

Eyebright

Unit Three - Dehumanisation

This is the third unit in a series of eight, created for HMD 2010, in partnership with the art and poetry group arthur+martha. You should download and read the project guidelines (http://education.hmd.org.uk/assets/downloads/guidance_notes.pdf) before working through the unit. The work is based on the stages of genocide (<http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides>) as defined by Gregory Stanton. The third stage is Dehumanisation and you need to **make sure** your students understand what happens in this stage. **Discuss** the summary below, as an introduction to the unit. You should not attempt to work through the exercises before you have done this.

Summary and discussion

One group denies the humanity of the other group, referring to them as animals. Dehumanisation overcomes the normal human revulsion against murder. Here propaganda is used in print, on radio, TV and the internet to portray the victim group in a negative way.

Explain that dehumanisation is a step towards terrible crimes such as murder. It is much easier to kill if the people who become targets are seen as second class or subhuman. The Nazis spoke of “*untermenschen*” and saw this group as “*unworthy of life.*” In propaganda films they compared Jewish people with rats. In Rwanda the Hutus used terms such as “*cockroach*” to describe Tutsi people. Share part of Ben Helfgott’s (<http://education.hmd.org.uk/case-studies/ben-helfgott/read>) story with your students and ask them to point out how the Nazis tried to dehumanise Ben, his friends and family.

Discuss how and why propaganda works and **ask** why people are influenced by it. **Ask** how the students think people are easily led?

Writing exercise

1. **Draw** a picture of yourself, roughly small enough to fit into a 12cm triangle. It can be realistic or a caricature.
2. **Draw** measuring lines alongside it showing height and width, but instead of giving measurements...
3. Write your ambitions for your life by the length arrow, your feelings for your friends and family next to the chest. **Experiment** with using the language of mathematics or

textspeak, substituting numbers for words (e.g. tonight becomes 2nite, forever becomes 4eva, and so on).

4. Lastly, and **most importantly**, write your hopes for the future IN WHATEVER COLOUR YOU LIKE above the head. This is the **only** place in the whole project where you will use colour – to make your own hopes stand out brightly.
5. Put a triangle template, 12 cm by 12cm by 12cm over your drawing/writing, draw round it and cut it out. Add a safety pin and turn it into a badge.

Finally - tell everyone that by making positive statements on the badges they have joined **The Legacy of Hope** by reversing Nazi messages of hatred.