

Child Soldier Stories

Lesson Title: Child Soldier Stories	Grade: 6	Subject: Social Studies	Time: 70 minutes	Unit: Resources and Wealth; Power and Authority	Topic: Child Soldiers	Cross-Curricular Components:
URL: http://www.un.org/works/goingon/soldiers/lessonplan2_3soldiers.html						
Lesson Description: The following activity will allow students to take a deeper look at the issue of child soldiers around the world. Have students read the following excerpts from an interview with child soldiers. As students take a look at the real life experiences of these youth, have them place their feet in the shoes of these soldiers. Have a discussion guided by the questions found below.		Curriculum Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome: PA6.1 Examine the relationship between an individual's power and authority and the power and authority of others. • Outcome: RW6.1 Examine and analyze factors that contribute to quality of life, including material and non-material factors. • Outcome: RW6.2 Contribute to initiating and guiding change in local and global communities regarding environmental, social, and economic sustainability. 				
Materials: → Excerpts		Assessment: - Teacher-given exit slip				

Procedure

“When we got there we were in an ambush, the rebels were attacking where we were in a bush. I did not shoot my gun at first, but when you looked around and saw your school- mates, some younger than you, crying while they were dying with their blood spilling all over you, there was no option but to start pulling the trigger. I lost my parents during the war, they told us to join the army to avenge our parents.”

–Ishamael Beah, 14, Sierra Leone

“One boy tried to escape, but he was caught. They made him eat a mouthful of red pepper, and five people were beating him. His hands were tied, and then they made us, the other new captives, kill him with a stick. I felt sick. I knew this boy from before. We were from the same village. I refused to kill him, and they told me they would shoot me. They pointed a gun at me, so I had to do it. The boy was asking me, “Why are you doing this?” I said I had no choice. After we killed him, they made us smear blood on our arms. I felt dizzy. They said we had to do this so we would not fear death, and so we would not try to escape.”

–Susan, 16, Uganda

“They beat all the people there, old and young, they killed them all, nearly 10 people...like dogs they killed them...I didn't kill anyone, but I saw them killing...the children who were with them killed too...with weapons... they made us drink the blood of people, we took the blood from the dead into the bowl and they made us drink...then when they killed the people they made us eat their liver, their heart, which they took out an sliced and fried... And they made us little ones eat.”

–Peruvian woman, recruited at age 11

“I was recruited by force, against my will. On evening while we were watching a video show in my village three army sergeants came. They checked whether we had identifica- tion cards and asked if we wanted to join the army. We explained that we were under age and hadn't got identification cards. But one of my friends said he wanted to join. I said no and came back home that evening but an army recruitment unit arrived the next morning at my village and demanded two new recruits. Those who could not pay 3000 kyats had to join the army, they said. I (my parents) could not pay, so altogether 19 of us were recruited in that way and sent to Mingladon (an army training centre).”

–Zaw Tun's

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the moral issues behind the use of children in armed conflict?
2. Describe how and where child soldiers are used.
3. Identify reasons for using children in armed conflict.
4. How does society suffer when children are used in armed conflict?
5. What is the role of international documents and protocols and what do they say about the use of children in armed conflict?