

**Title**  
Defining Genocide

**Grade Level**  
9-12

**Author**  
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**Time Required**  
1 class period

**Lesson Objectives**

By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to...

1. Define and provide multiple examples of genocide.

**Appropriate National Standards**

9.f – analyze or formulate policy statements demonstrating an understanding of concerns, standards, issues and conflicts related to universal human rights

**Background**

This lesson is meant to serve as a starting point for discussions of global genocide. As such, it should be used as a way to introduce students to the concept of genocide and its definition as determined by the United Nations.

**Materials**

Copies of the UN definition of genocide ([http://www.ushmm.org/genocide/take\\_action/genocide](http://www.ushmm.org/genocide/take_action/genocide))  
Copies of concept chart graphic organizer

**Procedure**

1. The teacher should ask students to write down what they know about the concept of genocide. If students feel like they know a lot about it, they can attempt to record a definition. If students feel that they do not understand the term, they should be asked to write down what they think it might mean, or where they may have heard it used before. The focus should be on students' thinking, not a right or wrong answer. (3 minutes)
2. After students have jotted their thoughts down, they should turn to a neighbor and discuss what they wrote. Students should feel free to add information from their peers to their own notes. (1 minute)
3. The teacher should then solicit thoughts from students and write down all contributions on the board, providing no extra commentary on what students said. (5 minutes).
4. The teacher should then distribute copies of the United Nations' definition of genocide as set forth in the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The teacher should note that the term genocide was not coined until 1944 and that there is still debate over what constitutes an act of genocide and what does not. (8 minutes).

5. Next, the teacher should hand out the graphic organizer (there are several different types of concept definition graphic organizers and a couple have been attached. Feel free to use what you think is best for your students). Once students have the graphic organizer, the class can begin to work in pairs or small groups to begin filling in their organizers. Most organizers include space for defining characteristics, examples and non-examples. Students should work to the best of their ability to fill in the chart. (12 minutes)
6. Once students have finished filling in their charts, the teacher should ask for students to share what information they used. This time can be used to clarify misunderstandings, correct information and fill in areas that are problematic for students (e.g. non-examples). (10 minutes)
7. The teacher can wrap up the class by going back and comparing what students learned from the UN information and what they put in their charts to what their pre-existing conceptions of genocide were. If time allows, this can also be used as a time to introduce small snippets of what some of the documented cases of genocide were about. (5 minutes)

### **Assessment**

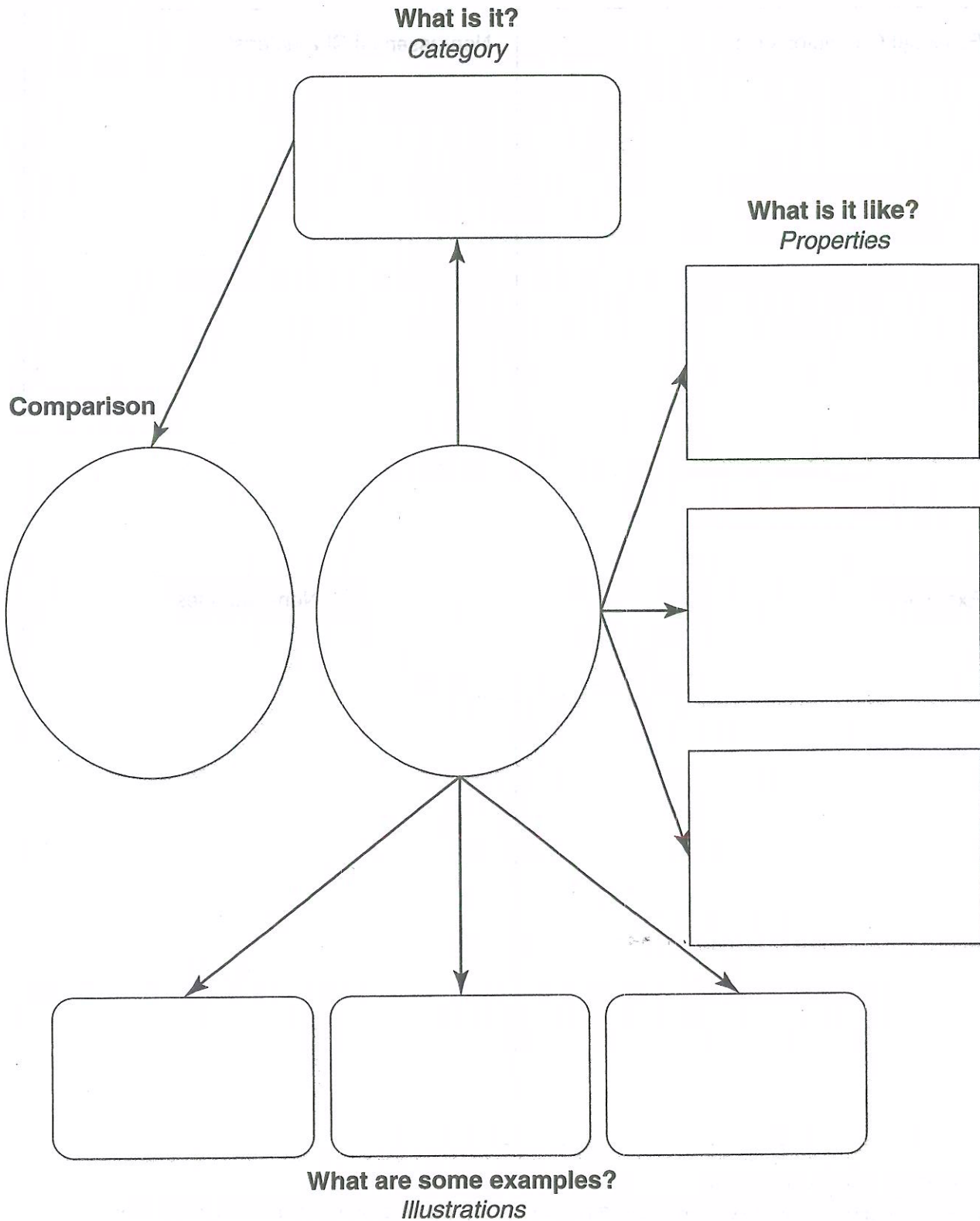
Students will be assessed by their participation in the opening journal question, class discussion and completion of their graphic organizer.

### **Extension Activity**

Students can also be provided with a definition of Crimes Against Humanity. Students can then compare and contrast the definition of Genocide with Crimes Against Humanity using a Venn diagram.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Concept of Definition Map**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Frayer Model

<b>Essential Characteristics</b>	<b>Non-essential Characteristics</b>
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Non-examples</b>

(Frayer, Frederick, &amp; Klausmeier, 1969)

*Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning*, 2nd Ed., by Doug Buehl (c)2001. Newark, DE: International Reading Association. May be copied for classroom use.