

LESSON 8

The Escalation of Hate

Goal

To examine the escalating nature of hate and to consider the difficulty of stopping the progression once it begins.

Materials

Overhead transparency or chart paper, construction paper or chart paper; markers

Key Words and Phrases

Escalation, stereotype, prejudice, scapegoating, discrimination, violence, genocide, hate crime, "model minority"

Process

1. On the left-hand side of an overhead transparency or piece of chart paper, write the following words: stereotype, prejudice, scapegoating, discrimination, violence, genocide. Ask students to consider the meaning of each of the words and to think about how they differ from one another.

Suggested definitions for terms used in this lesson

Discrimination - the denial of justice and fair treatment

Genocide - the systematic destruction or the attempted extermination of a group of people

Hate crime - a criminal act directed at an individual or property because of the victim's real or perceived race, ethnicity, gender, religion, nation origin, sexual orientation, or disability

Prejudice - a negative attitude toward a person or group formed without examining individual characteristics

Scapegoating - unfairly blaming an individual or group for circumstances that have varied causes

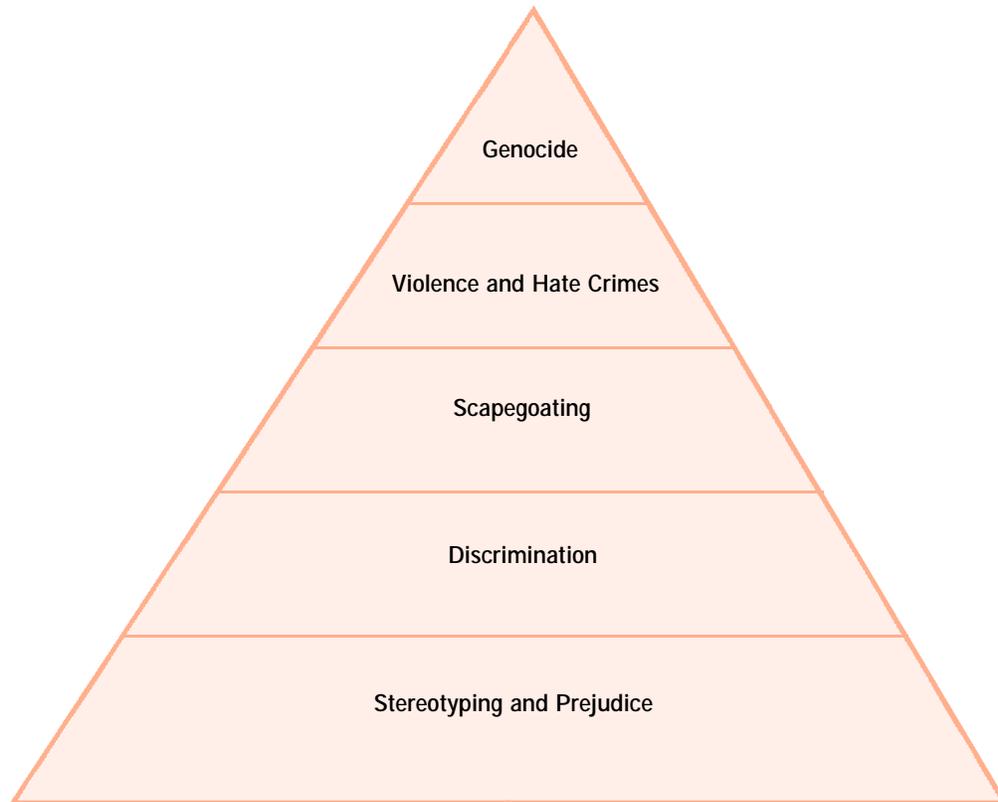
Stereotype - an oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard to individual differences

Violence - an action that emotionally or physically harms individuals or communities

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2. On the right-hand side of the transparency or chart paper, write the following statements:
 - a. The gay community is frequently blamed for AIDS.
 - b. In 1997, the FBI documented 8,049 hate crimes based on race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender.
 - c. During World War II, Nazis killed six million Jews to protect the so-called "Aryan Race."
 - d. Employers often do not hire people whose native language is not English.
 - e. People often refer to Asian Americans as the "model minority."
 - f. Fashion magazines rarely photograph overweight people positively.
 3. Working in pairs, have students match the examples on the right to the terms on the left. [Answer Key: 1-scapegoating; 2-violence; 3-genocide; 4-discrimination; 5-stereotype; 6-prejudice.] Ask students to consider if more than one word could be applied to some of the statements and to be prepared to explain their responses.
 4. After all pairs are finished, have students discuss their answers in a whole-group discussion. Clarify definitions as needed.
 5. On a large piece of chart paper, draw a triangle and divide it into five sections. Starting at the top of the pyramid, label the sections as follow: Genocide; Violence and Hate Crimes; Scapegoating; Discrimination; and Stereotyping and Prejudice. See example on next page.

Ask students to think about how this pyramid can be used to illustrate how hate escalates.
 6. Assign students to small groups. Give each group a large piece of construction paper or a piece of chart paper and markers. Have them draw their own "Pyramid of Hate" on the paper and then work together to fill in examples for each of the sections.
 7. When the pyramids are complete, have each group share some of its examples and discuss.
 8. Close with a whole-group discussion using some or all of the following questions:
 - a. What are some factors that make it more likely that hate will escalate? (e.g., hate behaviors are tolerated, the media reinforce stereotypes, friends and family agree with and reinforce each other's prejudices)
 - b. Once someone's actions start moving up on the pyramid of hate do you think it's difficult to stop? Why or why not?
 - c. What are some things that might help stop the escalation of hate? (e.g., education, new laws, enforcement of existing laws, school policies)
 - d. What can individuals do to stop the escalation of hate? What can communities do?
 - e. What is the cost to the individual who does not act to challenge hate? What is the cost to the targets of hate? What is the result for society?

PYRAMID OF HATE



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9. To help students continue thinking about the concepts presented in this lesson, post a large “Pyramid of Hate” in the classroom. As students read newspaper, magazine, or Internet stories about prejudice and hate, they can attach the stories to the pyramid in the appropriate categories. Set aside time for a discussion about how the events described show the escalating nature of hate. For example, the brutal deaths of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming, and James Byrd in Jasper, Texas, did not happen without underlying stereotypes and prejudice toward gay men and African-American men respectively.
 10. To help students put scapegoating into historical context, have students do library or online research about the Holocaust and the Internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

NOTE: In doing online research on these topics, students may encounter sites of hate groups; for example, a list generated on the topic of the Holocaust may include a number of anti-Semitic Web sites. Additional information on addressing these concerns with

Note cont. -

students is included in the Partners Against Hate publication, *Hate on the Internet: A Response Guide for Educators and Families*, available through the Partners Against Hate Web site, www.partnersagainsthate.org.

Adapted from *A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute Anti-Bias Study Guide (Elementary/Intermediate Level)*. 2000. New York, NY: Anti-Defamation League and *Opening the Door to Diversity: Voices from the Middle School (Resource Guide)*. 1999. Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association.

Connection to Standards

Language Arts: Listening and Speaking

- Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes

U.S. History

- Understands the causes and course of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and its reshaping of the U.S. role in world affairs

World History

- Understands the causes and global consequences of World War II

Life Skills: Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning

Civics

- Understands the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy
- Understands the role of diversity in American life and the importance of shared values, political beliefs, and civic beliefs in an increasingly diverse American society

Behavioral Standards

- Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function

