

# The Genocide Education Report



# Our report: A summary

Thank you for being interested in our report. During our research we interviewed, surveyed or spoke to 789 secondary school students, 82 teachers, survivors of the Holocaust and genocides in Rwanda, Bosnia and Cambodia as well as the leaders of many important educational organisations.

## **Our main findings were:**

- Just about everyone we spoke to thought that it was important for young people to learn about the Holocaust and other genocides.
- There are many fantastic people and organisations who work tirelessly to educate young people about the Holocaust and other genocides.
- Less than half of the students that we surveyed knew what genocide meant.
- Whilst many young people have heard of the Holocaust our research suggests that understanding of the terrible events is quite narrow.
- Teachers do not have the time or the necessary resources to teach about genocides that happened after the Holocaust.
- Survivors are hugely important to helping to educate us about the events they lived through. Nevertheless, they face challenges.

## **Our recommendations:**

We think that the brilliant work done by the organisations and survivors who we spoke to should be supported even more. Furthermore we recommend that young people be given a role to in educating their peers about the Holocaust and other genocides. In addition we think that new technology should be used to enable survivors to speak to more young people.

Thank you for reading.

Jasmin, Leon, Thomas, Shaeera, Sophia, Harry, Libby, Asha, Eve, Alasdair, Tim, Seb, James



## Young people ...

"... should spread the word and never stop talking about it, so people can learn from the stories...and so that it cannot be forgotten."

Sokphal Din, survivor of the genocide in Cambodia

"...are the most important people on Earth, They must be ambassadors for the people who died in the Holocaust."

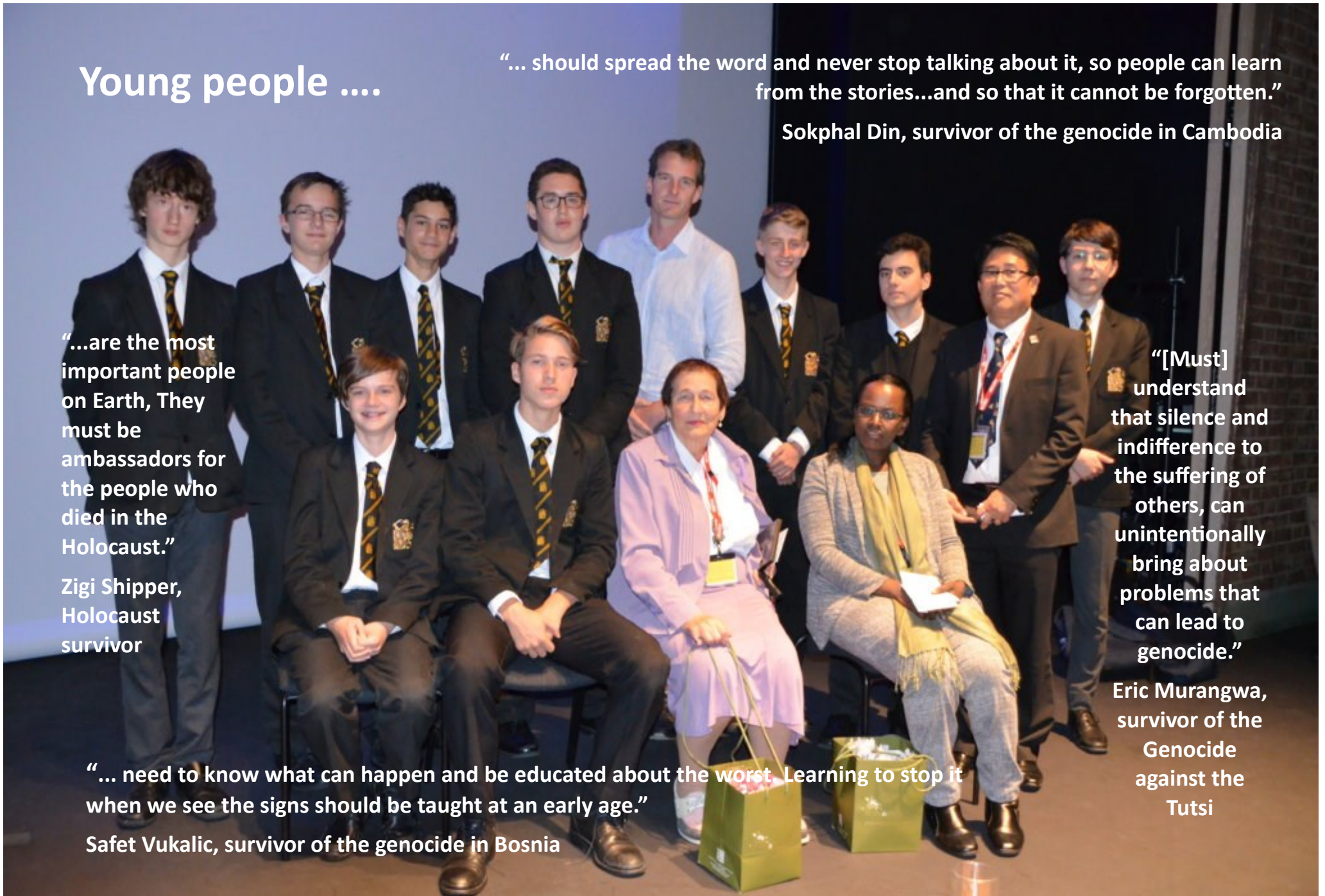
Zigi Shipper,  
Holocaust  
survivor

"[Must] understand that silence and indifference to the suffering of others, can unintentionally bring about problems that can lead to genocide."

Eric Murangwa,  
survivor of the  
Genocide  
against the  
Tutsi

"... need to know what can happen and be educated about the worst. Learning to stop it when we see the signs should be taught at an early age."

Safet Vukalic, survivor of the genocide in Bosnia



# It is important for young people to learn about genocide...

Eighty eight percent of young people who we asked said that it is important to learn about genocide. There are also many examples of people our age giving up their time to understand more about genocide and to help raise awareness amongst their peers. The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust Champions, the Ambassadors who represent the Holocaust Educational Trust, the young people who have travelled with Remembering Srebrenica to Bosnia and the authors of this report have all demonstrated that they think it is vital to know more about the atrocities of the Holocaust and more recent genocides.

Similarly, every single one of the eighty two teachers who we questioned stated that it was important that their students learn about the Holocaust and other genocides. Paul Salmons reinforced this point: 'Our national research with thousands of students and teachers across England shows overwhelming numbers think that the Holocaust is a very important part of the school curriculum, and students want to know more.'

The survivors that we spoke to also think that it is vital that the next generation know about what they went through so that genocides are never forgotten and can be prevented in the future:

*"It helps them to understand that silence and indifference to the suffering of others, can unintentionally bring about problems that can lead to genocide."*

Eric Murangwa, survivor of the genocide against the Tutsi

*"Young people are the most important people on Earth. They must be ambassadors for the people who died in the Holocaust."*

Zigi Shipper, Holocaust survivor

*"Young people should spread the word and never stop talking about it, so people can learn from the stories and carry on telling the story for generations, so that it cannot be forgotten."*

Sokphal Din, survivor of the genocide in Cambodia

*"Young people need to know what can happen and be educated about the worst. Learning to stop it when we see the signs should be taught at an early age."*

Safet Vukalic, survivor of the genocide in Bosnia

The leaders and experts from organisations that we spoke to similarly believed that it is important for secondary school age students to learn about the Holocaust and other genocides.

Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, told us that it was important for young people to know about the Holocaust and to understand how it was a threat to civilisation. Reinforcing this point The Department for Education told the House of Commons Education Select Committee that 'The Government believes it is important that pupils are taught the history and understand the appalling events of the Holocaust, and to understand how society can prevent the repeat of such a catastrophe'.

Several of our interviewees also stressed the need for young people to be made aware of other genocides in addition to the Holocaust.

We also spoke to specialists from the United States where many schools have a focus on the Armenian genocide. Roxanne Makasdjian, Executive Director of The Genocide Education Project in San Francisco told us:

"The Armenian Genocide is an ideal "case study" for introducing students to the concept of genocide and the "continuum" of genocide that followed it – the stages of genocide that manifest themselves across genocides, and the parallels that can be drawn."

Maddy Crowther from Waging Peace mentioned that, for many around the world, genocide is still a tragic reality of today. Learning about modern genocides encourages young people to think about the ways they can push for the prevention of ongoing or future mass atrocities. Maddy went on to say that:

"Every one of us has a role in protecting the world's most vulnerable. Furthermore, seeing genocide in plenty of different contexts prompts young people to imagine the various paths there are to the actual act of killing. It emphasises the point that genocide starts quietly, with discrimination and dehumanisation, and makes them alert to the risk of this in their own communities."

Amy Drake, Remembering Srebrenica's Director, reinforced this point by noting that society today can benefit from a study of the causes of genocide. Understanding how low level discrimination, the classification of people into groups and dehumanisation can lead to tragedy will encourage early intervention to stop genocide but also to bring about a better society. Amy also talked about genocide denial and how if young people are educated about it they can prevent it from happening.

# ...and great work is being done by inspirational people...

During the course of our research we found examples of fantastic organisations that educate young people about the Holocaust and other genocides



**HOLOCAUST  
MEMORIAL  
DAY TRUST**

**The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust** inspired 5,500 events last year alone, supports survivors and campaigners and has just unveiled a new interactive website with lessons for schools about the Holocaust and other genocides. The impact study published by Sheffield Hallam University confirmed 'HMD's important role in building knowledge in relation to the Holocaust and genocides, promoting cohesion and tolerance and providing a regular, and enduring, focus for education and remembrance.'



**Survivors Tribune** enables survivors of modern genocides & other global conflicts to share their experiences through public speaking events in schools, colleges and universities.

**We also know that there are many other great organisations working hard to raise awareness. In addition there are countless teachers and many survivors committed to educating young people about the Holocaust and other genocides.**



**The Holocaust Educational Trust** makes it possible for survivors to visit schools around the country. Over the past year 600 schools have benefited from this. In addition to this since 1999 over 30,000 students and teachers have visited Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of the Trust's 'Lessons from Auschwitz' programme.



**The Centre for Holocaust Education** is the only specialist Holocaust institute supporting teachers in the classroom with the best contemporary research. The Centre runs the Beacon School programme and more than 6,000 teachers have participated in the Centre's programmes since 2009.

**WagingPeace**

**Waging Peace** is an NGO that works to campaign against human rights abuses in Sudan. Together with its sister charity Article 1 (<http://article1.org/>) it also helps asylum seekers and refugees from the country access the services to which they are entitled. Waging Peace tries to engage young people in the British public by coaching some of those they have worked with to speak to school groups about their experiences and their reasons for fleeing.



**Remembering Srebrenica** organises the UK events for the Srebrenica Memorial Day, which takes place annually on 11 July. It runs a tailored education programme called Lessons from Srebrenica which sees groups visit Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aim is to teach delegates the lessons of the country's grim past to better inform the present.

### Case Study 1: London Schools Genocide Awareness Day

One hundred and fifty one students from twenty schools around London attended a Genocide Awareness Day at Hampton School. Four survivors (Ruth Barnett, Sokphal Din, Sophie Masereka and Kemal Pervanic) kindly gave their testimony. After a Q&A led by Dan Snow the students then split into groups to participate in workshops reflecting on what they had heard through art, poetry, film making, animation and journalism.

### Case Study 3: Royal Wootton Bassett Academy's Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Programme

"After many years of working for the prevention of genocide, I have concluded that prevention must start very early, in the shaping of attitudes and awareness of students at secondary school level. Royal Wootton Bassett Academy (RWBA) has been a pioneer in this field...RWBA has developed a Holocaust, genocide and human rights curriculum that is a model for all of the UK, and indeed the whole world." Dr Gregory H. Stanton, Founding President—Genocide Watch.

### Case Study 2: Bradford Grammar School's student -led Srebrenica exhibition

Year 9 students from Bradford Grammar School were trained as tour guides for an exhibition on the genocide in Srebrenica. The young people then guided students from other schools around the exhibition, which had been developed in association with Remembering Srebrenica and Cohesion Bradford.

### Case Study 4: Live streaming of survivor testimony at Pimlico Academy

In January 2016 the Holocaust Educational Trust broadcast the testimony of survivor Rudi Oppenheimer live on the internet from Pimlico Academy. More than two hundred schools watched and were then able to ask questions.

**These are different case studies of some really good Holocaust and genocide education that we found in schools around the country**



# ...but our research suggests that there are still major challenges to tackle.

We asked 789 11-16 year olds what they knew about the Holocaust and other genocides.

## Question 1: Can you define genocide?

- Responses to question one show that, whilst just over half of all pupils surveyed can define genocide, almost as many cannot. This clearly tells us that the topics on genocide and its meaning is not sufficiently taught to students, or not sufficiently reinforced.

## Question 2A: Have you heard of the Holocaust?

- The responses to question 2A tell us that the word 'Holocaust' is generally well recognised, with 88% of those surveyed having heard of the Holocaust. Whilst this is positive, the survey also shows us that more than one in every ten pupils reported never having heard the word, signifying that there are still some people uneducated on this important area of history. Of the 88% who recognised the word, we don't know how much of an impact schooling had, in comparison to popular culture.

## Question 2B: Can you name other genocides?

- The response to question 2B tells us that more than half of those surveyed could not name any other genocides besides the Holocaust. Indeed, less than a quarter of those surveyed could. This suggests that whilst there is good recognition of the Holocaust, oth-

## Young people's understanding of the Holocaust is narrow and incomplete

Whilst nearly nine tenths of young people have heard of the Holocaust their knowledge is still narrow and incomplete. We asked around thirty Year 12 and Year 13 students to give a definition of the Holocaust and to write what specific words they associated with the Holocaust. Most pupils associate the terms 'systematic extermination, mass killing, genocide, Hitler, Nazis, Auschwitz, gas chambers, concentration camps and Jews with the Holocaust. However, few students were aware of places such as Treblinka and most agreed that the Jews murdered were from Germany. Therefore, although general themes and statistics such as '6 million' are widely known, deeper knowledge (e.g. Why? Where? Who?) is lacking and could be developed.

er genocides, such as those in Cambodia, Rwanda, Darfur and Bosnia don't receive the same level of interest, importance or attention in teaching and popular culture. The fact that pupils are unaware of these genocides also suggests that pupils are unaware that the same mistakes of the Holocaust have been repeated in recent history.

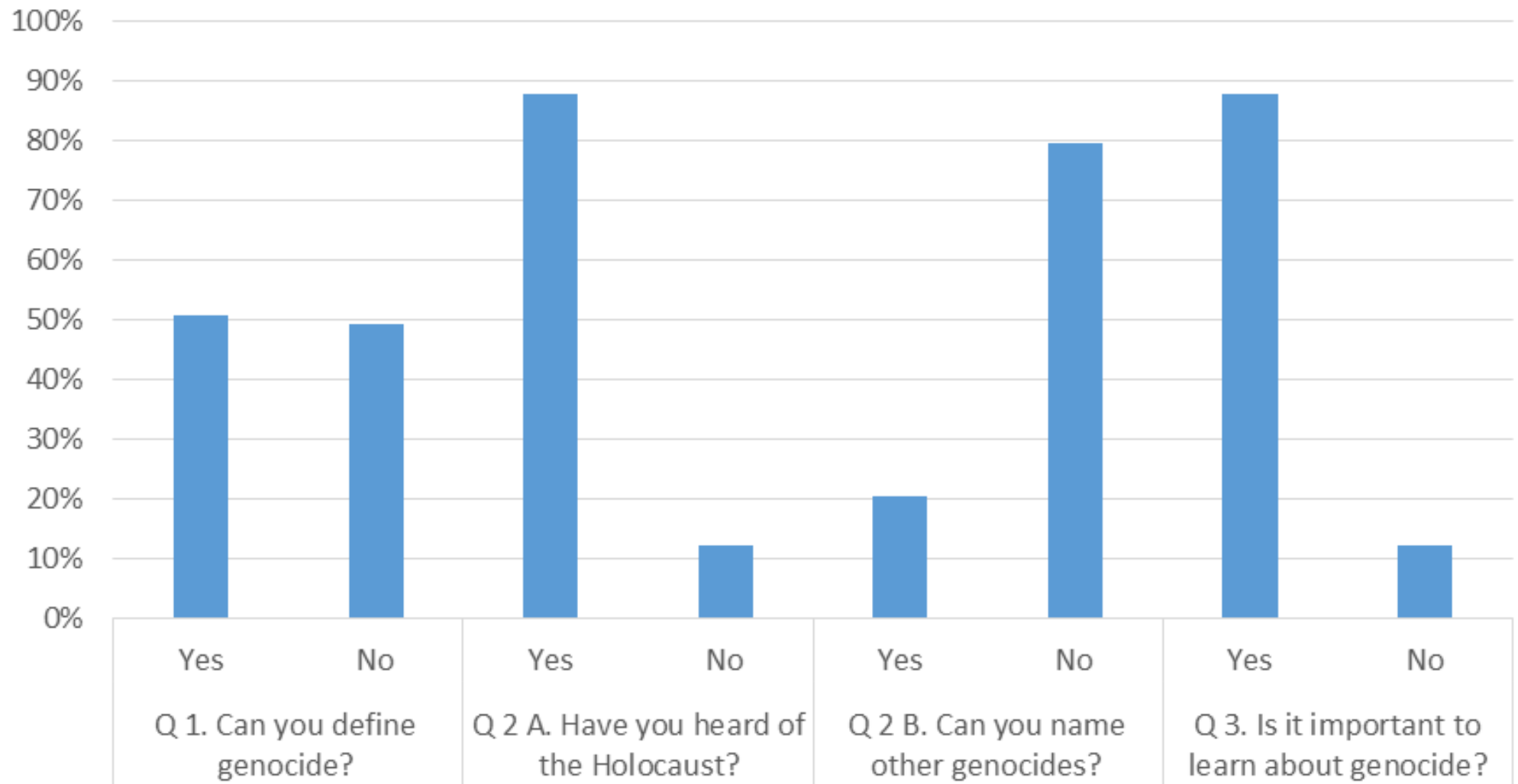
## Question 3: Is it important to learn about genocide?

- Responses to Q3 tell us that an overwhelming majority of those surveyed feel that it is important to learn about genocide and that they value genocide education.

## Question 4: How would you like to learn about the Holocaust and other genocides??

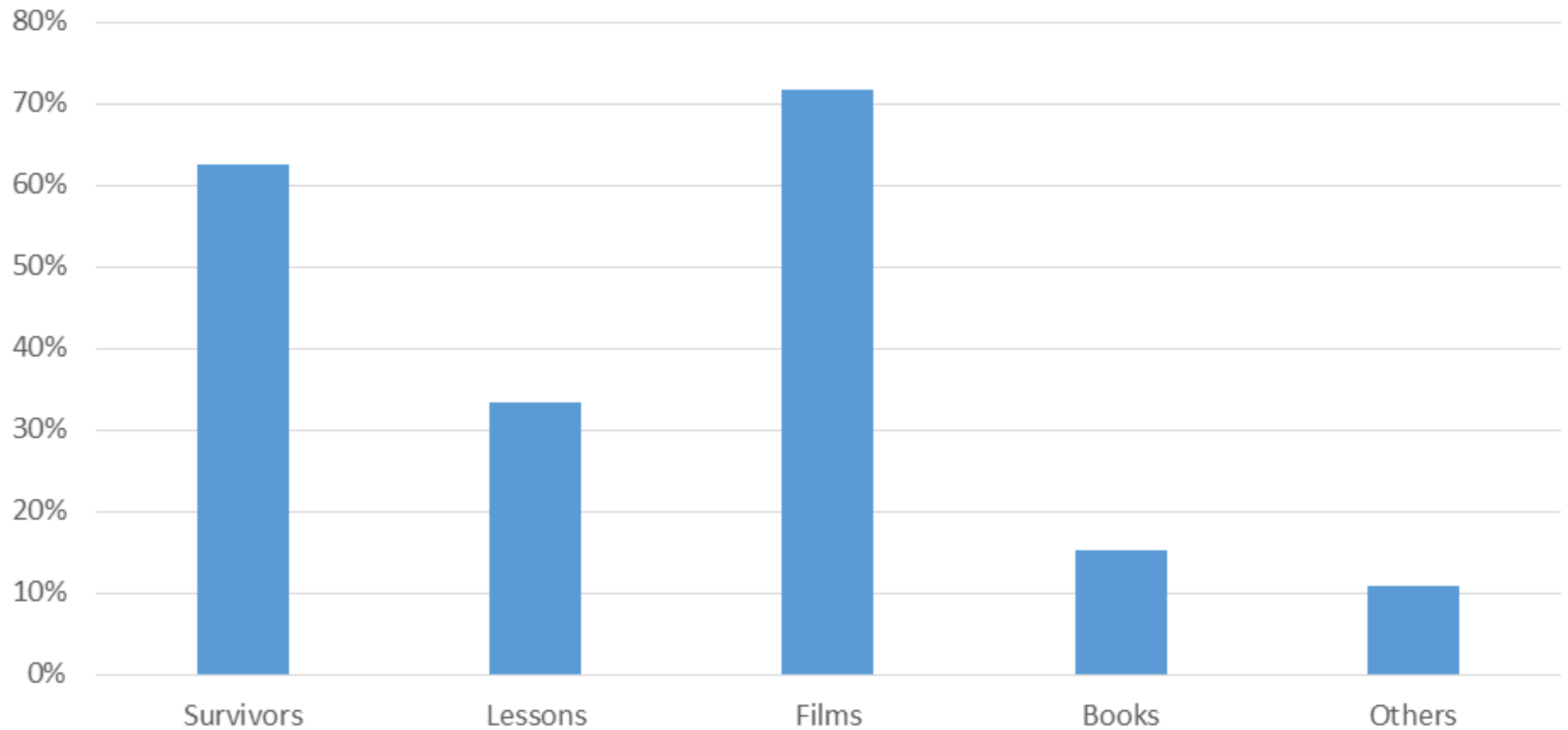
- The responses to the survey tell us that the majority of those surveyed would like to learn about genocide through films and survivor testimony. This suggests that pupils learn most from topics such as this when they are brought to life and humanised through personal experiences.
- The preference for film and survivor testimony, compared to traditional lessons might also suggest that teachers need support in bringing genocide to life as a topic and engaging their students.
- Around 10% of those surveyed said they would like to learn about genocide in other ways. This points to the fact that there are perhaps many other ways of teaching genocide that fall outside traditional realms, but may be equally effective.

## Pupil Survey Results





## How would pupils like to learn about genocide?



# ...Teachers find it difficult to teach about the Holocaust and other genocides

We asked 82 teachers about their teaching of genocides other than the Holocaust.

## Question 1: Do you teach about genocides that happened after the Holocaust?

- The survey responses tell us that most teachers do not teach about genocides that have taken place after the Holocaust, with 57% of teachers saying they do not teach any other genocide, aside from the Holocaust. This matches what was reported in the pupil survey in which 79% of those surveyed could not name any other genocide aside from the Holocaust.

## Question 2: If so, which genocides do you teach about?

- Of those teachers that do teach other genocides, it was clear that the Rwandan genocide was taught the most and the genocide that occurred in Darfur was taught the least. This suggests an imbalance in how genocide is taught across different schools.

## Question 3: How many lessons do you teach about genocide?

- Of those that do teach about genocides other than the Holocaust, 42% teach one to three lessons on the topic, 32% teach four to six lessons and only 26% teach more than six lessons on the topic. This suggests that genocide is currently under taught in schools, something backed up by the pupil survey which found

## Teachers would like more expert help with teaching the Holocaust

The result of our small survey of Year 12 and Year 13 students were reinforced by Paul Salmons who is at the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education. He confirmed the idea that students only knew a narrow amount of knowledge. He told us that : “A key weakness is that myths and misconceptions about the Holocaust that are common across society often go unchallenged in the classroom. Some 84% of teachers say they are 'self taught' in this subject, and much of their knowledge about the Holocaust comes from sources such as the media, film and TV, and books that are not up to date with the latest historical research.” That leads to some worrying gaps in knowledge and understanding. Many teachers are aware of this, Paul says, with “close to 80% say that they would like expert help through professional development in this area, and schools working closely with UCL Centre for Holocaust Education have seen significant improvements in teaching and learning.” Tapton School and Hampton School are Beacon Schools in the UCL programme.

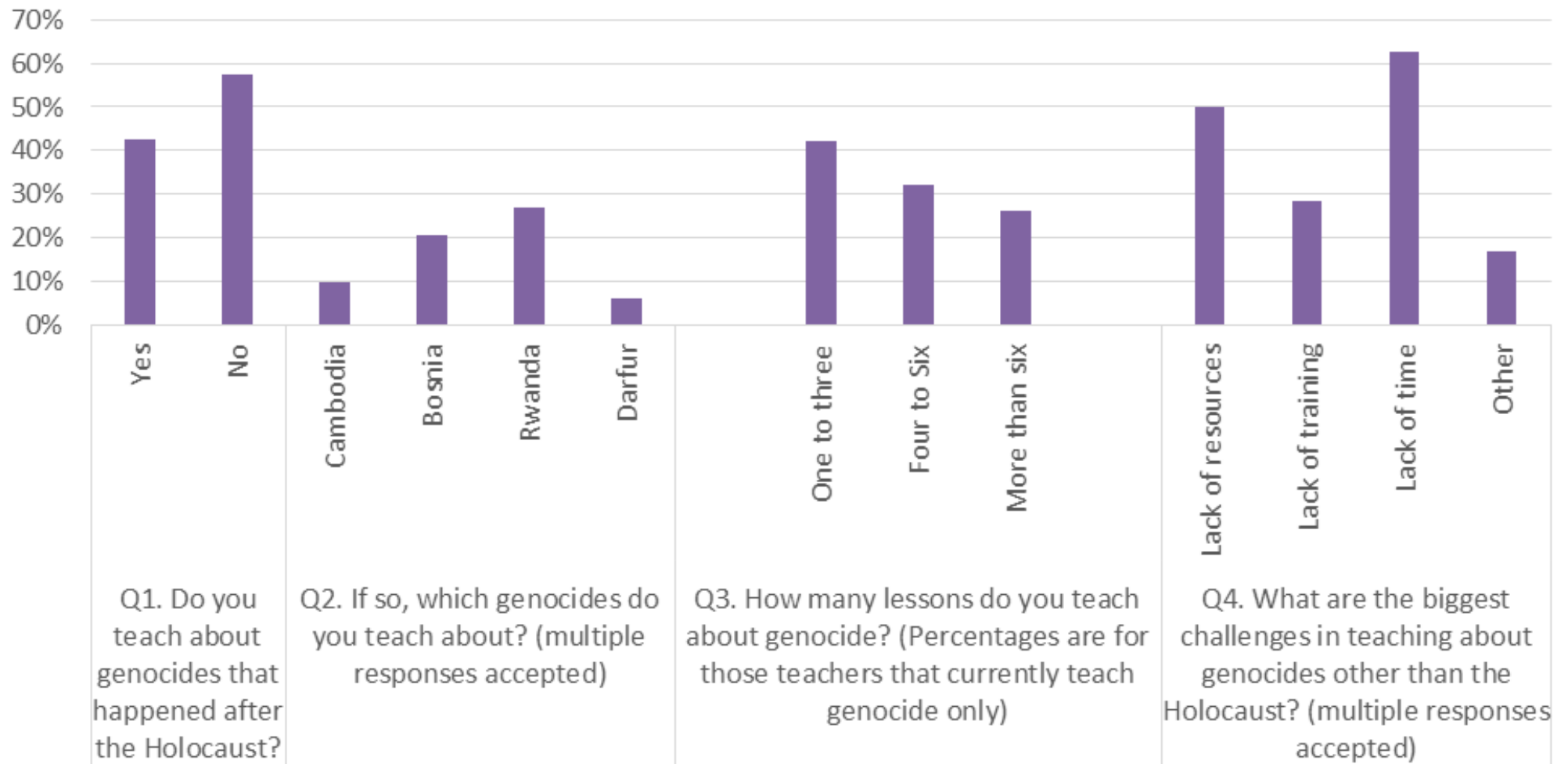
that only 51% of those surveyed could define genocide as word.

## Question 4: What are the biggest challenges in teaching about genocides other than the Holocaust?

- Lastly, the data tells us that the biggest challenge faced by teachers is that there is a lack of time, suggesting many feel the teaching of genocides other than the Holocaust is rushed. Around 50% of those surveyed also found resources to be a challenge, indicating a lack of relevant, stimulating and engaging

material on the topic (again, something backed up by the pupil survey which showed that only 33% of students surveyed said that traditional lessons were their preferred way to learn about genocide).

## Teacher Survey





## ...and survivors need help as well

The survivors who we met and spoke to for our report are remarkable people. They dedicate their time and relive horrific experiences to educate young people who they visit. We think that they need to be looked after and listened to.

Zigi Shipper visits hundreds of schools every year and travels thousands of miles to do so. He recognises that the government is doing 'a hell of a lot' to educate people about the Holocaust, to build a memorial and to help the Holocaust Educational Trust to reach as many schools as possible.

Ruth Barnett, who came to this country on the Kindertransport, has also spoken to hundreds of young people in schools. She spoke of the "recent concern about Holocaust education continuing after Holocaust survivors are no longer there to give testimonies in person" and said that "the emergence of survivors of other genocides since the Holocaust, ready and willing to give live testimony, is to be welcomed and supported."

However, the survivors also speak of the challenges they face as well as the reasons why they want to tell their stories to young people.

Safet Vukalic told us that "I continue to be involved with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and Remembering Srebrenica as both are doing a job that needs to be done." Sokphal Din said that "I would ask the government for the support and help for the victims and the survivors. They should give us survivors a chance to speak and give talks. I would like the

government to ... make sure that no one feels their identity is lost."

Eric Murangwa pointed out that "Survivors Tribune members have decided to...focus on the contribution the survivors community can make to society both here in Britain and beyond. We want to use the power of education...to change the world for the better."

Nevertheless, Eric 's task is made more difficult by a lack of knowledge amongst young people: "The answer is 'NO', young people in the UK are not well educated about the genocide against the Tutsi." This was because of a lack of resources: "It is clear that the will from teachers to find a solution to this problem [the lack of knowledge] is there but the lack of...educational materials plays a big part in stopping many teachers who would otherwise teach the modern genocides

Whilst Jo Ingabire, said "There's hardly any published information to aid in genocide education" Tanya, a daughter of a survivor of the genocide against the Tutsi, stated that "The curriculum does not include the genocide against the Tutsi, therefore many schools feel that it may be unnecessary to learn about it."

Other survivors, such as Chantal Uwamahoro, spoke about lacking confidence or language skills to speak in schools: "It is not always easy to approach young people with stories of the genocide."

Beata Uwazaninka, a survivor of the Genocide against the Tutsi, also told us about the reasons why she wants to speak about her experiences. "As well as helping those who survived heal their wounds through talking, if they know that they are being heard and believed it will help them to move on..." She also said "Providing a platform will enable them to feel cared for and trusted...the worst thing for survivors is the thought of being isolated." Chantal sees another important reason why survivors want to speak: "I believe that it is time now to do it as many people are denying that the genocide took place."

# Our recommendations:

## We recommend that...

Because we think that there is such good work already happening...

*The fantastic work of organisations such as UCL Centre for Holocaust Education, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, Holocaust Educational Trust, Remembering Srebrenica, Survivors Tribune, Waging Peace and others should be supported and encouraged by the government*

Because we think it is important that all young people know more about the Holocaust and other genocides

*Students should learn about the Holocaust and other genocides not just in Year 9 but throughout their time at school*

*Every school should have one 'expert' teacher (who could be from any subject) who is really well trained in Holocaust and genocide education*

*On Holocaust Memorial Day schools should come together in larger events to hear survivors speak, collaborate in workshops and benefit from the help of experts*

Because teachers do not have the time to teach about other genocides

*Students should be given the opportunity to train as experts and run Holocaust Memorial Day activities for younger students. They could receive an accredited qualification for this and gain credit for it on their UCAS applications.*

*On Holocaust Memorial Day every secondary school in the country should be encouraged to run activities so that every young person in the country has at least five whole days of genocide education in their time at school.*

*The government should help to produce innovative and good quality resources on genocides that have occurred since the Holocaust*

Because we think that survivors should be supported in spreading their story

*The government should make it possible for every school to have a survivor visit or reach them in person or via social media on or around Holocaust Memorial Day.*

*Holocaust survivors could 'mentor' survivors from more recent genocides who would like to speak in schools and help them feel comfortable and equipped to do so*

*Social media (e.g. Skype) should be used to enable survivors to reach schools that they may not have previously been able to visit. This would enable survivors from other countries to help educate young people from the UK as well.*

# Thank you to...

There are lots of people that we would like to thank for helping us with our report:

## The fantastic survivors:

Eric Murangwa, Eugene survivor of the genocide against the Tutsi

Jo Ingabire

Jean Paul Samputu

Beata Uwazaninka

Tanya

Pierre-Celestin Rusengatabaro

M.K Naila

Chantal Uwamahoro

Zigi Shipper

Sokphal Din

Safet Vukalic

Ruth Barnett

## The excellent education organisations

Olivia Marks-Woldman, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust,

Roxanne Makasdjian, Executive Director of The Genocide Education Project

Maddy Crowther, Waging Peace

Amy Drake, Remembering Srebrenica

Rebecca Heron, Remembering Srebrenica

Paul Salmons, UCL Centre for Holocaust Education

Dr Nicola Wetherall,

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy

## Our teachers:

Mr Carpenter

Mr Fowkes

Mr Fuller

Mr Lawrence

Perpetrator, Victim, Rescuer or Resister?

- \* On your table there should be three pieces of A3 paper
- \* On the relevant piece of paper write down all the words that you would use to describe a perpetrator, victim, rescuer or resister.

## The report team

Jasmin, Leon, Thomas, Shaeera, Sophia, Harry, Libby, Asha, Eve, Alasdair, Tim, Seb, James





awareness

loss

genocide

escape

Trauma

remains

conflict

Strength

awareness

"It was a miracle"

Sophie : Rwanda Genocide

Trauma

FORGIVENESS

Genocide

Conflict

death

AWARENESS

forgiveness

WAR

prejudice

loss

return

escape

SURVIVAL

Conflict

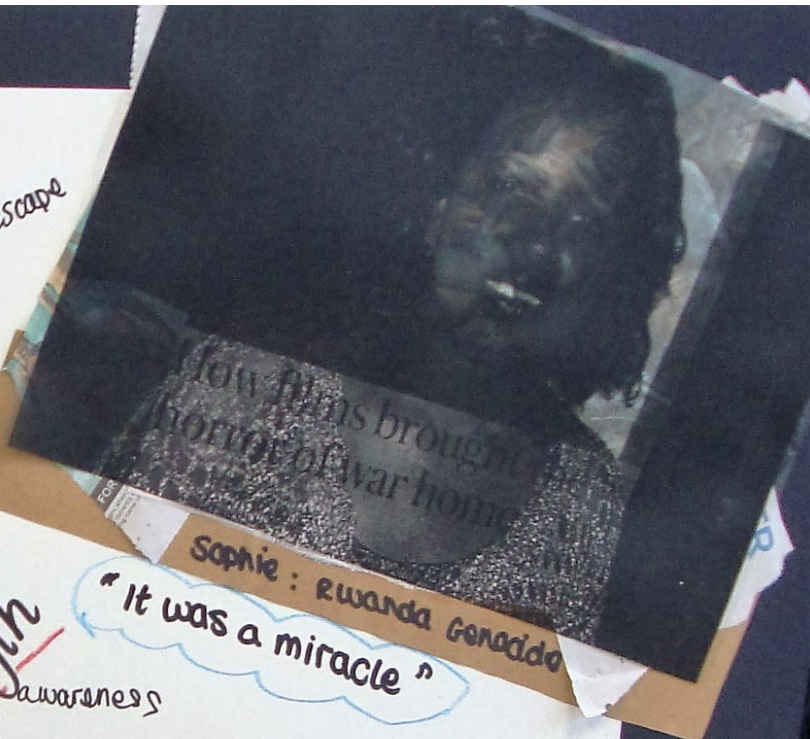
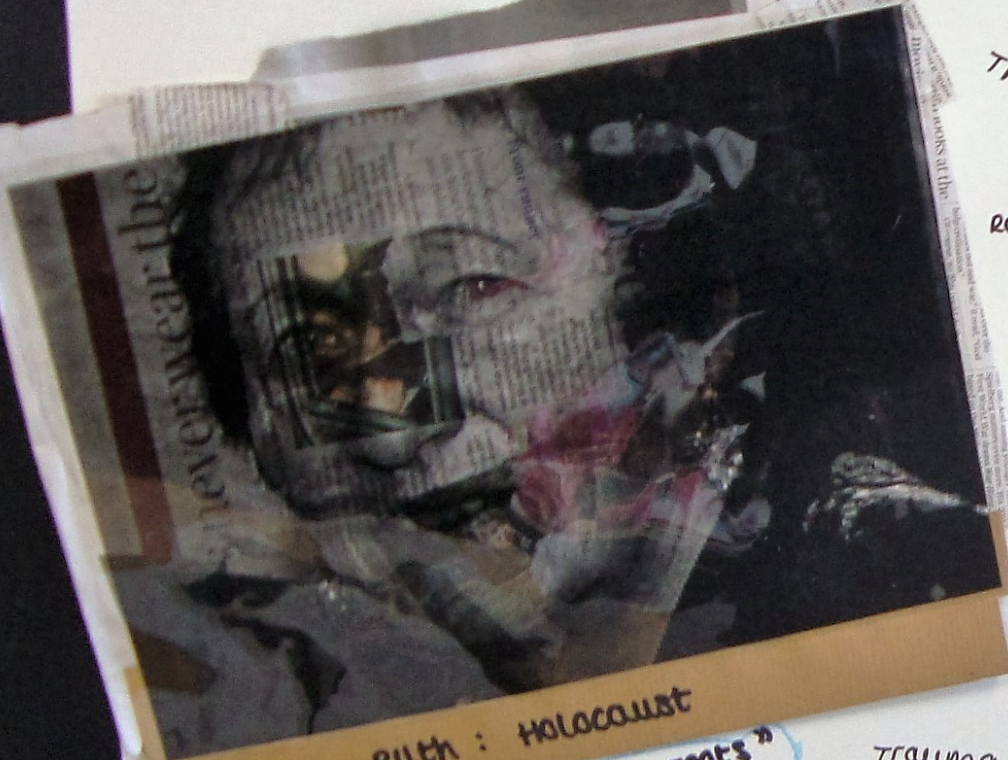
conflict

Trauma

"Remember your roots"

Ruth : Holocaust

never wear the





**“The stories of the survivors were very moving and taught us the importance of learning about genocide and spreading awareness in order to prevent a similar situation ever happening again.”**

**Oliver, Yr 11**

