



*\*The following lesson, including two options, incorporates the Pyramid of Hate, created by the [Anti-Defamation League \(ADL\)](#); a presentation by, and resources of [Echoes and Reflections](#); and resources of, and adaptations made by the [Holocaust Center for Humanity](#).*

## Pyramid of Hate Lesson

**Objective:** To provide an opportunity to define and recognize hatred in all of its forms, examine the escalating steps of hate, and how hate and prejudice can escalate when no one speaks up or takes action.

### Applicable Learning Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1 (**Speaking & Listening**: Collaborative Discussions)
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2 (**S & L**: Analyze information presented in diverse media & formats)
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 (**College & Career Readiness S & L**: Collaborative Discussions)
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 (**CCRA S & L**: Analyze information presented in diverse media & formats)
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4 (**Language**: Vocabulary acquisition and use)
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.4 (**Reading History/Soc. Studies**: Vocabulary key words and phrases)
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.7 (**Reading History/Soc. Studies**: Integrate visual information with other information)
- SSS3 (**Social Studies Standards**, Deliberates public issues)
- C4 (**Civics**, Understands civic involvement)
- H1 (**History**, Understands historical chronology)
- H2 (**History**, Understands and analyzes causal factors that have shaped major events in history)
- H4 (**History**, Understands how historical events inform analysis of contemporary issues and events)

**I. Rationale:** Bias-motivated violence, in addition to genocide, represent mere tips of an iceberg; an end result that is seen. Beneath what we can see lie attitudes, behaviors, actions and inactions that, if unchecked, create the conditions necessary for that end, tragic result. Unchecked, those attitudes and behaviors become normalized, with the potential to escalate. This lesson, with at least two options, engages students to consider that bias-motivated violence and genocide is not inevitable, encouraging them to realize that their actions (and inactions) have consequences, and that they CAN make a difference.

## Lesson Part One

**II.A. Terms and Definitions:** After studying the escalation of hate terms and definitions of hatred in various forms, below, put each of the following terms in the box that correctly correspond to the example on the right.

- **Bias** An inclination or preference either for or against an individual or group that interferes with impartial judgment.
- **Discrimination** Unfair treatment of one person or a group of people because of their identity (e.g., race, religion, gender ability, culture, etc.). Discrimination is an action that can come from prejudice.
- **Genocide** The act of or intent to deliberately and systematically annihilate an entire religious, racial, national or cultural group.
- **Hate Crime** A criminal act directed at a person or group because of the victim's real or perceived race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or ability.
- **Prejudice** Judging or forming an idea about someone or a group of people before you actually know them. Prejudice is often directed toward people in a certain identity group (e.g., race, religion, gender, etc.)
- **Scapegoating** Blaming a person or group for something, when the fault actually lies elsewhere. Scapegoating includes hostile words or actions that can lead to verbal or physical violence; a person or group is blamed for something because of some aspect of their identity, but they usually lack the power or opportunity to fight back.
- **Stereotype** The false idea that all members of a group are the same and think and behave in the same way.
- **Bias-motivated Violence** An action that emotionally or physically harms a person or group and that is motivated by the identity of the person or group (e.g., race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc.).

### Discrimination, Genocide, Hate Crime, Prejudice, Scapegoating, Stereotyping, Bias and Bias-Motivated Violence

| Term | Example   |
|------|---|
|      | Fashion magazines rarely include photographs of plus-size models in a positive way.   |
|      | A group of LGBTQ teens who attend a peaceful rally in support of same sex marriage are taunted and violently attacked by a group of teens.  |
|      | In Rwanda in the 1990s, the ruling majority Hutus engaged in efforts to systematically destroy their nation's Tutsi population, brutally killing 800,000 Tutsi through violent executions, murders with clubs and machetes and massacres in churches and hospitals. |
|      | An employer does not hire a male candidate who is otherwise qualified because the candidate is wearing a turban as part of his  |

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|--|--|
|  | religious tradition.   |
|  | A teacher doesn't recommend one of her top students for a leadership program in Washington DC because she believes the family couldn't afford the required expenses.   |
|  | A synagogue in a Midwest city is spray-painted with swastikas and hateful graffiti about Jews.   |
|  | A group of employees, all from Ivy League schools, are going out to lunch to discuss an exciting new potential client and her case. They have heard that one of five new hires to their law firm, Wayne, also attended an Ivy League school. They invite Wayne to lunch to talk about this prospective client, but not the other new hires, even though the others are widely considered better qualified for this type of case. |
|  | A school installs a metal detector by the front entrance of the school because of a perceived increase in students' carrying weapons to school. Many of the students are upset with the new procedures this creates and blame Muslim students at the school because of people's concerns about terrorism.  |

*\*Adapted from Anti-Defamation League (2016) Empowering Young People in the Aftermath of Hate*  
(Potential -- though not exclusive -- answers are at the bottom of this document)

**II.B. Definition of the Holocaust:** For teachers intending to use the Pyramid of Hate as a foundational lesson for ensuing learning about the Holocaust or other instances of genocide, now would be an optimal time to introduce the definition of the Holocaust. Ask students what wonders they have regarding this definition, either asking them to post them on an actual or virtual word wall, entering them into chat, google jamboard, etc. Save this document, indicating that hopefully most of their wonders will be answered by the end of their learning.

**Definition.**

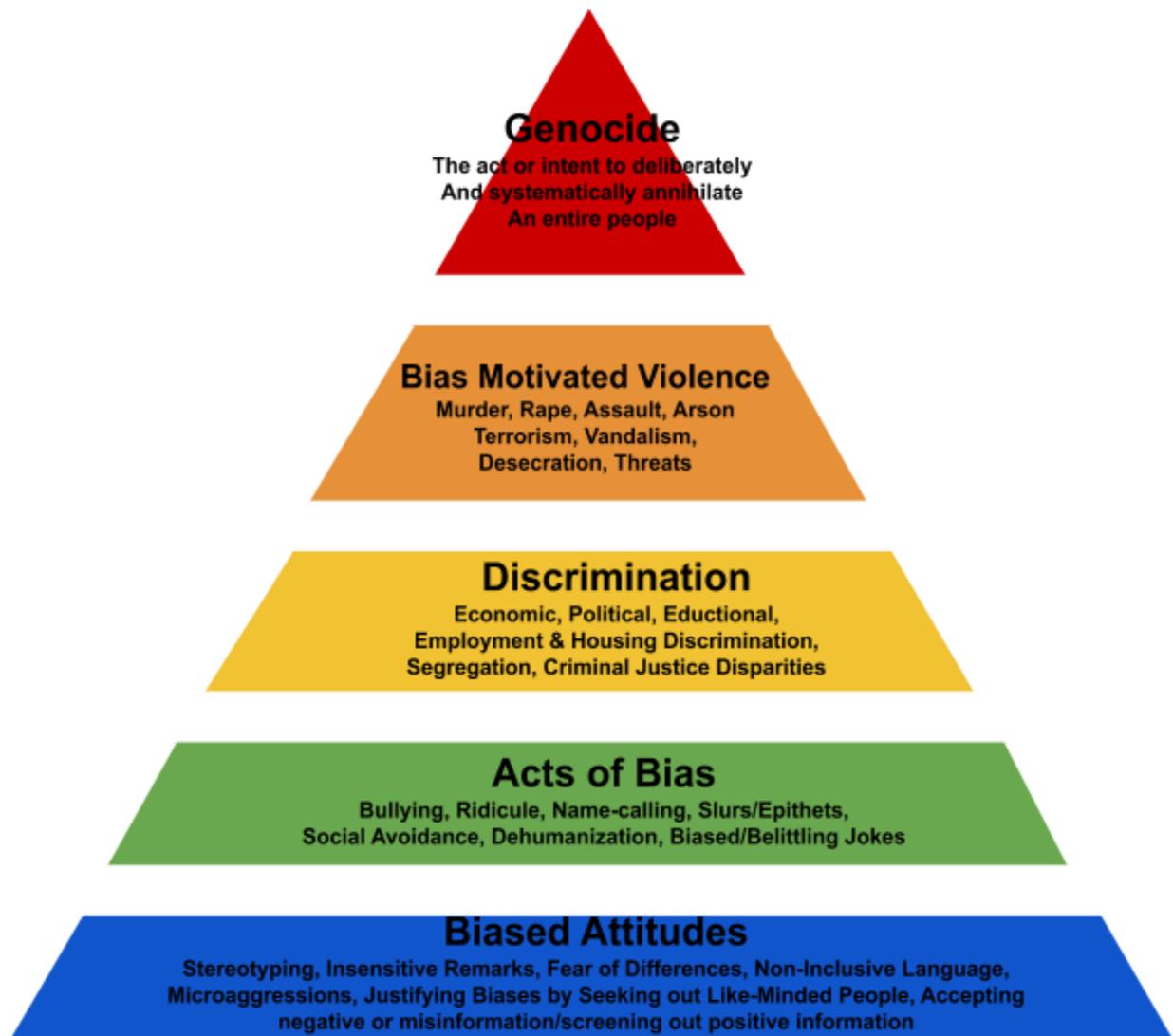
The **Holocaust** was the systematic, bureaucratic, state sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. "Holocaust" is a word of Greek origin meaning "sacrifice by fire." The Nazis, who came to power in Germany in January 1933, believed that Germans were "racially superior" and that the Jews, deemed "inferior," were an alien threat to the so-called German racial community.

During the era of the Holocaust, German authorities also targeted other groups because of their perceived "racial inferiority": Roma (Gypsies), the disabled, and some of the Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians, and others). Other groups were persecuted on political, ideological, and behavioral grounds, among them Communists, Socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and homosexuals (gay men). (definition by Echoes and Reflections)

**Lesson Part Two**

**III. Pyramid of Hate:**

**A.** Consider the **Pyramid of Hate**, below. The Pyramid shows biased behaviors, growing in complexity from the bottom to the top. Although the behaviors at each level negatively impact individuals and groups, as one moves up the pyramid, the behaviors have more life-threatening consequences. Like a pyramid, the upper levels are supported by the lower levels. If people or institutions treat behaviors on the lower levels as being acceptable or “normal,” it results in the behaviors at the next level becoming more accepted. In response to the questions of the world community about where the hate of genocide comes from, the Pyramid of Hate demonstrates that the hate of genocide is built upon the acceptance of behaviors described in the lower levels of the pyramid.



**B.** **\*Activity Option 1** (Together with Lesson Part One, 1 class period)

*\*\*Teachers, See below, Additional Teacher Notes re: Presenting the Pyramid of Hate*

1. For each level of the pyramid, ask students to provide one or two additional examples from their own experiences, situations they have heard or read about or in history that also exemplify the level.
2. Lead a brief whole group discussion, using some or all of the questions that follow.

- a. What are some of the factors that make it more likely that hate will escalate? (e.g., hate behaviors are tolerated; the media reinforces stereotypes; friends or family members may communicate agreement with one another's prejudices)
- b. Once the actions of a person involved in a bias incident began to escalate, do you think it's difficult to stop? Why or why not?
- c. What are some things that might stop the escalation of hate? (e.g., education; new laws; enforcement of existing school policies and laws)
- d. At what level of the pyramid do you think it would be easiest for someone to intervene? What are the possible consequences of waiting until behaviors escalate to take action?
- e. What are some actions people can take to interrupt the escalation of hate? What can communities do?
- f. In what ways does this understanding of the tendency of hate to escalate relate to [the current incident being discussed]?

**\*\*Activity Option 2 (Together with Lesson Part One, 2 class periods)**

*\*\*Teachers, See below, Additional Teacher Notes re: Presenting the Pyramid of Hate*

- I. For an analysis and application *more specific to the Holocaust*, explain to the students that you will be showing a series of images and video clips (links below). For each,
  - a) Provide time for students to reflect, converse and/or offer their ideas of which stage of the Pyramid of Hate that each such image or clip exemplifies, and why. *Note that it is possible for some to attach to more than one category.*
  - b) Encourage students to offer one or more examples of other situations, events, etc., that they have seen, experienced and/or learned about which would also come under each category on the Pyramid. These can be entered and saved live (on a class poster showing the Pyramid, with space for examples at each level, or virtually (via chat, google jamboard, etc.)

1. [Nazi Propaganda Comparison of Jew and Aryan \(image\)](#)
2. [Testimony of Klaus Stern \(video clip\)](#) (*ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE: Klaus was born in Breslau, Germany on May 7, 1921. With the rise of the Nazi party, Klaus began to feel increasingly ostracized, even among his childhood friends. He married his girlfriend Paula in July 1942, but in April 1943, they were deported to Auschwitz and separated. Over the next two years, Klaus was imprisoned in Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen, Flossenburg, Leonberg, and Mühldorf. He was liberated in May 1945 by American troops. After liberation, Klaus reunited with his wife and they immigrated to the United States in 1946, becoming the first Holocaust survivors to settle in Seattle, where they raised two children. When the war began, Klaus was eighteen years old.*)
3. [Testimony of Eva Tannenbaum-Cummins \(video clip\)](#) (*ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE: Eva was born in Berlin, Germany on November 26, 1922. When Hitler came to power, her life changed dramatically: her father was fired from his job as a newspaper critic, and Eva and her Jewish peers were expelled from school. Her father died of a heart attack only a couple of years later. After more than a year of desperately trying to leave Germany, Eva's mother arranged an affidavit from a cousin in Seattle, and they left Germany in July 1939 with only \$20. Eva attended high school in Seattle, married, and raised two children. She became a successful actress and wrote an auto-biographical one-woman show, "A Page from the Past...Or Is It?" When the war began, Eva was sixteen years old.*)

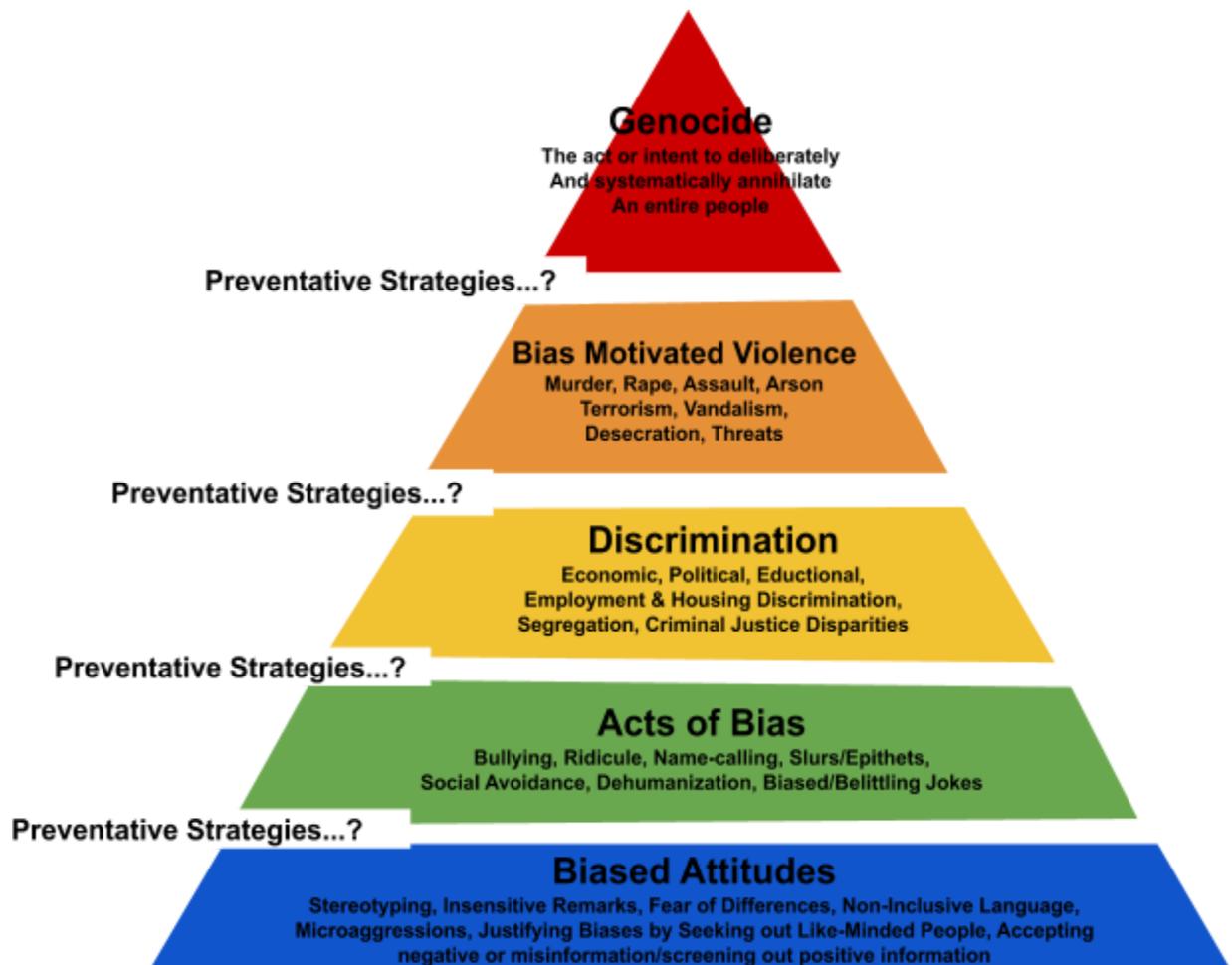
4. [Nazi Propaganda Boycott Sign, 1933 \(image\)](#)
5. [The Horowitz Synagogue \(Frankfurt\), Kristallnacht, November 1938 \(image\)](#)
6. Contextual photo of [Jews Crossing the Bridge in the Lodz Ghetto \(image\)](#) and [Testimony of Joseph Morton \(video clip\)](#) (*ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE: Joseph Morton was born on July 11, 1924 in Lodz, Poland. He was forced to live in the Lodz ghetto and later imprisoned in the Kaufering, Auschwitz, Mühldorf, Dachau, München-Allach, and Landshut concentration camps. His interview was conducted in the United States. When the war began, Joseph was fifteen years old.*) Also, see this contextual photo of [Children in Lodz Ghetto \(image\)](#)
7. a) [Testimony of Sam Farkas \(video clip\)](#) (*ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE: Sam was born in Teresva, Czech Republic on July 14, 1928. His dad worked in the timber industry, and Sam and his five siblings lived a comfortable life. After his town was invaded by Nazi-collaborating Hungarians in 1939, even teachers would tell him and the other Jewish kids, "Hitler will get you." His father, believing no one would harm them, refused many offers from gentile friends to hide the family. In January 1944, they were deported to the Mateszalka ghetto in Hungary, where they were routinely abused and overworked. One month later, the family was deported to Auschwitz. After liberation, Sam returned home to find out that only his eldest brother had survived. He met his future wife Ruth in a tuberculosis ward in 1946. They married in 1949 and settled in Seattle in 1951, where Sam volunteered at many Jewish organizations and food banks. When the war began, Sam was eleven years old.*)  
  
b) [Testimony of Stella Tarica \(video clip\)](#) (*ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE: Stella was born on the Island of Rhodes on January 24, 1931. By 1942, her family did not yet understand the threat of the Nazis, as they were being bombed by the British and were therefore sympathetic to the Italian army. On July 23, 1944, the Nazis and their collaborators deported 1,700 Jews from Rhodes and Cos to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Only 151 survived, including Stella and her three siblings. Upon arrival at Auschwitz, the family was separated, and Stella never saw her parents again. While in Auschwitz, Stella became very sick and, since no one in her barrack spoke Spanish or Italian, she felt very isolated. While on a death march in 1945, Stella was liberated by the Russian army. She found her siblings through the Red Cross, and their uncle brought them to the United States in 1946. She settled in Seattle and married Morris Tarica in 1949, with whom she had two daughters. When the war began, Stella was eight years old.*)

## II. Reflections/Post-Activity Discussion: *A Pyramid of Alliance ... Solidarity ... Respect....*

Below is the *Pyramid of Hate*, but with respective breaks between each escalating layer allowing for discussion and consideration of things and steps students believe they/society can do to prevent each above layer from becoming reality.

- 1) Ask students to consider -- alone, or working in pairs -- what can be done (preventative strategies), from the bottom layer to the top. Consider the role of individuals, institutions, states.
- 2) What do you notice about the preventative strategies at each layer? Are the preventative strategies from the bottom of the Pyramid less difficult to actualize than the ones closer to the top? What does that tell you about your/our challenges in response to hatred? Our responsibilities?
- 3) Finally, ask students to look at the bottom of the Pyramid, *ie.*, before there is hatred or hateful acts. What do you believe people (including groups, institutions, states...) should know, consider, believe and how they should act **INSTEAD** of the hateful acts and biases that sets the Pyramid in motion? What can/will you do about this? Are your ideas attainable -- why or why not? What would you say to anyone who believes they are unattainable?

## Building a Pyramid of Alliance ... Solidarity ... Respect



## For Teachers

**Wrap-Up:** How can you incorporate the “Pyramid of Hate” into your teaching or curriculum? Share out an idea in chat.

**Debrief:** “Which [guidelines](#) do this lesson invoke?”

### Additional Teacher Notes re: Presenting the Pyramid of Hate

**Level One: *Biased Attitudes*** The base of the pyramid describes biased attitudes we see and hear every day in schools, workplaces, communities and even at the dinner table. These include things like non-inclusive language, stereotypes, microaggressions or insensitive remarks. One might regard these attitudes as “not a big deal” or they don’t necessarily hurt anyone. But biased attitudes that begin with a simple stereotype about a group, if left unchallenged, can easily grow into sustained feelings about that group. These attitudes serve as the foundation of the pyramid, supporting more extreme levels of hate.

**Level Two: *Acts of Bias*** Based on biased attitudes, we then form prejudicial FEELINGS about a group which can lead to actions like bullying, scapegoating, biased jokes, ridicule, and name-calling. ACTS of bias move the biased ATTITUDE that “All those people are lazy and stupid” to ACTS that perpetuate that “I don’t like or trust those people.”

**Level Three: *Discrimination*** Once biased ATTITUDES and ACTS of bias have taken hold, DISCRIMINATION can follow. Discrimination moves the biased ATTITUDE “I don’t like or trust those people” to DISCRIMINATION, “I won’t hire those people to work in my store” or “I won’t let those people live in my neighborhood.” Once hate has progressed up the bottom three levels of the pyramid, it is not a far step to move from ACTIONS to Acts of Violence....

**Level Four: *Bias-Motivated Violence*** When discrimination is unchecked, acts of bias-motivated VIOLENCE can occur in schools and communities, including desecration of property, threats and assaults, but also arson, terrorism, vandalism, assault and murder.

**Level Five: *Genocide*** The top level of the pyramid is Genocide, the act of or intent to deliberately and systematically annihilate an entire people. During the Holocaust the Nazi’s committed genocide against the Jewish people, Gays, people with disabilities, Roma and Jehovah’s Witnesses. The Pyramid of Hate demonstrates how ideas, feelings/attitudes and actions can form a basis for the denial of justice. Although not every act of bias will lead to genocide, it is important to realize that every historical instance of genocide began with the acts of bias described on the lowest level. The most effective opportunity to take action is when we witness behaviors that fall within the lowest level of the pyramid. We can safeguard our schools and communities by modeling respect, promoting respectful behavior in others and engaging in efforts to stamp out hate

**Answer Key to Lesson Part 1 Activity:**

| <b>Term</b>                    | <b>Example</b>   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Stereotyping</b>            | Fashion magazines rarely include photographs of plus-size models in a positive way.  |
| <b>Bias-Motivated Violence</b> | A group of LGBTQ teens who attend a peaceful rally in support of same sex marriage are taunted and violently attacked by a group of teens.   |
| <b>Genocide</b>                | In Rwanda in the 1990s, the ruling majority Hutus engaged in efforts to systematically destroy their nation's Tutsi population, brutally killing 800,000 Tutsi through violent executions, murders with clubs and machetes and massacres in churches and hospitals.  |
| <b>Discrimination</b>          | An employer does not hire a male candidate who is otherwise qualified because the candidate is wearing a turban as part of his religious tradition.  |
| <b>Prejudice</b>               | A teacher doesn't recommend one of her top students for a leadership program in Washington DC because she believes the family couldn't afford the required expenses.   |
| <b>Hate Crime</b>              | A synagogue in a Midwest city is spray-painted with swastikas and hateful graffiti about Jews.   |
| <b>Bias</b>                    | A group of employees, all from Ivy League schools, are going out to lunch to discuss an exciting new potential client and her case. They have heard that one of five new hires to their law firm, Wayne, also attended an Ivy League school. They invite Wayne to lunch to talk about this prospective client, but not the other new hires, even though the others are widely considered better qualified for this type of case. |
| <b>Scapegoating</b>            | A school installs a metal detector by the front entrance of the school because of a perceived increase in students' carrying weapons to school. Many of the students are upset with the new procedures this creates and blame Muslim students at the school because of people's concerns about terrorism.  |

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The Pyramid of Hate and this activity are based on materials from:

# ECHOES and REFLECTIONS

Leaders in Holocaust Education

