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Teacher Overview: *What led to the Rwandan genocide? What human rights violations were committed during it? How did the international community react?*

[Go directly to student-facing materials!](#)

Unit Essential Question(s): How have human rights been violated and how have international organizations attempted to address them? | [Link to Unit](#)

Supporting Question(s): What led to the Rwandan genocide? What human rights violations were committed during it? How did the international community react?

Objective(s):

- **Explain** the historical context for the Rwandan genocide.
- **Describe** the human rights violations that took place during the Rwandan genocide.
- **Describe** role of the international community during the Rwandan genocide.



Alignment to State Standards

NYS Social Studies Framework:

Key Idea	Conceptual Understandings	Content Specifications
10.10 HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS: Since the Holocaust, human rights violations have generated worldwide attention and concern. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights has provided a set of principles to guide efforts to protect threatened groups and has served as a lens through which historical occurrences of oppression can be evaluated. (Standards: 2, 5; Themes: ID, TCC, SOC, GOV, CIV)	10.10c Historical and contemporary violations of human rights can be evaluated, using the principles and articles established within the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.	Students will examine and analyze the roles of perpetrators and bystanders in human rights violations in Cambodia, Rwanda, and Darfur in light of the principles and articles within the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Common Core State Standards

Depending on how you structure your lesson, you may address different standards. Below, are the standards that we believe are most important for this lesson.

Reading	Writing	Speaking and Listening
<p>Craft and Structure: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.</p>	<p>Text Types & Purposes: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.1: Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i>.</p>	<p>Comprehension and Collaboration: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p>

Objective:

What led to the Rwandan genocide? What human rights violations were committed during it? How did the international community react?

- **Explain** the historical context for the Rwandan genocide.
- **Describe** the human rights violations that took place during the Rwandan genocide.
- **Describe** role of the international community during the Rwandan genocide.

Introduction

➔ **Directions:** Respond to the prompts below.

During the Rwandan genocide in 1994, between 800,000 and 1,000,000 people were killed in 100 days.

1. How many people live in your city/town/neighborhood?

2. How many times larger is 1,000,000 people than your city/town/neighborhood? / What percentage of your city's population is 1,000,000 people?

3. What do you think could have caused so many people to be killed in 100 days?

Vocabulary

Use the list below as a reference while researching the Rwandan genocide.

Tutsi	A tribe that lives in Rwanda. In 1994, the Tutsi made up 14% of the population of Rwanda. When Rwanda was a Belgian colony, the Belgians favored the Tutsi over the Hutus by giving them jobs in the government and a higher standing in society, but when Rwanda gained independence in 1962, the Hutu took control of the government and the Tutsi were discriminated against. During the 1994 genocide, the Tutsi were targeted by an extremist Hutu government who tried to eliminate the tribe.
Hutu	A tribe that lives in Rwanda. In 1994, the Hutu made up 85% of the population of Rwanda. When Rwanda was a Belgian colony, the Hutus were treated as second-class citizens compared to the Tutsi, but After Rwanda gained independence from the Belgians in 1962, the Hutu took control of the government and discriminated against the Tutsi. An extreme Hutu government started the Rwandan genocide in an attempt to eliminate the Tutsi tribe.
Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)	A rebel group made up of Tutsi that had been driven out of the country. They were engaged in a civil war with the Hutu government starting in 1990 and were the group who stopped the Rwandan genocide by invading the country and defeating the government's forces.
Radio RTLM	A Hutu-owned radio station that broadcasted hateful propaganda against the Tutsi
militia	A military force made up of civilians (people who are not full-time soldiers)
General Romeo Dallaire	Commander of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in Rwanda before and during the Rwandan genocide. Hearing reports of a plan to exterminate the Tutsi, he requested additional troops from the UN, but was denied.
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	Once called Zaire, the DRC is a country neighboring Rwanda where refugees and Hutu perpetrators fled during and after the genocide. Since the genocide, the Rwandan government had targeted Hutu who left Rwanda for the DRC.
International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)	A court set up by the United Nations to put those who committed crimes against humanity during the Rwandan genocide on trial. The tribunal has convicted 50 individuals.

Case Study: Rwandan Genocide

Basic Information



Watch [this video entitled "A VERY Short History of Rwanda"](#), and this [Overview of Genocide in Rwanda from the Baylor University Institute for Oral History](#), then fill in the basic information about the Rwandan genocide in the space below.

Where:

When:

Groups Involved:



Rwanda, depicted here in dark blue, a country in Central Africa.

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons and is in the public domain

Contextualize the Genocide



➡ **Directions:** Using the information about [the Rwandan genocide from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#), contextualize the genocide by describing the geographic, economic, political, and historical circumstances of the event on a local, regional, and global scale.

Consider these questions:

What events took place outside of the country/region that led to the genocide?

What historical events led to the genocide?

Why was there conflict between the groups involved?

What events led the group in power to have power?

What events occurred close to the start of the genocide that sparked the conflict?

Timeline



➔ **Directions:** Using the information about [the Rwandan genocide from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#), identify **five** important events that led to the start of the genocide. Describe each of those events and explain who it led to the start of the genocide.

Date	Description of Event	How did the event lead to the start of the genocide?

Human Rights Abuses



➔ **Directions:** Using the information about [the Rwandan genocide from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#), check off the articles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights that were violated during this genocide.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 26. Everyone has the right to education.



➔ **Directions:** Choose *three* of the human rights abuses identified in the previous activity and describe what happened, and explain how that event violated the victims' human rights abuses.

Identify Article (ie-"Article 18")	1.	2.	3.
Describe what happened during the genocide that violated this human right.			
Explain how the events that took place violated the human right.			

International Intervention and Deescalation of Conflict



➔ **Directions:** Using the information about [the Rwandan genocide from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#), answer the questions below pertaining to the genocide you are researching.

1. What brought the genocide to an end or lessened the intensity of the conflict?

2. How did the international community (other countries, the United Nations, international non-governmental organizations) react to the conflict? Did they act? If so, how? If not, why not?

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SQ 3: What led to the Rwandan genocide? What human rights violations were committed during it? How did the international community react?

➡ **Directions:** Using evidence from the documents above, respond to the task below in the space provided.

- **Explain** the historical context for the Rwandan genocide.
- **Describe** the human rights violations that took place during the Rwandan genocide.
- **Describe** role of the international community during the Rwandan genocide.