



Lesson Plan: Child Labour

Standards

Established Goals:

This lesson presents an overview of where, why, how, and in what conditions child labor occurs. Students will identify the physical and emotional challenges that children forced into labor face. Students will study the efforts by the international community to prevent children from working in hazardous environments.

National Council for Social Studies Standards:

V. Individuals

VI. Power, authority, and governance

IX. Global Connections

X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Transferable Concepts/Links:

Hazardous Working Conditions, Child Labor Laws, Developing World,

Power, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), Poverty, Technology, Exploitation, International

Cooperation, International Law, Gross National Product (GNP), Gross

Domestic Product (GDP), Product Development, Industry, Multi-national Corporations, Supply and Demand

Course Connections:

Government

Global Studies

Current Events

Geography

Economics

Business

History

Social Studies

Understandings:

In many places around the world children are forced to work, sometimes in brutal conditions and dangerous environments that are threatening to their lives and health.

Typically, children who are forced into labor don't go to school or participate in recreational activities.

Child labor exists for many reasons, mainly economic gain.

Many products we use have possibly passed through the hands of a child laborer in the process of being made.

Children forced into labor deserve empathy.

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 and international organizations that are aiding children who have been exploited.

Equipment and Materials:

Computer & Television.

Handout # 1 [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.

Essential Questions:

What are the moral issues behind child labor?

Describe how and where child labor is used?

Identify the reasons for using child laborers?

How does the global society suffer when children are forced to work, particularly in hazardous working conditions?

What is the role of international documents and what do they say about child labor?

List the factors that contribute to child labor.

What is the link between poverty and child labor?

What are the advantages for the child's family when he or she works?

How do students' consumer decisions add to the cycle of child labor?

Should child labor be forbidden completely? Why or why not?

Students will be able to:

Classify where, when, why, how, and in what conditions children are forced to work

Define what constitutes a hazardous working environment.

Identify the articles being violated in the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other international documents that pertain to the use of child laborers.

Use essential information to get involved in the issue.

Assess the scope of child labor around the world today.

Describe the long-term effects of child labor on a country's economy and societal well-being.

Learning Activities

Activity 1:

1. Ask students the following questions and make a list of their answers on the board:
 - a. How many of you have chores at home?
 - b. How many of you have jobs?
 - c. How old do you have to be to work?
 - d. What do you receive in exchange for the work that you do?

Answers should include:

- e. A variety of household tasks (collecting the garbage, making beds, cleaning, washing the dishes, laundry).
 - f. A variety of jobs in the neighborhood (babysitting, waiter, bank teller, camp counselor).
 - g. Students will have a variety of answers depending on the type of job.
 - h. Some students might receive an allowance; others might simply be expected to share household responsibilities.
2. Give students the definition of 'child labor' and ask them if the definition applies to anyone they know.

Child labor, as defined by International Labour Organization (ILO) is work done by children under the age of 12; work by children under the age of 15 that prevents school attendance; and work by children under the age of 18 that is hazardous to their physical or mental health. Child labor is an economic activity or work that interferes with the completion of a child's education or that is harmful to children in any way.

Child labor is not confined to one particular industry and is found in most countries around the world. The cruelest forms of child labor are those that force children to work for long hours in dangerous conditions for little to no compensation. Some children are found working in large factories, manning large pieces of equipment. Others work in fields, mines, and quarries for up to 20 hours a day. Many children are sold into the sex industry where their physical and mental health is jeopardized daily. Some children find themselves in 'bonded labour' working to pay off generations worth of debt.

Many children become debilitated, both physically and emotionally, from hazardous working conditions. With severe injuries, children are unable to attend school and lose the chance to create a better life for themselves. Those who do survive face psychological and physical scars that might handicap them for the rest of their lives.

Child Labour can be organized into different categories. According to UNICEF:

Child Work: "Children's participation in economic activity - that does not negatively affect their health and development or interfere with education, can be positive. Work that does not interfere with education (light work) is permitted from the age of 12 years under the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 138."

Child Labour: "This is more narrowly defined and refers to children working

in contravention of the above standards. This means all children below 12 years of age working in any economic activities, those aged 12 to 14 years engaged in harmful work, and all children engaged in the worst forms of child labour."

Worst forms of child labour: "These involve children being enslaved, forcibly recruited, prostituted, trafficked, forced into illegal activities and exposed to hazardous work." (Retrieved Dec. 2005)

Ask students to define the difference between a hazardous job and a non-hazardous job. Make two lists on the board of examples of each type of job.

Answers for hazardous jobs should include: mining, jobs that require the operations of heavy machinery, jobs in dirty and unsafe environments, any job that last longer than eight hours a day. Answers for non-hazardous jobs might include: cleaning, child-care, agricultural work not requiring machines or sharp objects.

3. 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 246 million children world wide are child laborers
- o 73 million working children are less than 10 years old
- o There are 2.5 million working children in the developed economies
- o Every year, 22,000 children die in work related accidents
- o The largest number of working children - 127 million - age 14 and under are in the Asia Pacific region
- o Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest ratio of working children: nearly one-third of children age 14 and under (48 million children)
- o 8.4 million children are trapped in slavery, trafficking, debt bondage, prostitution, pornography and other illicit activities
- o Most children work in the formal sector;
 - o 70% in agriculture, commercial hunting, fishing or forestry;
 - o 8% in manufacturing;
 - o 8% in wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels;
 - o 7% in community, social and personal service, such as domestic work.

Source: International Labor Organization (ILO)

2. Ask students to identify and highlight which Articles of the Convention are being violated when child labor occurs.

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).

Other International Documents and notable events working to ban the use of children in hazardous working conditions:

- 1930: Adoption of the first Forced Labor Convention (ILO, No. 29)
- 1973: Adoption of the Minimum Age Convention (ILO, No. 138)
- 1996: Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action: Stats that a crime against a child in one place is a crime anywhere.
- 1999: International Labor Organization Convention No. 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst forms of Child Labor (Adopted on June 17, 1999; entered into force on November 19, 2000). The convention requires signatories to work with business groups to identify hazardous forms of child labor and introduce time-bound programs for eliminating them. As of 2005, 149 countries have ratified (agreed to the terms of) the Convention.
- 2002: ILO establishes 12 June as the World Day Against Child Labor.

- 2004: The first global economic study on the costs and benefits of elimination child labor says the benefits will be an estimated \$5.1 trillion.

Source: ILO

Activity 2:

1. In groups of three, have students come up with a list of reasons why children might be forced to work. After they have brainstormed for 5-7 minutes ask someone from each group to present the reasons they thought might be a cause of child labor.

Answers should include:

- Lack of decent jobs for adults.
- Large families require a variety of incomes to feed their members.
- Some jobs require small hands and bodies (sewing, crawling in small spaces).
- Agriculture jobs pay by the amount of produce picked. This system encourages families to bring more children into the field to help collect farmed goods.
- Poor families can't afford to send their children to school.
- It is cheaper to pay small children because they are less likely to complain than adults.
- Many families around the world are unfamiliar with the rights of their children and deem it acceptable to send children to work.
- Girls are often kept at home to look after younger children and do household chores.
- Families think that school won't help their children survive. Therefore, they send children to work where they can make money to feed themselves and family members.
- Migrant children don't live in one place long enough to attend school; instead they work in the fields with their parents.

2. Ask students: Do any of the above reasons justify child labour? Should children work to help feed their families? What if a parent is disabled or incapable of providing food for the family, should the child forego school and work instead?

These questions are likely to spark a debate in the classroom. None of these questions have right or wrong answers. Explain to the students that these are issues that politicians grapple with often.

3. Ask students: Are there any jobs that children, under any circumstance, should not be permitted to do? Make a list on the board that children can refer to.

Answers should include: Any jobs that are considered 'hazardous work.' Any hazardous work that threatens the life of the employees. According to The Fair Labor Standards (FLSA), the following jobs are prohibited by anyone under the age of 18:

- Manufacturing or storing explosives
- Driving a motor vehicle and being an outside helper on a motor vehicle.

- Coal mining.
- Logging and sawmilling.
- Power-driven wood-working machines.
- Exposure to radioactive substances and ionizing radiants.
- Power-driven metal forming, punching, and shearing metal.
- Mining, other than coal mining.
- Meat-packing or processing (including power-driven meat slicing machines).
- Operation of bakery machines.
- Operation of paper product machines.
- Manufacturing brick, tile and related products.
- Power driven circular saw, band saws and guillotine shears.
- Wrecking, demolition and ship breaking operations.
- Roofing operations.
- Excavation operations.

Activity 3:



1. Screen the documentary 'What's Going On?,' Child Labor in Brazil

Activity 4:

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

2. Ask students how they think they could help reduce the amount of child labor worldwide?

Answers should include: don't purchase materials that might have been made by children, boycott companies that have children in their work force.

3. There are many NGOs and members of civil society who work extremely hard to eradicate child labor.
 - a. International Labor Organization (ILO) works to raise awareness and promote the collection of information about the plight of child laborers.
 - i. ILO website <http://www.ilo.org/>
 - ii. List of Countries that have ratified Convention No. 138 <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-byConvYear.cfm?hdroff=1&Lang=EN&conv=C138>
 - iii. World Day Against Child Labor <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/wdacl/2005/index.htm>

b. UNICEF is a United Nations agency 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 child laborers.

- i. UNICEF website <http://www.unicef.org/>
- ii. Child Labor
http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_childlabour.html
- iii. UNICEF in Action
http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_action.html

(See below for more organizations)

4. Discuss ways that students will get involved in the fight against child labor.

Evaluation/Extension Activities

1. Write a response to the lesson's focus questions: How big a problem is the use of child labor today?
Answers should include: geographic distribution; number of children involved in labor, the difference between and hazardous and on-hazardous job, jobs children currently do, the reasons behind this global issue.
2. Research and report about the work of NGO's and INGO'S that are working to end child labor.

Summary of the Federal Child Labor Laws www.stopchildlabor.org

Human Rights Watch <http://www.hrw.org/children/labor.htm>

Kids Can Free the Children

<http://www.freethechildren.com/getinvolved/geteducated/childlabour.htm>

Amnesty International - Child Soldiers

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/children/document.do?id=8AFD6BE44ABEC9308025690000692F13>

3. Students can form their own student group/s to contribute to the global effort to stop the use of child laborers. 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. Identify other organizations to collaborate with
 5. Come up with a PR campaign to inform the school and public about their group

Get Involved

Free the Children <http://www.freethechildren.com/youthzone/rockinresources/index.html>

Child Labor Coalition, Child Labor Around the World
<http://www.stopchildlabor.org/internationalchildlabor/claroundworld.htm>

The National Labor Committee. End Child Labor Around the World.
<http://gbgmumc.org/umw/ednchild.html>

Corporate Accountability Project <http://www.corporation.org>

Apparel and Textile Workers <http://www.unitehere.org/about/apparel.asp?offset=3>

Clean Clothes Campaign. Improving Working Conditions in the Global Garment Industry
<http://www.cleanclothes.org/companies/niketrack.htm>

Sweatshop Watch, Empowering workers, Informing Consumers
<http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/>

Children's Movement for Peace (CMP) <http://turnerlearning.com/cnn/soldiers/intro.html>

Spanish Version <http://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/act_now/

Amnesty International <http://www.amnesty.org>

Resources

Learn More

Fields For Hope
<http://www.fieldsofhope.org/homeroom/>

Child Labor in America 1908-1912: Photographs of Lewis W. Hine.

The History Place:
<http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates.childlabor/index.html>

Clocking in For Trouble: Teens and Unsafe Work. The National Consumers League.

Guideline and laws pertaining the child labor in the US.
<http://www.nclnet.org/childlabor/jobreport.htm>

Child Labor Public Education Project
http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/laborctr/child_labor/about/

[what is child labor.html](#)

American Labor History, Rutgers University Library.
<http://newark.rutgers.edu/~natalieb/laborhis.htm>

Cyberschoolbus
<http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/childsoldiers/webquest/voices5.asp>

Books

Bethell, J. (1980). *Three Cheers for Mother Goose*. Holt, Reinhart & Winston: New York

Campbell Bartoletti, S. (1996). *Growing up in Coal Country*. Houghton Mifflin: New York

Chambers, C. (2006). *Living as a Child Laborer: Mehboob's Story (Children in Crisis)*

Chang, L. (2001). *Shonenko: Taiwanese Child Laborers in World War II Japan*

Dimock, G. (2002). *Priceless Children: American Photographs 1890-1925; Child Labor and the Pictorialist Ideal*

Freedman, R. & Hine, L. (1998) *Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor*.

Gourley, C. (1999). *Good Girl Work*. The Millbrook Press: Brookfield, CT

Hindman, H. (2002). *Child Labor: An American History*.

Kielburger, K. M. (1999). *Free the Children: A Young Man's Personal Crusade Against Child Labor*.

Levine, M. (2003). *Children for Hire: The perils of Child Labor in the United States*.

McCully, E. A. (1996). *The Bobbin Girl*. Penguin: New York

Meltzer, M. (1994). *Cheap Raw Material*. Penguin Group: New York

Mofford, J. (1997). *Child Labor in America*

Olfenhardt, L. *Child Labor: Then and Now*.

Sallee, S. (2004). *The Whiteness of Child Labor Reform in the New South*.

Schmitz, C. L. *Child Labor: A Global View*.

Trattner, W. *Crusade for the Children; A history of the National Child Labor Committee and Child labor Reform in America*.

Tucker, T. (1998). *Moonlight and Mill Whistles*. Summerhouse Press: Columbia, South Carolina

Weston, B. H. *Child Labor and Human Rights: Making Children Matter*.

Whittaker, W. G. (2003). *Child labor in America: History, Policy and Legislative Issues*

Breaker Boys, Art Poster by National Archive
 Region: *Child labor & Prostitution Plague Central America*

Reports

<http://www.crin.org/resources/find.asp>

Easy Target, Violence Against Children Worldwide

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/children/>

Proceedings of the annual meeting of the National Child Labor Committee, 1905, 1906 (Children and youth, social problems and social Policy), National Child Labor Committee

Rural child welfare: An inquiry by the National Child Labor Committee, based upon conditions in West Virginia. By, National Child Labor Committee

Advancing the global campaign against child labor: progress made future actions: proceedings from the conference hosted by the U.S. Department of Labor (SuDoc L 29.2:G 51)

By the sweat and toil of children the use of child labor in American imports: a report to the committees on appropriations, United States Congress (SuDoc L 29.2:SW 3/V.1)

The apparel industry and codes of conduct a solution to the international labor problem? : Executive summary, by the U.S. Department of Labor (SuDoc L 29.2:Ap 1/EXEC.UMM)

A report on child labor in Mexico and the United States (SuDoc L 36.2:C 43) by U.S. Dept of Labor

International child labor problems (SuDoc L 29.16:C 43/2) by U.S. Dept of Labor

School-to-work opportunities and the Fair Labor Standards Act: a guide to work-based learning, federal child labor laws, and minimum wage provisions (SuDoc L 36.208:SCH 6) by U.S. Dept of Labor

UNICEF. *The State of the World's Children 1996: Children in War*. Documents Federal Child Labor Laws, U.S. Department of Labor's Website

<http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/hrg.htm#9>

Slavery Convention

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/f1sc.htm>

Protocol amending the Slavery Convention

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/f2psc.htm>

Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery,

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/f3scas.htm>

ILO Convention 138, Minimum Age

<http://www.hrw.org/children/child-legal.htm>

ILO Convention 182, Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc87/com-chic.htm>

Child Labor Requirements in Agriculture Under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

<http://www.abe.iastate.edu/safety/pdf/clb102/pdf>

Recommendation 190 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc87/com-chir.htm>

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b3ccpr.htm>

International Covenant on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_cescr.htm

<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

'Proud to Work & Happy to be Organized!': Working Children in West Africa & their Participation in their own Movement This report examines the lives of working children in W. Africa, & examines how & to what degree working children/young people participate in the West African EJT (enfant jeune travailleur) Movement.

<http://www.crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=3450>

A Future Without Child Labour

This new report sees reduced numbers but worsening conditions for 246 million Child Laborers and calls this scourge "one of the most urgent challenges of our time".

www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2002/19.htm

Abolishing Extreme Forms of Child Labour

www.ilo.org/public/english/child/text/newsroom/abolishing.htm

Advancing the Campaign Against Child Labour Report comparing military and basic education expenditures by governments in 73 developing countries for each year from 1990-2001.

www2.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/Advancing3/overview.htm

Attacking Child Labour in Cyberspace
www.ilo.org/public/english/235press/magazine/28/news.htm

Child Labour - Burning Questions
<http://www.crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=5424>

Radio Addresses

'Cocoa Beans': A Poem for Child Laborers, by Freda Denis Cooper (Sep. 2005)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4864221> Disconnecting Chocolate from Slavery, (Feb. 2005)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4498442>

The Tsunami's Toll on Children (Jan. 2005)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4280701>

What's in a Song: An Enduring 'Factory Girl' (Jan. 2005)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4254901>

Haiti's Dark Secret: The Restavecs (March 2004)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1779562>

A Restavec's Tale: Jean Robert Cadet (Feb. 2000)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1779562>

Sweatshops: Child Labor (Jan. 2001)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1117137>

Child labor March Anniversary (July, 2003)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1321205>

Child Slavery in West Africa (June, 2001)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1124954>

Pakistan Child labor (Feb. 2002)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1137980>

China and Child labor (Mar. 2001)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1119793>

Child Soldiers Around the World (July, 2003)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1318241>

Amish See Exemption from Child Labor Laws (Nov. 2003)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1504767>

General Assembly of the UN, Special Session on Children
<http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/>

Articles

Wells, M. *Child Laborers in the shade grown tobacco industry in Connecticut* (Pamphlet/ The Consumers' League of Connecticut)

A former child laborer's shop floor view: an interview with Nazma Akhter. (Cover Story)(Interview): An article from: Multinational Monitor (HTML)

The small hands of slavery: India's bonded child laborers and the World Bank. (Cover Story): An article from: Multinational Monitor (HTML) by Lee Tucker, Arvind Ganesan

Joseph, J. D. (1996). Our Purchases Keep Children in Chains, *Knight Ridder/Tribune*
<http://www.saigon.com/~nike/childlabor.htm>

Nike Shoes and Child Labor in Pakistan
<http://www.american.edu/TED/nike.htm>

Werner, W. (1999). Teaching for Hope. The Canadian Anthology of Social Studies. Pacific Educational Press, Vancouver, CA p. 249-253

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/poemengbqrd.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