GCSE History Title: The stages of a Genocide.

* At this time we were studying Germany and the genocide that happened then so this may refer to a lot of the happenings of this genocide and not me being racist in any way.

Classification: A society identifies an ‘us’ and ‘them’ based on ethnicity, language, race, religion or nationality, e.g. German and Jew.

Symbolisation: Names or other symbols are given to the classifications e.g. ‘Jews’ or ‘Gypsies’. They can also be distinguished by skin colours, colours or dress and apply the symbols to members of groups e.g. the Star of David for Jews. *

Dehumanisation: Basic human rights are denied to the ‘other’ group, to make them seem less human and more animal like, which gets over a humans natural dislike of murder. Hate propaganda and messages (e.g. over the radio) get distributed at this stage.

Organisation: Special army units or militias are often trained and armed. These can be informal or state run, but if the genocide comes from the government, they will often try to make these groups seem unofficial to maintaining deniability.

Polarisation: Dividing of the ‘other’ group from ‘normal’ society. Hate groups broadcast polarising propaganda. Laws may forbid intermarriage or social interaction. Extremist terrorism targets moderate people who could try to reunite these groups.

Preparation: Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic or religious identity. Death lists are drawn up. Members of victim groups are forced to wear identifying symbols e.g. a star. Their property is taken away from them. They are often segregated into ghettos, deported into concentration camps, or confined to a famine struck region and starved.

Extermination: Quickly becomes mass killing. It is ‘extermination’ to the killer because they do not believe the victims to be fully human. When it is sponsored by the government, the armed forces often worked with militias to do the killing.

Denial: Those who commit genocide dig up the mass grave, burn the body’s, try to cover up the evidence and intimidate (threaten) the witness. They deny that they committed any crimes, and often blame what happened on the victims. They block investigations of the crimes and continue to govern until driven from power by force, when they flee into exile.