocide event, and (2) each theme marks a point of comparison to which analysts can return to examine similarities and differences across different genocides.

To ensure that the comparative framework we developed addressed both the specifics of individual genocides and the commonalities shared by genocides, we applied the framework to survivor testimonies. Survivor testimonies from different genocides offer powerful voices of survivors that preclude any notion of a hierarchy of suffering while offering glimpses into common experiences and emotions.⁷ They also allow students to access and bear witness to narrative and personal accounts of genocide.⁸ Our framework centered the experiences of individual people within specific genocides to ensure that the stories and perspectives of survivors were highlighted amid comparative work that seeks to establish similarities between different genocides. Harnessing the emotional power of testimony permitted us to ensure that students never lost sight of genocide's human toll.

The focus of our approach to testimony distinguishes it from other paradigms of comparison, such as settler colonialism and empire, indigenocide, genocide and modernity, or even the debate around the uniqueness of the Holocaust.⁹ These paradigms emphasize spatial aspects, such as with colonialism and empire. They also stress temporal features, such as with the extensive assault on Native peoples in the Americas, which was always destructive and, unlike the Holocaust, was perpetrated over centuries.¹⁰ Or they point to particular features of genocide, such as the industrial mass murder of the Holocaust. These paradigms provide useful categories of comparison and differentiation, though not without limitations. In contrast, our testimony-based approach offers comparison on the level of individual experience, which reveals profound similarities in the way that genocide survivors seek to remember, commemorate, and communicate about past atrocities. This approach focuses not on constructing a hierarchy of suffering, but on empathy, while also recognizing the particularity of events and the cultural context in which they occurred.¹¹

Comparative Genocide Pedagogy: Unit Design and Materials

An interdisciplinary group of scholars formed the Comparative Genocide Project at Arizona State University.¹² We feel that it is important to note the interdisciplinary roots of the curriculum unit and its materials for two reasons. First, our diverse perspectives helped the team stay true to multiple disciplinary and pedagogical ways of thinking. Second, because students may not encounter information about genocide along predictable curricular pathways, our different foci ensured that the framework's design and implementation could be supported in diverse contexts of teaching and learning. Although the Holocaust and other genocides are often named in history and ELA standards, such documents do not tend to offer resources or curricular structures for teaching about genocide. Additionally, several studies have indicated that students are more likely to encounter genocide education in ELA classrooms than in other disciplinary contexts.¹³

Our first step was to formulate the learning objectives for the unit. The goals and learning objectives for the unit were informed

by comparative genocide scholarship. Specifically, we wanted students to: (1) read and understand two survivor testimonies from two different genocides; (2) analyze each testimony using the comparative genocide framework and the seven thematic strands (prejudice, violence, survival and resistance, perpetrators, conformity, ideology, and coming to terms with the past); and (3) articulate the commonalities and differences between the survivor stories and the genocides that engendered the testimonies. We hoped that the comparative approach to genocide study would increase students' exposure to genocides beyond the Holocaust and that our centering of survivor testimonies would help students construct empathy for people living in disparate geographical spaces and historical times.

Our second step was to determine which two genocides students would compare during the unit. We first identified the Holocaust because it is the genocide most commonly taught in history and ELA classrooms in the United States and students would likely have some background information from which to draw. We selected the Rwandan Genocide as the second atrocity that students would analyze, in part because students would likely *not* have such background information. While we believed that the Rwandan Genocide survivor testimonies would enable students to analyze the testimonies using the key thematic strands, we also thought that the pairing of these testimonies would illuminate both the uniqueness of each genocide as well as the commonalities shared by those who survived them. While we certainly believed the survivor testimonies from the Rwandan Genocide afforded thematic analysis, we also wondered whether the distinct temporal, spatial, and sociohistorical differences would help students highlight commonalities. For example, among the people victimized in the Rwandan Genocide were those who once ruled the country and held social and political power, a fact that contrasts with the historical and contemporary victimization of Jewish people leading up to the Holocaust.¹⁴

Diverse criteria concerning content, representation, and availability informed the selection of the testimonies. By choosing testimonies that represented a variety of experiences, we hoped that the interviews would enable students to identify different comparative themes and thus allow comparison between the interviews selected (see **Figure 1** for an overview of the survivor

Genocide Name	Survivor's Name	Online Archive	Web Link
The Holocaust	Abraham Kolski	Jewish Holocaust Centre	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHWq8_K3Hck (11:02 minutes)
	Dario Gabbai	USC Shoah Foundation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SoTJ9cv028 (24:13 minutes)
	Henri Korn	Jewish Holocaust Centre	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FHSitrSqwo (17:13 minutes)
	Irma Hanner	Jewish Holocaust Centre	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOHPgSehL-M (13:48 minutes)
	Sonia Wajsenberg	Jewish Holocaust Centre	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSIC9U9R0PM (10:00 minutes)
The Rwandan Genocide	Alphonse Kabalisa	USC Shoah Foundation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zmnWc7NtIs (2:42 minutes)
	Francoise Muteteli	USC Shoah Foundation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hj5yb6Fn1ZI (1:12 minutes)
	Julienne Umugwaneza	USC Shoah Foundation	Login: https://iwtitness.usc.edu/SFI/ Play video from 59:21-1:10:33. (11:12 minutes)
	Phoebe Kabaradine	USC Shoah Foundation	Login: https://iwtitness.usc.edu/SFI/ Play video from 18:00-28:00. (10:00 minutes)
	Theoneste Karenzi	USC Shoah Foundation	Login: https://iwtitness.usc.edu/SFI/ Play video from 28:00-38:12. (10:12 minutes)
Eugenie Mukeshimana	United Nations	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQFely6oULg (9:49 minutes)	

Figure 1: Survivor Testimonies selected by the Comparative Genocide Project.

testimonies used in this curriculum unit). We also wanted representation in terms of gender, class, and country of origin. For example, with the testimonies from the Holocaust, Abraham Kolski was the son of a barber, whereas others came from more bourgeois backgrounds. We included Polish, Greek, and German survivors of the Holocaust, as well as testimonies provided by survivors from different regions of Rwanda. Practical considerations also informed our decisions. We sought testimonies that were reliably accessible and available free of charge on the Internet. Furthermore, when a testimony exceeded twenty minutes, we selected a portion of the testimony that we felt would support comparative genocide study.

The analysis of student work featured in this article focused on two assignments designed by the Comparative Genocide Project team. The first assignment was the Comparative Genocide Reporting Form (see **Appendix B**). The reporting form required students to (1) generate basic information regarding the testimony their analysis was to focus upon, (2) research events or historical persons described in the testimony and decide if the information corroborated or contradicted details included in the testimony, (3) summarize the testimony and identify powerful quotations, (4) record their thinking about how the testimony addressed the seven comparative themes, and (5) recommend (or not recommend) particular survivor testimony to historians researching genocide or to students studying genocide in high school. We hoped that the reporting form would provide us with insight into how well the comparative approach helps students understand the historical and cultural contexts of genocide and empathize with the survivors whose stories they read.

The second assignment was a graphic organizer (see **Figure 2** for a completed example). Students first selected a testimony from the Holocaust and another from the Rwandan Genocide. In the inner circle of the graphic organizer, students explored the commonalities between the two testimonies and the survivors' experiences. In the outer circle, students recorded the unique and specific qualities of each survivor's testimony. The rest of the page beyond the two circles was dedicated to the contextual factors and the social and historical processes that resulted in genocide. In one of the ELA classrooms in this study, students were encouraged to use art and creativity when completing this assignment.

that our research would highlight ways in which the usefulness of the framework and the effectiveness of the reporting form could be improved upon and enhanced to support students' comparative study of genocide.

During Spring 2017, the research team collected data from sixty-four high school students (juniors and seniors) enrolled in four "Holocaust Literature" elective classes at two different high schools within the same school district. Twenty-five students were enrolled in the two classes taught by Ms. Smith—an ELA teacher whose career spanned twenty-five years. She was responsible for designing the "Holocaust Literature" elective and introducing it to the school district. At the time of the study, she had taught this elective course for sixteen years. Thirty-nine students were enrolled in the two classes taught by Ms. Brown—a veteran ELA teacher of seventeen years. Ms. Brown had taught the elective course for three years. Both teachers were very much invested in the "Holocaust Literature" course and were committed to pursuing professional development opportunities that expanded their understanding of and knowledge regarding genocide. Ms. Smith, during an interview with the research team, remarked that she wished she had named the elective "Genocide Studies" because she felt that title more accurately reflected the course she had constructed.

During the unit, both Ms. Smith and Ms. Brown made similar pedagogical decisions. They both spent the first lesson exploring the definition of genocide by the United Nations (UN) included in the curriculum materials.¹⁵ While Ms. Brown was, in her words, still "a learner," Ms. Smith demonstrated detailed knowledge regarding the history of the UN definition and its foundation in the thinking of Raphael Lemkin.¹⁶ Ms. Smith reminded students of conversations they had held at the beginning of the semester and asked them to remember why defining genocide and working to ensure its status as an international crime was important to Lemkin. Both teachers, however, asked students to view the definition as "fluid" (in Ms. Brown's words) and open to critique and interpretation. In line with history education scholarship,¹⁷ both teachers problematized the UN's legal definition.

In the four lessons that followed, Ms. Smith and Ms. Brown then engaged their students in testimony analysis using the comparative genocide framework. Both teachers required students to complete a reporting form on Eugenie Mukeshimana's address to the United

Nations on the Rwandan Genocide. Ms. Smith allowed her students to choose one of the five Holocaust testimonies we provided, while Ms. Brown focused her students on the testimony of Abraham Kolski. Students in all four classes completed the graphic organizer as the concluding assignment.

Data Sources and Analysis

We used a variety of data sources for the larger study. Members of the research team attended class during each day that Ms. Brown and Ms. Smith taught the comparative genocide unit and wrote field notes that represented a record of what transpired during each lesson. We also interviewed both teachers before and after the comparative genocide units they taught. To address our research questions for the present study, we collected and qualitatively analyzed the students' two reporting forms and graphic organizers. The research team began their analysis of student work by reading through the entire data corpus. As we read, we wrote memos that focused on any aspect of the student work that seemed particularly pertinent to our research questions. Our memos also enabled us to write about any patterns we believed we saw during the initial phase of analysis. During the next phase of analysis, we re-read the data corpus, looking specifically at how students had understood the general themes and used those themes to understand the individual survivor testimonies against the backdrop of either the Holocaust or the Rwandan Genocide, particularly as expressed in the reporting form, which was constructed to position students as historians who approach the testimonies from an analytical stance.¹⁸ We also noted moments where students appeared to demonstrate a personal connection or empathy towards the survivors whose testimonies they studied. We were interested to see what transpired when students were asked to do the work of historians within the ELA context. The researchers met frequently to discuss the student work and the patterns we were constructing.

Findings

Our data analysis enabled the research team to construct three major patterns representing trends apparent across the student work: (1) students showed understanding of some thematic strands more

than others, (2) students' historical work was impacted by the ELA context, and (3) there were affordances and limitations in focusing students' analytical work on survivor testimonies. We discuss the patterns below and conclude each section with our thoughts regarding how the findings will inform future iterations of the framework and its accompanying tasks and materials.

Understanding Themes

The reporting form asked that students examine the testimony and explicate how the testimony addressed the concepts that comprise the comparative genocide framework: prejudice, violence, survival and resistance, perpetrators, violence, conformity, ideology, and coming to terms with the past. Both teachers led students through the reporting form, reading aloud the descriptions of each theme and their accompanying supporting questions. Students in all four classes asked few clarifying questions about the themes themselves, and the questions they did ask tended to focus on logistical concerns, such as proper form completion and the accompanying timeline. Both Ms. Smith and Ms. Brown also seemed confident that their students understood the themes they were using to analyze the testimonies because they had been studying the Holocaust since the beginning of the Spring semester. Ms. Brown, for example, when talking about the theme of ideology, said to her students, "So ideology and the tools of propaganda...we've seen a lot of this already," referring to the multiple texts and research assignments her students had read and undertaken.

Students' responses on the reporting form showed a nuanced conception of violence. We were initially concerned that students' ideas of violence might not include conceptions that go beyond explicit physical harm, yet several students displayed an understanding that violence can assume other forms, such as environments designed to facilitate psychological damage or perpetual threats of physical harm. For example, when responding to Eugenie Mukeshimana's testimony on the Rwandan Genocide reporting form, students often wrote about how her existence was threatened by people who were meant to protect her and who could murder with impunity (see **Figure 3** for a student example). Other students understood the inhumane treatment and references to the Tutsis as "cockroaches" and

100 WORD SUMMARY: Summarize the events described in the testimony in 100 or less words.

Eugenie Mukeshimana testimony was very informational. She talks about living in Kigali during the genocide and attending high school. She fears for her life, going to and from school. She mentions how soldiers of Rwanda wanted to kill her. I find this extremely shocking because soldiers purpose is to protect citizens. She also talks about nobody doing anything to stop this matter. she gives examples of ways to stop it like preventing radio waves to stop attacks.

WITNESS QUOTATION

Cite the most memorable or powerful quote from the testimony:

"We will exterminate you"

Why did you choose these words?

I choose these words because these words came from a soldier. Soldiers are there to protect you as a citizen. Instead they were making her fear for her life.

Figure 3: A student from Ms. Smith’s class describes the constant threat of violence under which Eugenie Mukeshimana lived during the Rwandan Genocide.

“snakes” to be exterminated as a form of violence. These students demonstrated in their responses that living under constant threat also constitutes a very real form of violence. On a Holocaust reporting form, a student from Ms. Smith’s class noted that Irma Hanner experienced several kinds of pain: the physical pain of disease; the emotional anguish of losing both her family and her childhood; and the lasting psychological imprint of hate that Irma harbored for years after the war. Students, thus, recognized that pain was experienced both physically and mentally.

However, analysis of the completed forms suggested that many students needed further support in understanding some of the other themes that comprise the framework. First, on a more general level, many students tended to seek a very literal application of a theme. For example, when the survivor testimony did not explicitly contain the name of a particular theme (for example, survival and resistance), a number of students wrote that the testimony did not address that theme. They used phrases such as, “the testimony doesn’t say” or the “testimony doesn’t mention.” Students seemed, in some cases, to view the discussion of the themes as a yes/no answer option. Furthermore, we noted that, for the perpetrator section of the reporting form, students tended to name or list the perpetrators. Referring to the Holocaust survivor testimonies, students tended to write “Nazis.” We conjecture that students needed more background knowledge regarding key ideas relevant to Holocaust perpetrators. Further background knowledge, for example, may have helped these students avoid equating all perpetrators with Nazism. Some murderers kill for ideology, but other murderers do not.

A possible reason for students’ tendency to provide brief responses that indicated the presence (or lack of presence) of a concept might be that they needed a more robust understanding of the nuances of each theme’s definition. For example, the two concepts that seemed to be most problematic for students were conformity and ideology. Conformity was one of the concepts that both the Comparative Genocide Project team and the teachers thought students would understand without difficulty because of its applicability to high schoolers’ social reality. Ideology was another concept that many students did not seem to understand. This lack of understanding regarding conformity and ideology were apparent on the reporting forms. One of Ms. Brown’s students stated that they did not believe

Eugenie Mukeshimana’s testimony addressed conformity because “there was not segregation so there were no ways to conform” and also stated that there was no ideology because “Hutus just didn’t like the other tribe.” While this student’s comments may be attributed to a lack of background knowledge regarding the Rwandan Genocide, such statements were also made by students regarding the Holocaust. For example, a student in Ms. Smith’s class wrote that the testimony did address ideology because “Irma’s uncle had tried to adopt her since he was a Christian and save her from concentration camps.” In addition, a small number of students also understood conformity in terms of the survivor, making statements such as, “Irma had to conform to the way she lived so she could see her family again.”

Such problematic quotations reinforce the idea that students need opportunities to construct a more thorough understanding of each genocide’s historical background before undertaking this comparative work. For the Rwandan Genocide, this would include understanding the conflict in the context of larger problems such as colonialism and decolonization. Just as time was spent exploring the fluidity of the United Nations’ definition of genocide, it appears that students needed more time and support in building a more nuanced understanding of each of the themes and the relationships between the themes.

ELA Context

During our analysis of student work, we began to recognize that the ELA classroom context foregrounded some pedagogical considerations while backgrounding others. Below, we examine how students’ representations of their historical thinking differed in detail and quality from the reporting form tasks that more closely resembled work sometimes undertaken in ELA contexts.

Undertaking Historical Work. From a historical perspective, what we can claim to know relies upon an intricate interplay between sourcing and corroboration: historians test the reliability of one source by seeing what other sources have to say about it and its contents, and vice versa.¹⁹ Therefore, on page three of the reporting form, we asked students to build historical knowledge regarding the life and times of each genocide survivor. We considered this task central to the testimony analysis because we believed it would help

students connect the individual testimonies to their geographic and sociopolitical contexts. We did not want students to perceive the testimonies as isolated statements of experience free from context.

However, short or absent responses to the tasks on page three suggested that many students needed further support in understanding the historical purpose and value of these tasks. Consider, for example, the following prompt:

Please look up the event(s) described in the testimony (be sure to cite your source). Do the events described corroborate or contradict the description and function of the place at the time the witness was there? Why or why not?

One student responded, “The history corroborates and backs up Abraham’s story.” When asked whether any other people were mentioned in the testimony and whether they could find anything out about them, the same student replied with similar brevity: “A high[ly] ranked Nazi doctor.” But, when asked whether any historical figures had been mentioned in the same testimony, he replied in the negative. Nevertheless, in his response to the very next prompt (asking whether the testimony corroborated or contradicted other descriptions of the historical figure, and whether he could find evidence regarding the person’s whereabouts at the time of the events described in the testimony), the student stated that the description in the testimony “corroborates Abraham’s testimony, and no.”

It is important to note that not all students neglected to attend to these important historical approaches to knowing. Some students addressed the question by looking up the events described in the survivors’ testimonies and seeking corroborating or contradicting information. All the students who traversed this route used information gleaned from the Internet, and the vast majority used information found on the websites of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), the History Channel, or Wikipedia. Each of these websites represents a more-or-less reliable source of expository information. The curricular design might have better supported students in thinking like historians had it incorporated additional primary source documents (such as those included in the excellent resources offered by the USHMM) as points of corroboration or contradiction, including additional personal accounts or images. To be clear, we do not mean to imply that teachers should facilitate student skepticism regarding the existence of past occurrence of genocides. Rather, by constructing an

evidence-based account of the genocides, students will be inoculated to the claims of deniers by virtue of understanding how knowledge of genocides is constructed. Understanding how we “know” genocides will highlight the ignorance of denial.

Undertaking ELA Work. In ELA, recent curricular policy has assumed a text-dependent stance to reading and analyzing texts, which privileges the text itself and focuses analysis and textual discussion “on the four corners of the page.”²⁰ When approaching text from this perspective, information beyond the text itself is not foregrounded. The social and political contexts of either text production or text reception²¹ are not prioritized or factored into textual analysis. A consequence of this focus on single texts isolated from contexts of production and reception is that corroborating and/or challenging the information presented is currently not emphasized in ELA standards.²² We believe, therefore, that there might be important epistemological differences between the history and ELA classroom. How students “know” things and what “counts” as evidence for claims in the ELA classroom will likely differ from assumptions about knowledge and evidence typical of history classrooms. Even though both teachers introduced students to the Holocaust’s historical contexts, it may be that single-text analysis dominated the work students were required to undertake. These are important considerations given the inclusion of Holocaust texts in ELA standards and curricula.²³

In contrast to the brevity of students’ approach to the historical work on page three of the form, students increased the length of their responses and demonstrated their personal connections with the testimony on page four. Students across all four classes demonstrated that they had comprehended the testimony by writing detailed summaries (see **Figure 4** for an example).

Students’ most frequent demonstrations of personal and emotional connection to the survivors’ accounts were found in their choice of powerful or significant quotations and their consequent justifications for their selections. The research team observed this trend in students’ responses across their analyses of testimonies from both genocides. For example, one of Ms. Brown’s students, first quoting Mukeshimana’s statement that “it is possible to save the future generations by educating them,” then justified her selection:

100 WORD SUMMARY: Summarize the events described in the testimony in 100 or less words.

Abraham Kolski and his family were forced to live in their barbershop in a ghetto. There was no food and his father died of hunger. Abraham, his mother, and his two brothers were sent to Auschwitz. The brothers had their lives spared many times because of their skills as barbers. They were marched for months with no food or sense of hygiene. The brothers were finally liberated but after being separated, the youngest brother did not make it.

Figure 4: A student from Ms. Brown's class accurately and succinctly summarizes Abraham Kolski's Holocaust survivor testimony.

Education is so important to me. And this is something I have believed for so long. So many people fall into conformity or just believe what their parents believe. I don't think that's right. There needs to be a strong education system to teach students about the world so they can see it differently, so we don't become the 12-year-old boy following along the path our ancestors took, but become our own person with our own beliefs.

Bearing these different constructions of knowledge in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that students exhibited both a connection and commitment to the summarization and quotation response tasks given the ELA context of this unit. Furthermore, some of the comments students made on the recommendations page of the reporting form suggest that students find doing this kind of textual analysis work incommensurate with undertaking historical work. For example, several students commented that they thought the testimonies should be used for teaching genocide in high school, but that survivor testimonies might not be useful to historians researching genocide. With regards to Mukeshimana's testimony in particular, students expressed that they felt the testimony did not contain enough information for a historian. One student commented that Mukeshimana "only shared her beliefs, and it

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLASSROOM / RESEARCH USAGE

Do you think this testimony should be used for a historian researching genocide (check one):

YES _____ NO X

Do you think this testimony should be used for teaching genocide in high school (check one):

YES X NO _____

If you think this testimony *should* be used, please list three reasons why below:

1. It shows what she went through when she was growing up.
2. It shows what people that are suppose to protect cause more harm.
3. She explains that she only wants help.

If you think this testimony *should not* be used, please list the reasons why below (e.g., not reliable, poor quality recording, not informative, not representative of the experience of the group):

1. No because it was more dehumanizing than kill thousands.
2. No because she doesn't explain any killing and genocide means killing
3. No because she didn't have many examples she kept dehumanizing
talking about the sort of same experience but different
day when it happened.

Figure 5: A student from Ms. Smith’s class recommends Eugenie Mukeshimana’s survivor testimony for high school study of genocide, but not for historical research.

wasn’t very informative.” Another student felt that the testimony should not be used by a historian because it was a personal account of dehumanization and did not detail the murder of thousands (see **Figure 5**). Seeking to do history in an ELA classroom, then, may complicate efforts to help students approach testimonies from a historical analytical stance. Working within an ELA context, students may have found it difficult to engage in historical

disciplinary constructions of knowledge, which may, in turn, reinforce conceptions of history as a series of facts concerning what happened rather than as an interpretive act.

Affordances and Limitations of Analyzing Survivor Testimony

As we iteratively coded and discussed student work, we began to consider the value of the testimonies in terms of affordances and constraints they offered. In terms of affordances, the personal nature of the testimonies seemed to resonate with students, often providing them with unexpected insights and points of view. For example, many students chose to highlight the moment Abraham Kolski described his father's death and stated that "he was lucky." One student remarked, "that just gives me perspective, like his father is no longer living and yet he is fortunate," while a second student expressed that "to him, peaceful death was precious and it was better than going through all of the pain." On the reporting form's recommendations page, students stated that they valued the testimonies because they "offered first-hand experiences" that were "emotional and personal." Several students stated that the survivors' testimonies provide hope, and many students stated that survivor testimonies played an important role in remembrance of and understanding about genocide. Other students relayed that they believed survivor testimonies could aid genocide prevention efforts.

Furthermore, some students found the testimonies made the issue of genocide easier to comprehend. One of Ms. Smith's students, for example, selected Eugenie Mukeshimana's quote comparing Hutu perpetrators to "bullies on the school bus," explaining her selection by saying, "Eugenie used her hardships and compared them to everyday hardships." For this student, it seems Mukeshimana's ability to analogize her experience into everyday terms was a powerful sense-making mechanism for the student.

This same ability of the testimonies to appeal to students' sense of relevance also came at a cost, perhaps most notably in how easily students assimilated the testimonies into their own framework of school bullying. Consider the following quote from Mukeshimana's testimony:

[The Hutus] came to our faces, and they said, “You are cockroaches. You are snakes. We can kill you now, and nobody will ask about you.” And you used to hear these messages every day going to school.

This quotation seems a prime opportunity for students to reflect on the ubiquitous, inescapable nature of everyday violence experienced by marginalized groups. Nevertheless, a student’s explanation of why she chose this particular quotation seems to put into stark light a missed opportunity to consider Mukeshimana’s circumstances deeply:

This quote is so relevant nowadays and back then and basically since the beginning of time. There’s always been bullies, and in my opinion, there will always be bullies, but it’s important that we don’t give them the attention they want.

This response to Mukeshimana’s recounting causes concerns for several reasons. First, this student’s explanation seems to reveal a deep-seated misunderstanding of the historical context of the Rwandan Genocide, in terms of both space and time. It is disheartening to think this student might have walked away from this exercise with the notion that Mukeshimana and the many Tutsis and moderate Hutu that died in the Rwandan Genocide could have avoided their fate by simply choosing not to “give them the attention they want.”

Such responses were not restricted to Eugenie Mukeshimana’s testimony and cannot necessarily be explained by a lack of background knowledge regarding the Rwandan Genocide. Commenting on Abraham Kolski’s Holocaust testimony, one student wrote that it should be used in high schools because Kolski’s testimony and descriptions of the roles prisoners were forced to enact in order to survive “provided good insight into careers in the camps.” In both cases, far more important than the content-related misconceptions, students’ explanations seem to reflect a lack of historical empathy on the part of the student.

Our findings, then, show students adopting a range of emotional distances from the texts—sometimes within a single reporting form. When emotionally close to the testimony, the students appeared to understand that they were bearing witness to a human being’s lived experience. They understood and were able to write about the

pain, trauma, anger, and (on occasion) hope the survivor described within their testimony. However, at other times, students seemed emotionally distant from that lived experience. When they appeared emotionally distant, we found that, instead of bearing witness and helping to shoulder the responsibility of remembrance and ethical global citizenship, students seemed to fall short of acknowledging the severity and horror of the atrocities experienced during genocide.

Discussion

We began this classroom study knowing that what we learned would inform our work in advancing comparative genocide study in high school classrooms. This study has not changed our belief in the importance of a comparative approach to studying genocide, nor the promise that we believe the conceptual framework developed by the Comparative Genocide Project holds. Nevertheless, students' work also illuminated important limitations. Therefore, to better support teachers in designing comparative genocide curricula for their specific classroom contexts and students, four key considerations will form the basis of our efforts and help determine the future directions our work will take.

First, we wish to build upon the affordances of our approach to comparative genocide study. As illustrated in the opening vignette, this comparative genocide unit marked the first time that many students had learned about the Rwandan Genocide. For students to take action or become "agents of change" as their teachers wished, it is important that students realize that genocide is not synonymous with the Holocaust. The reporting forms and comparative organizers demonstrated that students understood Eugenie Mukeshimana's testimony and were able to identify, write about, and represent thematic similarities and differences between the two survivor testimonies they explored. Students also constructed personal connections to the survivor testimonies on parts of the reporting form, demonstrating empathy and the ability to bear witness to the experiences spoken by other people. To be sure, students misinterpreted some of the key themes and included some historical errors in their work. However, we believe that the comparative approach provided students with the opportunity to begin learning about the Rwandan Genocide through survivor

testimony and to build an initial understanding of the characteristics that link genocides separated by time and space. This exposure to the Rwandan Genocide and to the stories of those who survived was valuable, even if our study highlighted issues regarding students' understanding of the larger historical contexts of the Rwandan Genocide and the Holocaust.

Second, our study suggests students' lack of equal background knowledge of both genocides limited the effectiveness of the comparative approach. A comparative approach to genocide necessitates students building an understanding of the unique historical backgrounds of both genocides before initiating comparative work. Students understood the testimonies and were able to empathize with the survivors whose stories they analyzed. Still, their work did not demonstrate a detailed understanding of the broader contexts of both genocides. We will, therefore, strive to build a more balanced curriculum that incorporates a stronger emphasis on the social, economic, and political factors that have resulted in genocide. We also believe that students would benefit from additional instruction on oral history, memory, and the use of primary sources such as testimonies in understanding genocide. However, if comparative approaches to genocide study do require more extensive contextual and disciplinary emphases, we are concerned about the framework's suitability in current high school curricular spaces. The students in this study were able to spend five days on this unit. Even this amount of time might not be possible in many classrooms, particularly in history and social studies classes, where it is not uncommon to spend only one or two lessons touching upon major world events. Students in those classrooms most likely would not be able to engage in all aspects of the framework. Our study, then, also highlights issues with the current construction of K-12 history and social studies curricula and high school schedules.

Third, we wish to develop curricular tools grounded in the pedagogical best practices of history education to support teachers and students in an array of disciplinary contexts. We wonder whether the positioning of this activity within an ELA classroom may have backgrounded opportunities for students to develop rich contextual knowledge vital to understanding how and why everyday people can transform over the course of months into advocates for genocide. For example, David Christian's notion of

“scaling,” a disciplinary-specific pedagogical tool in which teachers strategically shift students’ focal perspective recursively between and among historical individuals, groups, nations, and regions, may be particularly helpful in analyzing genocide generally and comparative genocide specifically.²⁴ While there are benefits to an interdisciplinary approach to comparative genocide study, our study suggests that students need a firmer grounding in history to understand context and establish disciplinary knowledge.

Finally, we realized that our resources also need to address the seven themes and include opportunities to support students in developing a nuanced understanding of these concepts. At the outset of our study, we wanted to examine how comparison of genocides centered on survivor testimony support and/or hindered students’ understanding of the unique and similar qualities of each genocide event. Our classroom study revealed that students understood some of the concepts well, but demonstrated visibly less comfortability with other concepts. Additionally, students should have the opportunity to respond to, challenge, and expand upon the concept definitions we presented to them. We hope that students who use the comparative genocide framework will produce sophisticated knowledge regarding genocide that empowers them to interrogate current definitions of genocide and the legal processes that determine which violent acts count as crimes against humanity. Our goal is for students to act upon and help transform their worlds.²⁵

Conclusion

The Comparative Genocide Project presented a framework for comparative inquiry and education through common themes in survivor testimony from different genocides, and the study reported in this article investigated how students understood the themes that span genocides and attempted to understand how a comparative approach to genocide study might help and/or interfere with students’ understanding of the qualities unique to each genocide they studied. We found that students understood some concepts more than others and established that this uneven understanding impacted the nature of students’ analyses and comparison. Students’ work was also affected by a lack of historical background, particularly with regards to the Rwandan Genocide. However, some students

demonstrated empathy when responding to the survivor testimonies and established personal connections to the survivor testimonies on some parts of the reporting form. Our work strongly suggests that students need time in social studies or history classes and guidance from teachers to build the historical knowledge for this important and complex work, possibly in coordination with ELA teachers who will likely teach genocide literature. History teachers, thus, have an essential role to play in both advocating and creating space for comparative genocide education across the curriculum. The Comparative Genocide Project will continue to support teachers in ensuring that students graduate high school with both knowledge of genocide beyond the Holocaust and the understanding that people continue to perpetrate genocide across the globe.

Notes

1. Please note that all study participants' names are pseudonyms.
2. Lauren McArthur Harris, Stephanie F. Reid, Volker Benkert, and Jason Bruner, "Investigating Comparative Genocide Teaching in Two High School Classrooms," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 47, no. 4 (October-December 2019): 497-525.
3. Brenda Melendy, "World History Analysis and the Comparative Study of Genocide," *World History Connected* 9, no. 3 (October 2012), <https://worldhistoryconnected.press.illinois.edu/9.3/forum_melendy.html>.
4. For a more detailed description of this debate, see Harris, Reid, Benkert, and Bruner, "Investigating Comparative Genocide Teaching in Two High School Classrooms."
5. Koen Kluessien and Carse Ramos, "A Matter of Comparison: The Holocaust, Genocides and Crimes Against Humanity: An Analysis and Overview of Comparative Literature and Programs," International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, November 2017, <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/IHRA_AMatterofComparison_December2018.pdf>.
6. Martin Shaw, "From Comparative to International Genocide Studies: The International Production of Genocide in 20th-Century Europe," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 4 (December 2012): 645-668.
7. Jason Bruner, Volker Benkert, Lauren McArthur Harris, Marcie Hutchinson, and Anders Erik Lundin, "Developing a Critical Comparative Genocide Method," *World History Connected* 14, no. 2. (June 2017), <https://worldhistoryconnected.press.uillinois.edu/14.2/forum_bruner.html>.
8. Shaw, "From Comparative to International Genocide Studies."
9. See, for example, A. Dirk Moses, "Empire, Colony, Genocide: Keywords and the Philosophy of History," in *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses (New York: Berghahn Books 2010), 3-54; Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe, "Indigenocide and the Massacre of Aboriginal History," *Overland*, no. 163 (June 2001): 21-40; Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press 1989), 91; and Steven T. Katz, "The Uniqueness of the Holocaust: The Historical Dimension," in *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*, ed. Alan S. Rosenbaum, third ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press 2009), 55-74.
10. Alex Alvarez, *Native America and the Question of Genocide* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 112.
11. Bruner, Benkert, Harris, Hutchinson, and Lundin, "Developing a Critical Comparative Genocide Method."
12. The Comparative Genocide Project was formed by an interdisciplinary group of scholars: Lauren McArthur Harris, a history education scholar, focusing on world history; Volker Benkert, a historian who specializes in modern German and European history and German Jewish history; Jason Bruner, a history and religious studies scholar who focuses on European imperialism and Christian practices in sub-Saharan Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and

Marcie Jergel Hutchinson, a history education scholar. Stephanie Reid, whose research focuses on literacy and ELA education, and Taylor Kessner, a learning scientist who focuses on history and social studies education, were later invited to participate in the study. Four of the six group members are also former social studies and ELA secondary teachers.

13. For example, Mary Beth Donnelly, "Educating Students about the Holocaust: A Survey of Teaching Practices," *Social Education* 70, no. 1 (January-February 2006): 51-54; Mary M. Juzwik, "The Ethics of Teaching Disturbing Pasts: Reader Response, Historical Contextualization, and Rhetorical (Con) Textualization of Holocaust Texts in English," *English Education* 45, no. 3 (April 2013): 284-308; B. Joyce Stallworth and Louel C. Gibbons, "What's on the list...now?: A Survey of Book-Length Works Taught in Secondary Schools," *English Leadership Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (February 2012): 2-3.

14. Catherine Newbury and David Newbury, "The Genocide in Rwanda and the Holocaust in Germany: Parallels and Pitfalls," *Journal of Genocide Research* 5, no. 1 (2003): 135-145.

15. The United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect defines genocide in Article II of the Genocide Convention. In the Genocide Convention, "genocide means 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; and e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." United Nations, Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, "Genocide," <<https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>>.

16. Raphael Lemkin coined the term "genocide" and wrote this definition: "Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group." Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress*, second ed. (Clark, NJ: Lawbook Exchange, 2008), 79. For further information regarding Raphael Lemkin, his definition of genocide, and his contributions to the designation of genocide as a crime against humanity in international law, see Facing History and Ourselves, "Raphael Lemkin and the Genocide Convention," in *Holocaust and Human Behavior*, <<https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-11/raphael-lemkin-and-genocide-convention>>.

17. Tamara L. Shreiner, "Helping Students Use World Historical Knowledge to Take a Stand on a Contemporary Issue: The Case of Genocide," *The History Teacher* 50, no. 3 (May 2017): 359-380.

18. Keith C. Barton and Linda S. Levstik, *Teaching History for the Common Good* (Mahwah, NJ: Routledge, 2004), 69.

19. Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001).

20. Lucy Calkins, Mary Ehrenworth, and Christopher Lehman, *Pathways to the Common Core: Accelerating Achievement* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2012), 39.

21. Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2016).

22. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts* (2010), <<https://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>>. It is important to note that there are ELA standards for history/social studies teachers. In the ELA standards for history/social studies teachers, there are two standards dedicated to comparing and contrasting sources and documents and to corroborating or challenging an author's claims. This supports our assertion that corroboration and challenge is currently more associated with history education contexts than ELA contexts.

23. See, for example, Engage NY, *Common Core Curriculum: Grade 11 ELA Curriculum Map* (New York: New York State Department of Education, 2014), available at <<https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-11-english-language-arts>>.

24. David Christian, *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History*, second ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011).

25. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 50th Anniversary Edition (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).

Appendix A

**Comparative Genocide Framework
Seven Themes and Supporting Questions**

Theme	Theme Explanation	Supporting Questions
Prejudice	Genocide and atrocity often erupt suddenly, yet rarely without a prior history of conflict and hatred. One precondition to genocide is to define a group as fundamentally different, often building on long existing racial, religious, or ethnic prejudices. This can occur in many ways through segregation and ostracism enacted by state bureaucracies and supported by mainstream society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the author of the testimony you investigated experience prejudice, segregation, or ostracism? • How did prejudice by others manifest itself, and how was segregation enforced? • Who ostracized the author of the testimony, and how exactly was she/he subject to ostracism such as theft of her/his property, violence against religious symbols, and social isolation?
Violence	Physical violence aimed at persecuting or enslaving others often, but not necessarily, has led to ethnic cleansing and genocide. All ethnic cleansing entails large-scale murder. Some instances of mass murder, like the murder of Tutsis by Hutus in Rwanda, are aimed entirely at the killing of an entire group. Other instances, like what happened with Native Americans, were often aimed at decimation and displacement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which forms of violence, such as beating, rape, ethnic cleansing, and murder, did the author of the testimony you investigated witness firsthand?

Theme	Theme Explanation	Supporting Questions
Survival and Resistance	No people were killed and no group was destroyed without resistance, yet resistance could take on different forms. Survival in itself is an act of resistance. Yet some went even further by sabotaging the work of the persecutors, helping others, or offering armed resistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which strategies of survival did the author of the testimony employ and how did she/he resist the persecutors, such as hiding and aiding others or even bearing witness to crimes after the atrocity? • Did the testimony mention any use of counter-force against the perpetrators of genocide? If so, in what ways? • Did the survivor act alone or with a group? • How did their strategies of survival and/or resistance change through the course of the genocide?
Perpetrators	People commit genocides, not faceless bureaucracies led by a dictator and his madmen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who were the perpetrators, and in what kind of military or bureaucratic structures were they organized? • Does the testimony you worked on say anything about the motivations of perpetrators? • Which role did economic considerations play, and how did perpetrators benefit from the crimes?

Theme	Theme Explanation	Supporting Questions
Conformity	No atrocity can be committed without the tacit consent of the mainstream population. Such conformity can be achieved by threatening the mainstream population. Yet indifference or, worse still, willing complicity for personal gain were also important factors that made ordinary people go along with the atrocities that were unfolding around them. As such, many members of the mainstream society benefited by taking over land, water rights, or possessions of those persecuted, while others stood idly by.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the testimony you investigated say about ordinary members of the non-persecuted group? • Was there a vast change in intergroup relations? If so, was this a sudden or gradual change? • Did the survivors feel threatened by others in the community? • Did the speaker see ordinary people complicit in these atrocities? If so, how?
Ideology	Encompassing ideologies and the propagandistic tools to spread them are essential to elicit enough support from perpetrators, bystanders, and beneficiaries to the crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were ideas spread and which media are mentioned in the testimony? • In which ways did the ideas build on pre-existing prejudice? • How did the state justify or explain its decisions to commit these atrocities? • How did state ideologies change in order to facilitate the murder of others? • To what extent were those persecuted blamed for their own suffering or made scapegoats for contemporary problems?

Theme	Theme Explanation	Supporting Questions
Coming to Terms with the Past	Justice, commemoration, and reconciliation are ways for survivors to address the past.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the testimony offer any insights as to how to commemorate the atrocity, how and if perpetrators were brought to justice, and how those who stood idly by were held responsible? • Is there any mention of reconciliation, and what would be the prerequisites of reconciliation in the eyes of the victims? • Does the speaker come across as having found some sort of justice and/or reconciliation? • Does she/he feel that the crimes have been officially recognized and/or compensated in some form? • Is there a sense of hope for the future? If not, what is the survivor's disposition to her or his past?

Appendix B

Comparative Genocide Reporting Form

COMPARATIVE GENOCIDE REPORTING FORM

Please review the entire form before watching/listening to/reading the testimony.

STUDENT RESEARCHER INFORMATION

Your name: _____ Date: _____

Grade level and course: _____ School: _____

Teacher's name: _____

TESTIMONY GENERAL INFORMATION

Note: "Testimony" is used to describe any account provided by a witness.

Name of testimony (for example, *The Diary of Anne Frank*): _____

Name of the genocide (e.g., The Holocaust, Rwandan Genocide): _____

TESTIMONY AND PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Date of testimony given: _____ Date of event(s) discussed: _____

Place where testimony was recorded: _____

Place where events occurred: _____

Where and how it is stored now (link to web location): _____

Type of the testimony (interview, court testimony, diary, autobiography, other):

Type of rendition (text, video, audio): _____

Length (pages, minutes): _____

Person / Institution who collected the testimony (for example, the person asking the questions):

Name: _____

The role(s) the person played in the process (for example, interviewer, collector, editor, all three):

If possible, identify the person's motivation for generating the testimony:

Witness (fill in as much information as possible about the witness **at the time of the event**):

Name of witness: _____

Gender: _____ **Age** (at time of event): _____

Nationality/ethnicity: _____

Education level: _____

Occupation: _____

Religion: _____

How does he/she know about the events he/she describes?

Which experiences were personal? Which were reports from others?

CONTEXT OF THE EVENTS DESCRIBED

Please look up the event(s) described in the testimony (be sure to cite your source). Do the events described corroborate or contradict the description and function of the place at the time the witness was there? Why or why not?

If other people are mentioned in the testimony, can you find out anything about them (be sure to cite your sources)?

Are there any historical figures mentioned? _____

If so, does the description in the testimony corroborate or contradict other descriptions of that person? Did you find evidence that the person mentioned actually was or could have been at that place in that time?

100 WORD SUMMARY: Summarize the events described in the testimony in 100 words or less.

WITNESS QUOTATION

Cite the most memorable or powerful quote from the testimony:

Why did you choose these words?

COMPARATIVE THEMES

Please address the following questions for the themes below. Please indicate if the testimony does not address a particular theme. See below for theme explanation.

Theme	Yes/No	Explanation (using the questions below as a guide)
#1 Prejudice		
#2 Violence		
#3 Survival / Resistance		

<p>#4 Perpetrators</p>		
<p>#5 Conformity</p>		
<p>#6 Ideology</p>		
<p>#7 Coming to Terms with the Past</p>		

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLASSROOM / RESEARCH USAGE

Do you think this testimony should be used for a historian researching genocide?
(check one):

YES _____ NO _____

Do you think this testimony should be used for teaching genocide in high school?
(check one):

YES _____ NO _____

If you think this testimony *should* be used, please list three reasons why below:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

If you think this testimony *should not* be used, please list three reasons why below (e.g., not reliable, poor quality recording, not informative, not representative of the experience of the group):

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____



NEW! 2019 Book Releases

Range of Topics from Pop Culture to History

Offer your students well-rounded courses on current trends in Asia with our extensive scope of Asia-focused publications.

Explore the whole range of AAS books at <http://bit.ly/AASPublications>



Association for
Asian Studies

BOSTON, MA, USA 2020 03.19-22
HONG KONG 2020 06.22-24
 JOIN US AT ONE OF THE LARGEST ASIAN STUDIES EVENTS WORLDWIDE

Visit <https://www.asian-studies.org>

Attend an Association for Asian Studies conference in the US or Asia to engage with Asian scholars, librarians, diplomats, and publishers from around the world with an avid interest in Asia—its culture, history, and languages.

- Panel Sessions presented by Asian Studies specialists
- Book Exhibit Hall with international publishers