UNworks
what'S Going oN?
Child soldiers in Sierra Leone
Abu   Swankay Fatmata T-Boy

Lesson Plan: Child Soldiers

Standards

Established Goals:
This lesson presents an overview of where, why, how, and in what conditions children are used as child soldiers. Students will identify the physical and emotional challenges that child soldiers face. Students will study the efforts by the international community to eliminate children from armed conflict and strategies they are using to integrate children back into their communities.

National Council for Social Studies Standards:	Transferable Concepts/Links:	Course Connections:
		American History,
V. Individuals	Conflict, Revolution, Power, Civil War, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), Poverty, Technology, Socialization, Recruitment, Exploitation, Atrocities, Civil society, International cooperation, collaboration	World History,
VI. Power, authority, and governance		Government,
IX. Global Concerns		Global Studies,
X. Civic Ideals and Practices		Current Events

Understandings:
Children are used in armed conflict throughout the world.

Children become involved in armed conflict when there isn't a governmental infrastructure in place to protect them.

Children become involved in armed conflict because they are physically and mentally easy to control.

The long term effects of children in armed conflict have lasting implications on the individuals, the society, and the world at large.

Child Soldiers are both victims and victimizers.

International institutions and documents are in place to protect children's rights.

International agencies and grassroots organizations are working to combat the use of child soldiers among other issues.

Children in armed conflict want help.

Essential Questions:
What are the moral issues behind the use of children in armed conflict?

Describe how and where child soldiers are used.

Identify the reasons for using children in armed conflict.

How does society suffer when children are used in armed conflict?

What is the role of international documents and protocols and what do they say about the use of children in armed conflict?

Students will know:
Human Rights vocabulary terms.

What is being done about this global issue?

International documents and the issues that they address.

The names of NGOs, civil society and international organizations that are aiding children in armed conflict.

Students will be able to:
Classify where, when, why, how, and in what conditions child soldiers are used.

Chart and map data about child soldiers.

Use the essential information to get involved in combating the issue.

Assess the scope of the use of child soldiers throughout the world today.

Form an opinion about whether child soldiers are victims or victimizers.

Equipment and Materials:
Computer, Television & Atlas.

Handout # 1 Mapping child soldiers

Handout #2 Where child soldiers are being used

Handout #3 Stories of child soldiers

Handout #4 Convention on the Rights of the Child

Note: To open handouts or save them to your PC, click on the link. Or right click on links and select "Save Target As" option.

1. Give students the definition of a child soldier

   According to UNICEF:
   "A 'child soldier' is defined as any child - boy or girl - under 18 years of age, who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including, but not limited to: cooks, porters, messengers, and anyone accompanying such groups other than family members. It includes girls and boys recruited for sexual purposes and/or forced marriage. The definition, therefore, does not only refer to a child who is carrying, or has carried weapons" (Cape Town Principals, 1997).

   Ask students to determine what sorts of tasks child soldiers could be required to do. Answers should include cooking, cleaning, operating computers and taking part in combat. Any job a child does, against his or her will, that is affiliated with an armed militia is considered to be a task of a child soldier.

2. Hand out copies of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 1989, world leaders decided that children under 18 years of age often need special care that adults do not. The Convention is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate a full range of human rights such as civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for children.

   The Convention is an international document negotiated by Member States at the United Nations. Every Member State of the United Nations has ratified (or adopted) the treaty except the United States and Somalia, who have only signed it.

   The Convention offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development. By recognizing children's rights in this way, the Convention firmly sets the focus on the whole child.

   Madeline Albright, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, signed the Convention in 1995. However, the United States Constitution requires that such documents receive a two-thirds approval by the Senate to be adopted. There are some articles in the Convention that the US Senate has yet to come to an agreement on.

   Ask Students:
   What is the difference between ratifying and signing a treaty?
   Why do you think the United States has not adopted the Convention?

   Answers can include:
   a. Signing does not create a binding legal obligation but does demonstrate the State's intent to examine the treaty domestically and consider ratifying it. Ratification signifies an agreement by the state to be legally bound by the terms of the treaty.

   b. Some US legislators feel that the provisions or certain articles of the Convention could interfere with the role of parents in their children's lives.

   The Convention is the most widely supported international treaty because nations, organizations and individuals realize that the future of humanity is in the hands of our

children.

Share these facts with your students:

- o 40 million children live on the streets of the world's cities
- o The average age of the homeless in the US is 9 years
- o A gun takes the life of a child every 2 hours in the US
- o In Liberia, children made up a quarter of all civil war combatants
- o Children are tortured by authorities in 11 countries
- o More than a million children work in the Asian sex trade
- o 4,000 children in the USA were murdered by their parents in 1998
- o 2 million girls between 4 and 12 years undergo genital mutilation every year

Source: Children's rights across the world (BOES)

Ask students to identify and highlight which Articles of the Convention are being violated when children are used in armed conflict.

Answers are:
  Articles 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37 and 38.

Ask students to rephrase the Articles 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, **32**, 34, 35, 36, 37, **38** for an in class discussion.
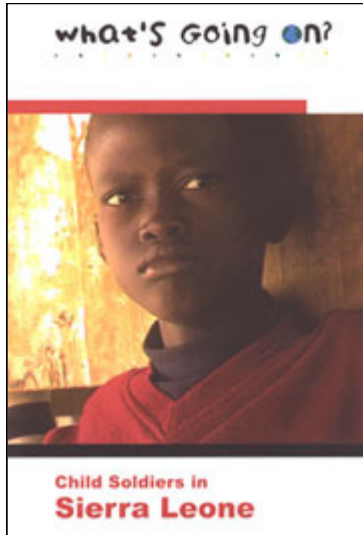
Note to teacher: Students should hold onto their copies of the Convention for further use during other "What's Going On?" lesson plans. It is recommended that you have students use the following initials next to each article that is violated for each topic they learn about from the "What's Going On?" series. (Child Soldiers (CS), HIV/AIDS (AIDS), Refugees (RF), Child Labor (CL), Landmines (LM), Girl's Education (GED), Indigenous People (IP), Northern Ireland (NI), Poverty in America (PA), Street Children (SC).

Activity 2:

1. Introduce these additional facts in a handout or on a transparency
    - o Child Soldiers are being used in over 36 countries worldwide.
    - o Today, there are approximately 300,000 child soldiers fighting in armed conflict.
    - o Child soldiers are under the age of 18.
    - o Children are used as soldiers because they are easily manipulated and are too young to understand their actions.
    - o Child soldiers use AK-47s, M-16s and grenades because they are easy to use. Orphans and refugees sometimes see their only hope for survival is by joining a militia.
    - o Child soldiers are used to clear landmines and as human shields. Child soldiers are often given drugs to help them cope with their emotions making it easier for them to kill.
    - o Girl soldiers are often used as domestic sex slaves.
    - o Child soldiers carry supplies and act as messengers, cooks and lookouts.
    - o Child soldiers are sometimes forced to commit atrocities against their own families and villages.
    - o Many child soldiers are not welcome back home after a conflict ends because of cultural superstition.
    - o Children are the victims of conflict after witnessing or participating in murder and rape, becoming disabled, homeless or psychologically traumatized.

2. Hand out copies of the blank [World Map](#) and the [Where Child Soldiers are Being Used Graph](#). Have students color in parts of the world that use children in armed forces.

3. Discuss: What does the map show us about the extent to which children are used in combat world wide? Why are child soldiers found in some countries and not others?

Activity 3:

Child Soldiers in
Sierra Leone

1. Screen the documentary 'What's Going On?,' Sierra Leone.
2. What rights were violated in the cases of Abu, Fatmata and Swankay?
3. Ask students to discuss their emotional responses to the documentary.

Activity 4:

1. Ask students what actions they think the rest of the world can do to eliminate child soldiers.
   Who is responsible for taking action against these atrocities?

2. There are many NGOs and members of civil society who work extremely hard to eradicate child soldiers.
   a. Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict (UNSGCAC) works to raise awareness and promote the collection of information about the plight of children affected by conflict.

   b. UNICEF is an international agency of the United Nations that works to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF works with families and communities to provide psychosocial support, education, vocational training for children involved in armed conflict.
   (See below for more organizations)

3. Discuss ways that students can get involved in the fight against children in armed conflict.

1. Write a response to the lesson's focus questions: How big a problem is the use of child soldiers today?
Answers should include: Geographic distribution; number of children involved in armed conflict; the number of conflicts in which children have participated in; the type of activities child soldiers are expected to do.

2. Have students read the personal stories of child soldiers. Examine the readings to find the emotional, psychological, and physical effect that war has on children. Identify the reasons why children end up in such predicaments. Ask students to respond to the question: Are child soldiers victims or victimizers?

3. Research and report about the work of NGO's that are working to end the use of child soldiers.

   The International Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers
   http://www.child-soldier.org

   The U.S. Campaign to Ban the Use of Child Soldiers
   http://www.us-childsoldiers.org

   Human Rights Watch
   http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/crp/index.htm

   Kids Can Free the Children
   http://www.freethechildren.com/youthinaction/war_affected_children.htm

   Amnesty International - Child Soldiers
   http://www.amnestyusa.org/children/soldiers

   One World
   http://www.oneworld.org/child_rights/ch_war.html

   Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict
   http://www.un.org/special-rep/children-armed-conflict/English/ChildSoldiers.html

   Rapper Emanuel Jal's Trip to Peace
   http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4950821

4. Students should be able to form their own groups and contribute to the global effort to stop the use of child soldiers. Divide students into groups of 3-5 and have them come up with the following:
   1. A group name and logo.
   2. The group's mandate and mission statement.
   3. Long and short term goals for the group
   4. Other organizations to collaborate with
   5. Come up with a PR campaign to inform the school and public about their organization.

Learn More

Children's Movement for Peace (CMP) http://turnerlearning.com/cnn/soldiers/intro.html
Spanish Version htt://geocities.com/enchantedforest/creek/8238/index.htm
Human Rights Watch http://hrw.org/campaigns/crp/whatdo.htm
Say Yes to Children Campaign: http://www.netaid.org/sayyes/en/new_index_html
US Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers: http://www.us-childsoldiers.org/join.html
Amnesty International http://www.amnesty.org
UNICEF programs for promoting peace in war torn areas http://www.unicef.org/children-in-war/feature-peaceed.html
Soldiers of Peace, CNN/Turner Learning
http://www.turnerlearning.com/cnn/soldiers/intro.htm
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC).
http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/index.htm
UNICEF Voices of Youth Website,
http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/rights.explore_151.html. Explore and read about children's views and experiences of war. Research UNICEF's agenda and strategies to combat the use of child soldiers.
One World http://www.oneworld.org/child_rights/ch_war.html
Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, http://www.un.org/special-rep/children-armed conflict/English/ChildSoldiers.html
Kids Can Free the Children
http://www.freethechildren.com/youthinaction/war_affected_children.htm
Children in War http://www.childreninwar.com/
Cyberschoolbus http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/childsoldiers/webquest/voices5.asp

Books

Abrams, I. (2001). The *Novel Peace Prize Laureates: An Illustrated Biographical History (1901-2001).* Science History Publications, ISBN 0881353884
Boutwell, J. & Klare, M. (2000). "A Scourge of Small Arms." *Scientific American,* June 2000 48-54
Keene, A. (1998). *Peacemakers: Winners of the Nobel Peace Prize.* Oxford University Press, ISBN 0195103165
Singer, P.W. (2005) *Children at War.* New York: Pantheon Books

Reports

Coalition to stop the Use of Child Soldiers. Child Soldiers.1379 Report (CSC Report).
Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2002. http://www.child-soldiers.org. This report evaluates the United Nations Security Resolution (UNSC) which was adopted to tackle the international problem of recruitment and use if child soldiers.
Graca, M. (1996). "Children at Both End of the Gun." In *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children.* United Nations/UNICEF http://unicef.org/graca
UNICEF. *The State of the World's Children 1996: Children in War.*
http://www.unicef.org/sowc96/childwar.htm
UNICEF. *The State of the World's Children 2001: Leadership.*
http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_7344.html

Documents

United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in armed conflict, full text available at http://www.unicef.org/crc/annex1.htm
Optional Protocol on the use of Children in Armed Conflict
http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/protocolchild
The Child Soldiers Protocol http://hrw.org/campaigns/crp/protocol.htm
Balot, Isabelle. (2004) "Child Soldiers", a poem. Protocol
http://www.un.org/spanish/special-rep/children-armed-conflict/fsoldiers_files/poemengbgrd.doc
UNICEF Fact Sheet http://www.unicef.org/protection/files/childsoldiers.pdf
Alfredson, L. Disarmament Forums, (2002) Child Soldiers,
http://ochaonline.un.org/GetBin.asp?DocID=3884
Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War
http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Fourth_Geneva_Convention

Film

UNICEF 3551: *Demobilization of Child Soldiers in Southern Sudan*, 26 min. UNICEF: 2001
http://www.unicef.org/vidcat/order.html ($15.00)
Thompson, K. Soldiers for Peace, CNN/TurnerLeanring, 1999.
http://www.unicef.org/vidcat/377/index.html
J. Russell, B. Bailey, L. Poole. (2004). Invisible Children: Discover the Unseen. Documentary
film about child soldiers and children involved in armed conflict in Uganda.
http://www.invisiblechildren.com ($29.95 for two DVDs)

Radio Addresses

Soldier Boy, Denmark Radio (TV), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' agency for
international development and co-operation (DANIDA) and UNICEF. Videocassette
available at http://www.unicef.org/broadcast/vidcat.htm
Kruger, Franz. "Child Soldiers Active in 41 Countries." Radio Netherlands, June 12, 2001.
http://www.rnw.nl.hotspots/html/childsoldiers010612.html
National Public Radio (NPR) reports on Child Soldiers, "Fighting Child Soldiers" All Things
Considered, April 10, 2002 with Peter Warren Singer (5 min.).
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4791597
MSNBC slide show *Children at War* with audio recording available at
http://www.msnbc.com/news/747688.asp (MSNBC, "Children at War," MSNBC, May 4,
2002).
Beauchemin, "Child Soldiers of Liberia," *Radio Netherlands* http://www.rnw.nl.en/liberia
Kenneth Walker, "Child Soldiers Rehab." National Public Radio, July 6, 2000
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1076296
David Mcguffin, "Saving the Child Victims of Uganda's Civil War," April 24, 2005
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4617565
"Child Soldiers Fight Forgotten War in Uganda," May 11, 2005
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4647575
Ed Gordon, "Child Soldiers of the Lord's Resistance Army," August 9, 2005
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4791635
"Innocents Lost: Saving Child Soldiers," August 9, 2005
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4791597
Pauline Baker, "Failed States Report," June 26, 2005
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4719480
Brenda Wilson, "Young Ugandan Women Face AIDS Threat," January 17, 2004,
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1602787
Jason Beaubien, "Northern Uganda Wracked by Civil War," December 5, 2003,
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1533421
"Mozambique Study Sees Hope for ex-Child Soldiers," May 5, 2005,
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4632471
Talk of the Nation, "Underage Letters: A Private Army," February 1, 2005
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4507493
Talk of the Nation, "U.N. Report on Child Soldiers," February 16, 2005,
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4501720
General Assembly of the UN, Special Session on Children,
http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/

Articles

Werner, W. (1999). Teaching for Hope. The Canadian Anthology of Social Studies. Pacific
Educational Press, Vancouver, CA p. 249-253
Keairns, Y. (2002). Child Soldiers, http://www.afsc.org/issues/issue.php?id=315
BBC World Service, *Children of Conflict*,
http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/childrensrights/childrenofconflict/
Additional articles are available at http://newssearch.bbc.co.uk/cgi-
bin/search/results.pl?scope=newsifs&tab=news&q=child+soldier&go.x=43&go.y=13
Masland, Tom. "Voices of the Children," Newsweek, May 13, 2002, vol. 24
BBC News, "Child Soldiers to Be Disarmed," BBC News, May 25, 2000
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/764230.stm
BBC News, "Child Soldiers to Swap guns for PCs," BBC News, May 25, 2002
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1886248.stm
BBC News, "Congo Demobilizes Child Soldiers," BBC News, December 18, 2001
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1718545.stm
BBC News, "Rehabilitating Sudan's Boy Soldiers," BBC News, May 4, 2001
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1313271.stm