Teaching About Genocide
Challenges and Solutions

Beyond Pedagogical Limits
- Challenging/intense subject matter
- Mandated without materials
- Deficient background knowledge
- Making it "real"
- Time

Possible Solutions
- Challenging/intense subject matter
  - Choose topics and resources that are appropriate for the emotional maturity of your students.
    - Goal is to promote understanding, not shock
  - Create cooperative learning/critical thinking exercise to encourage understanding over memorization.
  - Teacher guidance is key
- Mandated without materials
  - Develop curricula for various levels to promote appropriate teaching strategies.
Possible Solutions, cont.

- Deficient background knowledge
  - Prepare by creating context
  - Investigating major themes
    - Identify and teach recurring big ideas such as prejudice, identity, perspective, truth, etc.
  - Interdisciplinary units
    - Responsibility for teaching about genocide and related concepts should be shared among several teachers across content areas.
    - Use a variety of resources.

Possible Solutions, cont.

- Connections to student experience/American history
  - Use current events to promote curiosity and tie to modern issues.
  - Highlight similarities between conditions of genocide and U.S. society.
    - Bullying
    - Segregation vs. ethnic cleansing
    - Anti-Muslim sentiment
    - Use of propaganda

Possible Solutions, cont.

- Time
  - Spread out genocide-related topics throughout the year.
  - Introduce important themes through other subjects, recall later to maximize available time.