

# Children of War Lesson Plan

<u>Unit:</u> Cooperation and Conflict
<u>Class:</u> Honors World Geography, Central HS
<u>Teacher:</u> Mrs. Kathryn Elam Jasper
<u>Time Needed:</u> One 90-minute block for actual lesson (homework designated for prior day and follow-up project planning, if desired, for following month)
<u>Content Objectives:</u>  National Geographic Standard 4, Human Systems #10, The Characteristics, Distribution, and Complexity of Earth's Cultural Mosaics  National Geographic Standard 4, Human Systems #13, How the Forces of Cooperation and Conflict Among People Influence the Division and Control of Earth's Surface  Memphis City School Standard 4.2.3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine the conditions and motivations that contribute to nationalism (desire for autonomy) among ethnic groups and the effects of nationalism on world conflicts, resolutions, and political boundaries. (Ex. Kurdish in S.W. Asia, Basques in Spain, Chechens in Russia, Quebecois in Quebec, Yugoslavia).</li><li>• Analyze the causes of boundary disputes and internal conflict among cultural groups. (Ex. Boundary disputes in Africa; Religious and cultural disputes in Iraq and Kosovo; Tribalism in Afghanistan).</li><li>• Analyze global conflicts and their causes from multiple points of view. (Ex. Israel/Palestine, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, North Korea/South Korea, Rwanda, and Darfur).</li></ul>
<u>Key Question:</u>  "How are the lives of teens living in war torn areas affected?"
<u>Lead-in/Background:</u>  Prior to this lesson, students will have learned about several conflicts around the globe. During the religion unit, students learned about Sunni/Shiite relations, the Palestine/Israeli conflict, and the Troubles in Northern Ireland. During the Government unit, students studied civil wars and government instability in Bosnia, parts of Africa, and World War Two Germany. They will use their knowledge of these various conflicts during their study of this lesson.  In addition, students will have read <u>The Diary of Anne Frank</u> , which their English teachers are using in a lateral unit on the Holocaust. This lesson is designed to be co-curricular and bridge the gap between English and Geography.
<u>Materials:</u>  Nystrom World Map Wet Erase Boards, Wet erase markers Nystrom Atlases Handout with excerpts from <u>Zlata's Diary</u> Copies of <u>The Diary of Anne Frank</u> Powerpoint list of Invisible Children Video (from <a href="http://www.invisiblechildren.com">www.invisiblechildren.com</a> ) Journals White board squares & dry erase markers BBC articles on Bosnia and Uganda

## Procedure:

1. Prior to the lesson: for homework on the day prior to the lesson, students will review the basic reasons for conflict in Bosnia, Uganda, and World War Two Germany.
  - Article one on Bosnia:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country\\_profiles/1066886.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1066886.stm)
  - Article two on Uganda:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/1069166.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1069166.stm)
2. **Bellwork:** As the students enter the classroom, they will proceed to group formation, 3 to a group. Desks are arranged in groups of three. On the desks are a Nystrom Atlas and Nystrom wet erase world map. Students will look on the Smartboard at the list of places that have experienced civil conflict or war within the last century (20<sup>th</sup> Century). Students will map these places with the wet erase maps. The list is very large, including any major civil conflict, spanning the globe (Cambodia, Guatemala, Cuba, Germany, Uganda, South Africa, and Afghanistan are examples of ones on the list). Students will indicate the date using wet-erase marker on their group's map.
3. **Entry to lesson:** Students will make an observation chart on the board of what they've read about these civil conflicts and where they have happened. Usual remarks include:
  - "It really seems like it could happen anywhere"
  - "Some of these conflicts are recent, some are from a long time ago. It never stops, does it?"
  - "Why do these conflicts happen? What is to prevent us from having a civil conflict?"
4. **Lesson:**
  - Students will start by writing their group's definition of civil conflict on their groups' white erase board (square). They hold this up and we all see what each other think. This ensures all students understand the term "civil conflict".
  - We begin by discussing Anne Frank. They've been reading the book in English class so I ask them if they have ever thought of the Holocaust as a "civil conflict." We explore this topic. This is a lead-in to the topic of today's lesson, children in conflict. I ask them how old Anne was. We talk about how her life was just like theirs - she had crushes, went to school, had friends. We then begin to discuss how her life was different than theirs - how she was affected by Germany's civil conflict.
  - Students are given numbered passages from Zlata's Diary (passages at the end of this lesson). The lights are turned off, the students are quiet, and each student reads their passage in order, with no commentary between.
    - Note: When I've done this, having the lights off and no breaks helps with the grave nature of wartime and really sets the mood for the discussion.
  - We reconvene as a group. A discussion is formed based on the similarities between Zlata and Anne Frank's experiences. I ask them how their experience in conflict has shaped their childhood.
  - (with the lights continuing to be off) the video clip on the Invisible Children is played. This video clip shows firsthand the effects of Uganda's civil conflict on the children of Uganda, called "nighttime commuters" or "Invisible Children." These children were stolen from their villages and made to fight in the civil conflict. Their families do not know if they are alive. (Video is approx 4 minutes long - there are several but this one is called "Search and Rescue"
5. **Closing:** In their journals, the students reflect on the three different children they have "met" today - Anne, Zlata, and the Invisible Children. They write their reactions to the living conditions that these children must handle on a daily basis. They are given free range to write what they feel about the situation but the basic idea is to write about what "Children in Conflict" deal with due to their culture groups clashing or their nation's government being under siege. The journals can be read aloud if time permits.
6. **Follow up:** The project "Rock for Refugees" is introduced/proposed.

- At Central HS, Rock for Refugees is a yearly fundraiser for our African refugees in our school community. We have a large population of refugees at Central and many of them are lacking money for school uniforms, school supplies, and money to attend school functions. The students put on a talent show at the local amphitheater and take donations for the refugee families. The English as a Second Language teachers handle distributing the money. This concert has happened four times now.
- To tie in with our lesson on "Children in Conflict," I introduce the fundraiser to our freshmen (who don't know much about it) and ask if they'd like to help with it. If they say no, that is fine. If they are interested (which I assume they will be after reading from Zlata's Diary and watching the Invisible Children video), we form committees and begin to help plan the Rock for Refugees concert
- Proposed addition: depending on interest, students can also form a video component to interview the refugee students in our school and get "their story" about being a refugee. This video could play during the concert.

#### Assessment:

Students will be assessed in a variety of ways. First of all, assessment of understanding comes from informal cues such as participation in the discussions, eye contact, and body language.

Formally, students are assessed through their journal entries as well as an essay question that is included on the unit test.

If students choose to do the Rock for Refugees project, that will be used as an assessment as well.

#### Zlata's Diary Excerpts for discussion:

##### Zlata's Diary

Excerpts from Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo  
(Zlata Filipovic. New York: Penguin Books, 1994.)

Sunday, April 12, 1992

"I keep thinking about the march I joined today. It's bigger and stronger than war. That's why it will win. The people must be the ones to win, not the war, because war has nothing to do with humanity. War is something inhuman."

Monday, June 29, 1992

"That's my life! The life of an innocent eleven-year-old schoolgirl!! A schoolgirl without school, without the fun and excitement of school. A child without games, without friends, without the sun, without birds, without nature, without fruit, without chocolate or sweets, with just a little powdered milk. In short, a child without a childhood. A wartime child. I now realize that I am really living through a war, I am witnessing an ugly, disgusting war. I and thousands of other children in this town that is being destroyed, that is crying, weeping, seeking help, but getting none. God, will this ever stop, will I ever be a schoolgirl again, will I ever enjoy my childhood again? I once heard that childhood is the most wonderful time of your life. And it is. I loved it, and now an ugly war is taking it all away from me."

Monday, March 15, 1993

"There are no trees to blossom and no birds, because the war has destroyed them as well. There is no sound of birds twittering in springtime. There aren't even any pigeons – the symbol of Sarajevo. No noisy children, no games. Even the children no longer seem like children. They've had their childhood taken from them, and without that they can't be children. It's as if Sarajevo is slowly dying, disappearing. Life is disappearing. So how can I feel spring, when spring is

something that awakens life, and here there is no life, here everything seems to have died.”

Thursday, November 19, 1992

“I keep wanting to explain these stupid politics to myself, because it seems to me that politics caused this war, making it our everyday reality. War has crossed out the day and replaced it with horror, and now horrors are unfolding instead of days. It looks to me as though these politics mean Serbs, Croats and Muslims. But they are all people. They are all the same. They look like people, there’s no difference. They all have arms, legs and heads, they walk and talk, but now there’s ‘something’ that wants to make them different.”

Saturday, July 17, 1993

“Suddenly, unexpectedly, someone is using the ugly powers of war, which horrify me, to try to pull and drag me away from the shores of peace, from the happiness of wonderful friendships, playing and love. I feel like a swimmer who was made to enter the cold water, against her will. I feel shocked, sad, unhappy and frightened and I wonder where they are forcing me to go, I wonder why they have taken away my peaceful and lovely shores of my childhood. I used to rejoice at each new day, because each was beautiful in its own way. I used to rejoice at the sun, at playing, at songs. In short, I enjoyed my childhood. I had no need of a better one. I have less and less strength to keep swimming in these cold waters. So take me back to the shores of my childhood, where I was warm, happy and content, like all the children whose childhood and the right to enjoy it are now being destroyed.”

Monday, December 28, 1992

“...I look over at Mommy and Daddy. ... Somehow they look even sadder to me in the light of the oil lamp. ... God, what is this war doing to my parents? They don’t look like my old Mommy and Daddy anymore. Will this ever stop? Will our suffering stop so that my parents can be what they used to be – cheerful, smiling, nice-looking?”

Saturday, July 10, 1993

“I’m sitting in my room. Cici is with me. She’s enjoying herself on the armchair – sleeping. As for me, I’m reading through my letters. Letters are all I’ve got left of my friends. I read them and they take me back to my friends.”

Monday, August 2, 1993

“Some people compare me with Anne Frank. That frightens me, Mimmy. I don’t want to suffer her fate.”