



PINES ACADEMY
INTERNATIONAL



World Events



English as a
Foreign
Language

Introduction

This book contains 20 articles and 10 discussion questions for each article, presenting gathered news articles from different places to provide information to students. This information can be helpful in increasing the student's awareness on what is happening around the world and can be used as supporting details when expressing their own ideas.

The pictures are included for students to easily have an idea on the content of the articles and can also be an effective motivation for them.

Moreover, Intriguing questions are formulated to make the students come up with their opinions/ideas giving way to student's interaction in class.

As a whole this book can be used as a tool for enhancing the student's communication skills.

I. CHILD SOLDIERS: CHILDREN AT WAR



Children have been the major victims of wars. What's new is that now children are also becoming offenders. Villages are raided and children kidnapped, just to be trained and transformed into soldiers. Childhood is being scarred by wars.

In poor regions of the world, often villagers are raped, murdered and children are often carried off to become soldiers. Nobody cares that they're still children. They are kidnapped and recruited. Not even girls are spared.

Children are handed over the task of cooking and serving food, washing. They are made to carry heavy things and sometimes also sent as secret agents to investigate the territory of their enemies. They even have to serve as mine detectors. Children recruited as soldiers are ordered to murder, rape, torture or plunder people. Often their own parents, friends and neighbors are the victims. Girls even have to serve soldiers on a sexual basis.

Only some children succeed to escape. The escapers, if caught, are punished with beatings. Sometimes, the punishment is so bad that the children die. Children who have lived those terrible and scary moments will never forget them.

One of the reasons for the increasing rate of children being recruited as soldiers at war is the availability of large quantity of weapons that are easy to handle even by young children. Furthermore, children are easy to influence, unassuming and unaware of danger and therefore at a lot of risks. Threats, physical violence, alcoholism and drugs are used to break their resistance and make them become obedient soldiers.

Integration in society after war is a very hard process. The everyday violence often leaves its trace: nightmares, depressions, mental illness.... Especially for girls, it is very difficult due to sexual abuse. Unwanted pregnancies, venereal diseases or AIDS are some consequences of the time spent serving in the military. These children suffer a lot. And after ordeal, they can't go back home because their parents are dead. War children are often excluded.

They have learned to fight and to use weapons, but without school education or professional skills, their chances to integrate after war are small. While the younger children are able to go to school, the older ones need to obtain practical skills before they can live a new life. These children also need psychological help!

Questions for discussion:

1. What do you think of the people who force children to take up arms and fight?
2. What do you think the children feel about fighting in wars?
3. How do you think a child changes once he or she is given a gun and told to kill people?
4. Do you think the emotional scars that child soldiers suffer ever heal?
5. What do you think about the association to stop using children as soldiers of war?
6. What should the global community do to reduce the number of children fighting in conflicts across the world?
7. The UN says using children under 15 is a war crime. Do you agree or disagree?
8. What should the government give as a punishment for people using children in war?
9. Do you think it's alright for children to have guns if they were the only and last chance to protect your country?
10. What is the worst case of the use of child soldiers you know about?