

Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk about AIDS



Teacher's Guide

By Deborah Ellis

**“Our Stories, Our Songs” – Deborah Ellis
Teacher’s Guide**

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Introduction

Our Stories, Our Songs is a collection of autobiographical vignettes as told to the author by children and youth during her travels to Malawi and Zambia. The book is appropriate for readers in grades 7-9, ESL students and reluctant high school readers as a text for independent reading, guided reading, or literature circles. It can also be used as a whole class literature study where all or portions of the text are used to explore the many ways in which HIV and AIDS affects children.

The Teacher's Guide is divided into three main sections to correspond to major themes of the text. Each section includes a general synopsis, vocabulary, guiding questions for pre- and post-reading discussion (with appropriate teacher support material) and an (optional) extension activity. In addition, there are two culminating activities with related assessment rubric charts which encourage students to integrate themes and apply their knowledge about the AIDS pandemic in Africa. A breakdown of individual themes encountered in the stories is shown below:

Major Themes in "Our Songs, Our Stories"

	STORY	Themes
PART ONE: Songs at the Edge	<i>Life In Chowomba</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children orphaned by AIDS • Poverty • HIV and AIDS stigma • Children's rights affected by HIV and AIDS • Vulnerability of children without adult care
	<i>Bounced Around</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children orphaned by AIDS • Equity and empathy • Stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS
	<i>New Desks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children orphaned by AIDS • Children's rights affected by HIV and AIDS • Education/schools
	<i>The Island in the Sky</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIDS awareness • Difference between HIV and AIDS • Education/Schools • Vulnerability of children without adult care • Children orphaned by AIDS – changing responsibilities of oldest sibling • Emotional distress for children
	<i>On the Street</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teenagers and HIV • Children living on the street • Vulnerability of children without adult

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> care • Gender differences
	<i>Trouble</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in prison • Human Rights and Ethics/ Social injustice • Vulnerability of children without adult care
	<i>Prison</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in prison • Vulnerability of children without adult care • Violation of the Rights of the Child due to HIV and AIDS • Social injustice
	<i>Babies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender inequalities and AIDS • Early Childhood Development Rights affected by HIV and AIDS • Perceptions of Death
PART TWO: Songs of Survival	<i>Being Sick</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs and Symptoms of HIV • Health care and HIV • Stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS • Lack of HIV testing
	<i>Peer Counselling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive actions towards fighting HIV • Stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS • HIV Survival tools • Gender inequality • Vulnerability of children orphaned by AIDS
	<i>Living</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive actions towards fighting HIV • Perceptions of death • HIV and AIDS education • HIV support groups/centres
PART THREE: Songs of Victory	<i>Anti-Aids Clubs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role models • Positive actions towards fighting HIV
	<i>Kicking Aids Out</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using sports programs to fight against HIV • Defying gender roles – female empowerment in Zambia • Positive programs fighting against HIV
	<i>Arts Against AIDS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV and AIDS education • Music and drama fight against HIV • Youth newspaper in Malawi stands up against HIV and AIDS • Female empowerment/women's rights in Zambia

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hope for the future
	<i>Story Workshop</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Radio drama providing education on HIV and AIDS• Examples of children acting positively towards HIV prevention

PART ONE: SONGS AT THE EDGE

Life in Chowamba (pp. 2-7)

SYNOPSIS

We are introduced to children who live in Chowamba, a congested, low income neighbourhood outside Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. The author meets a woman named Agnes who sells ribbons to provide food and shelter for children orphaned by AIDS. We meet Collins, Martha, Manuel, and Victor who share their stories about losing one or both of their parents and about their fears and hopes for the future.

VOCABULARY

Nsima: Zambian word for corn meal
Orphan: a child who has lost one or both parents

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Introduction to the Book

- Look at the cover of the book. Where do you think these stories are from?
- What do you think this book will be about?
- Why do you think the author chose this picture for the front cover of her book?
- Look at the font and text used for the titles on the cover of this book. What kinds of statements do these make? What kind of message are they trying to share?

Pre-reading Discussion

- What do you think the author means by the title “Songs at the Edge”?
- What are your biggest fears and worries in life? What are some ways that you try to overcome your fears?
- Before reading “Songs at the Edge,” complete the first two columns of the KWL (Know, Want to Know, Learned) chart in Worksheet 1.

Post-reading Discussion

- Complete the final column of the KWL chart. What did you learn from these stories?
- Where do these four stories take place? (Find Zambia on a map and locate the capital city Lusaka).
 - *Show students Zambia on a map (see page 100 of the book for a condensed map of the region). More information about Zambia can be found at: <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/zambia.html>*
- Who is Agnes and why is she so special? Why is she such an important part of these children’s lives?
- How does a lack of adult care make a child vulnerable?
 - *Separated, unaccompanied, and/or orphaned children are vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, kidnapping, and stigma; and are at extreme risk of poverty, hunger, and dropping out of school.*

- Why does Agnes sell ribbons on the street in Lusaka?
- Consider all four stories from the children. What similarities do they share?
 - *Death of a parent*
 - *The children in these stories are forced to deal with death and psychosocial trauma at a young age. This question can be used to introduce a discussion on the emotional stresses associated with HIV and AIDS.*
 - *The children in each story have become vulnerable due to the lack of adult care.*
- What are the children's biggest fears?
 - *Some of the children fear death and fighting while other children do not fear anything.*
 - *Emphasize the universal fears that all people may have despite their background.*

Further Discussion

- Why do you think so many of these children do not know how their parents died?
 - *Stigma or shame associated with HIV and AIDS*
 - *Relatives often want to protect the children by not explaining the reason for their parents' death*
 - *Lack of understanding of the disease*
- Examine the Convention on the Rights of the Child. (A child-friendly language version can be found in Appendix 1). If a child has no adult care, what rights of the child are affected?
 - *The right to live with your parents*
 - *Right to be protected from harm and abuse*
 - *The right to food, clothing and a safe place to live*
 - *The right to be raised by own parents*
 - *Access to money and employment*

Worksheet 1

KWL Chart

Use this chart before you begin reading the assigned section.

Topic: How children are affected by HIV and AIDS		
What I Know	What I Want to Know	What I Learned

Activity: HIV and AIDS Quiz

Summary

After discussing the stories from “Life in Chowomba”, students will have an opportunity to test their knowledge of HIV and AIDS. (This activity could also be used as a preconception activity before you begin the text.)

Goals/Objectives

- Learn basic facts about HIV and AIDS
- Understand the epidemic proportions of HIV in the developing world
- Learn about the impact of HIV on children and youth
- Identify the links between the violation of children’s rights and their vulnerability to HIV and AIDS

Materials Needed

- Photocopy of Worksheet 2: “How much do you know about HIV and AIDS” for each student. (Note: The quiz is based on data taken from UNICEF’s 2005 Unite Against AIDS publication. For more information, please see: <http://www.uniteforchildren.org/index.html>)

Method

- Ask each student (or small groups of students) to complete the HIV and AIDS Quiz.
- When the students have completed the quiz, read each statement with the class and discuss possible answers with the students. Where appropriate and comfort levels allow, ask students to justify their answers.

Some questions and ideas taken from: “The ABC’s of HIV/AIDS”, Children’s Rights and Global Citizenship, Children’s Rights Centre, University College of Cape Breton, Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada, 2003, pg 104.

Worksheet 2 - student

How much do you know about HIV/AIDS?

1. What does AIDS stand for? _____
2. How are HIV and AIDS related? _____
3. a) What part of the body does HIV affect? _____
b) Refer to your answer in 3a. If this part of your body is affected, how does that harm an individual? _____
4. List three ways that you can become infected with HIV.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
5. How many people are living with HIV in the world? _____
6. There is a cure for HIV. Circle one: **True** or **False**
7. There is a vaccine for HIV. Circle one: **True** or **False**
8. People who are HIV positive can look healthy. Circle one: **True** or **False**
9. You can get HIV by sharing food with an infected person. Circle one: **True** or **False**
10. Females are more at risk of HIV infection than males. Circle one: **True** or **False**
11. Most new HIV infections are a result of heterosexual sex. Circle one: **True** or **False**
12. The violation of children's rights is a large contributing factor to the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS. Circle one: **True** or **False**
13. In many countries, AIDS is disrupting education systems by reducing the supply of teachers and school resources. Circle one: **True** or **False**
14. In some sub-Saharan African countries, life expectancy is decreasing due to AIDS. Circle one: **True** or **False**
15. There are drugs available to treat HIV but not everyone who needs them has access to them. Circle one: **True** or **False**
16. HIV prevalence is growing rapidly in Eastern Europe and parts of Central Asia. _____ Circle one: **True** or **False**

How much do you know about HIV/AIDS?

Worksheet 2-Teacher

1. What does AIDS stand for? *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*
2. How are HIV and AIDS related? *HIV is the virus that infects the body; AIDS is the disease that results when the virus attacks enough of the body's immune cells and the body becomes prone to other infections*
3. a) What part of the body does HIV affect? *Cells of the immune system*
b) Refer to your answer in 3a. If this part of your body is affected, how does that harm an individual? *Decreases the body's ability to fight off other infections*
4. List three ways that you can become infected with HIV.*
a. *Unprotected sex with an infected individual.*
b. *Sharing dirty needles with an infected individual.*
c. *Mother to child transmission (during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding)*
*http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/aids/explore_186.html
5. How many people are living with HIV in the world? ~40 million (UNAIDS, 2006)
6. There is a cure for HIV. Circle one: **True** or **False**
7. There is a vaccine for HIV. Circle one: **True** or **False**
8. People who are HIV positive can look healthy. Circle one: **True** or **False**
9. You can get HIV by sharing food with an infected person. Circle one: **True** or **False**
10. Females are more at risk of HIV infection than males. Circle one: **True** or **False**
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14. In some sub-Saharan African countries, life expectancy is decreasing due to AIDS. Circle one: **True** or **False**
15. There are drugs available to treat HIV but not everyone who needs them has access to them. Circle one: **True** or **False**
16. HIV prevalence is growing rapidly in Eastern Europe and parts of Central Asia. _____. Circle one: **True** or **False**

Bounced Around (pp. 8-10)**SYNOPSIS**

In this single story, we are introduced to Mitto, a young 12 year old girl in Malawi who has been orphaned and has been bounced between many different relatives. She really wants a passport so she can get to a “happier place.”

VOCABULARY

Mulanje:	a village in Malawi
Pedal-pushers:	calf-length pants worn by women
Malaria:	a disease caused by a blood parasite called plasmodium that is transmitted when people are bitten by Anopheles mosquitos. The symptoms of malaria are high fevers, headache, nausea, vomiting and yellowish skin. (Source: <i>FAQs for Malaria, World Health Organization, http://www.searo.who.int/EN/Section10/Section21.htm)</i>
Football:	soccer

GUIDING QUESTIONS**Pre-reading Discussion**

- Change happens to all of us. Brainstorm examples of changes that sometimes happen in the life of a young person growing up. (*Example: divorce of parents, illness/death of a family member, moving schools, falling in love etc.*)
- Does a person always have control over the changes in his or her life? Which changes are usually out of your control?
- How do you feel when changes in your life are out of your control? Why?
- Gather ideas about what students think a typical home in Malawi is like.

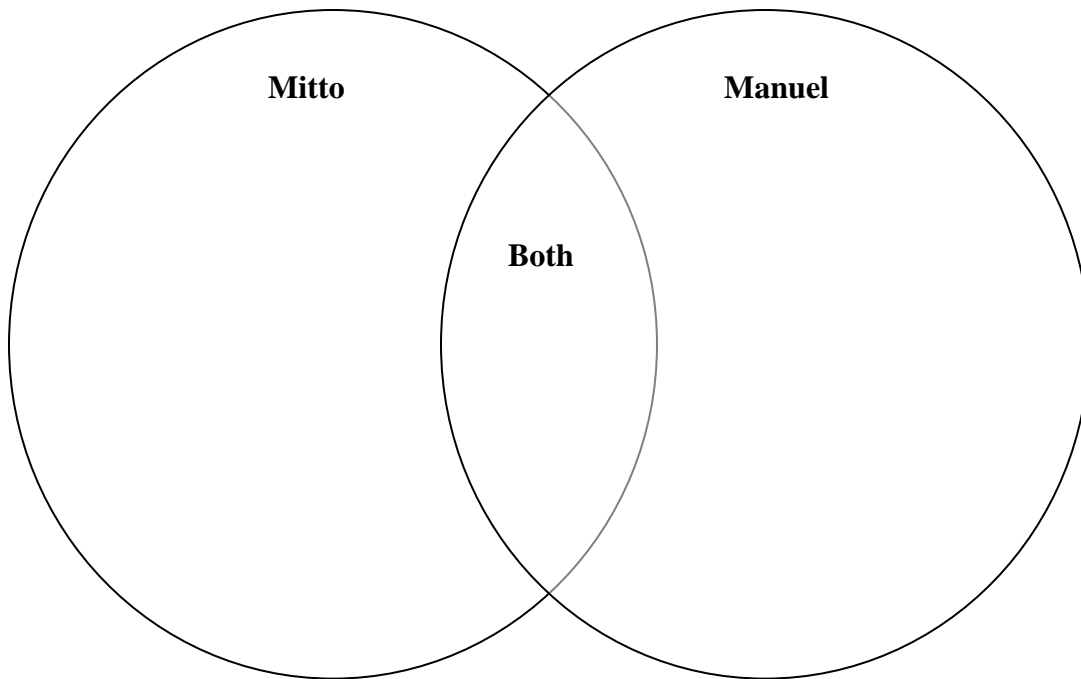
Post-reading Discussion

- What happened to Mitto’s parents and aunt? How did these changes affect Mitto?
 - *Mitto’s parents and aunt died and she was forced to move around to live with different relatives. She suffered abuse and neglect in some of her homes.*
- Describe the home that Mitto lives in at the end of her vignette. How does the house compare to your preconceptions about homes in Malawi?
 - *Mitto now lives in a middle class home with her relatives. Her house has a living room, sofas, satellite TV, and several bedrooms.*
 - *Use this question to address the false stereotypes that many people may have about people and places in developing countries. Discuss ways in which stereotypes can be damaging.*
- Why does Mitto want a passport? What does this say about how Mitto feels?
- Activity: Use Worksheet 3 to compare Mitto’s story with Manuel’s story from Life in Chowomba.

Worksheet 3

Mitto and Manuel

Mitto and Manuel are both children who are growing up in different communities affected by AIDS. Use the Venn diagram below to compare similarities and differences between the stories of Mitto and Manuel.



New Desks (pp. 11-15)

SYNOPSIS

Three students from a school in Lukata, Zambia, who have all been orphaned, share their excitement about getting new desks at their school.

VOCABULARY

Sickle-cell anaemia: Sickle cell anaemia is a serious genetic disease in which the body makes abnormally shaped red blood cells and cannot therefore transport oxygen efficiently through their body. People with sickle-cell anaemia often have organ damage, pain and low blood count. (For more information on the disorder: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000527.htm>)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Pre-reading Discussion

- What do you like most about your school? What makes you proud of your school?
- If you were to make one change at your school, what would it be?
- What kinds of things do you get excited about or look forward to?
- What do you want to be in the future? How are you planning on achieving these goals?

Post-reading Discussion

- What do these children want to be when they grow up? What does this tell us about their view of school and education?
- How did the children respond to the delivery of these new desks?
- Activity: Use worksheet 4 to show the impact that these new desks will have on the children. *Encourage a discussion about hope, change for the future, and the value of education regardless of where you live.*

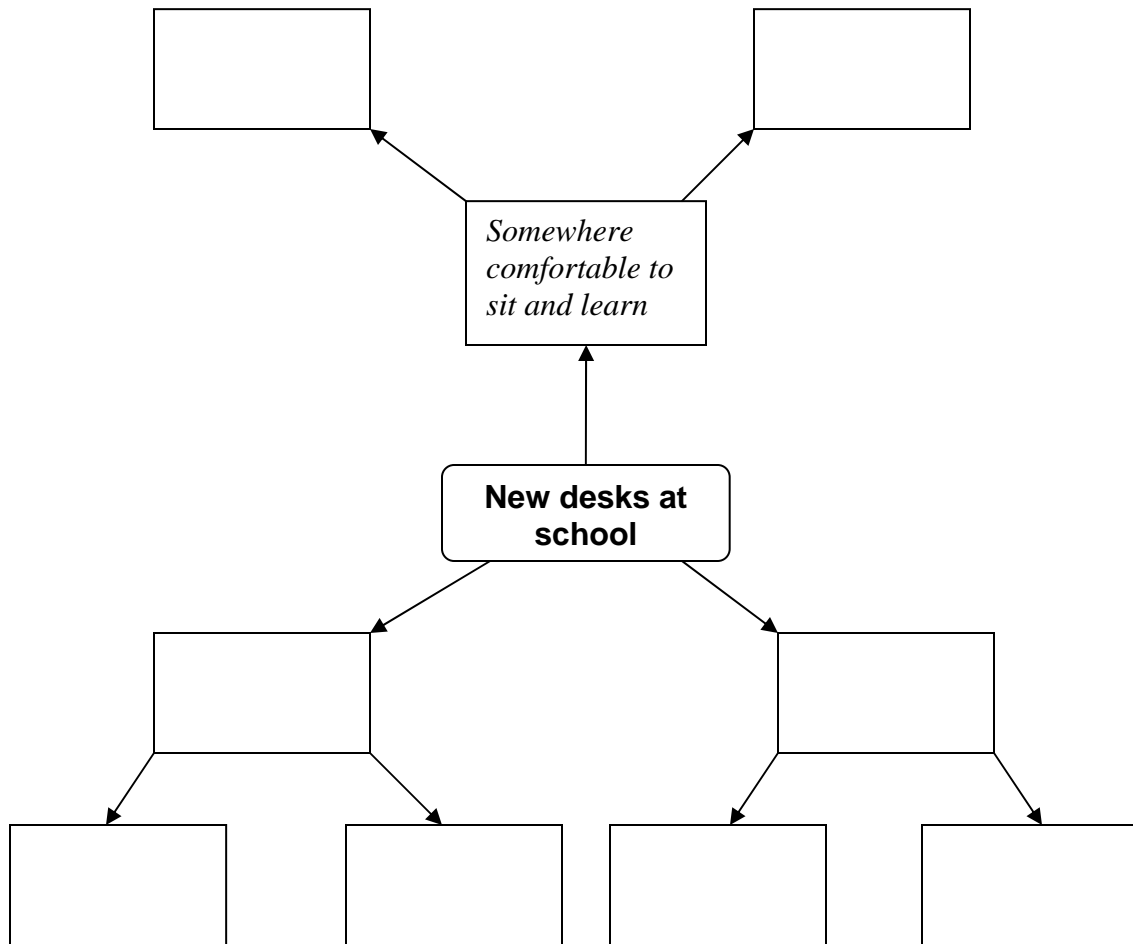
Further Discussion

- What types of conditions make it easy or difficult for children to learn?
 - *Discuss issues with your students such as having food and regular meals, safe walk to school, a roof to protect from rain and snow, access to computers/internet, supportive teachers and families*
 - If you have computer access, share the photo essay “What makes a school” with students (http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/education/712_734.html) to show the many unique places where children learn around the world. Ask students to imagine they are attending one of the schools from the photo essay. Have each student write a one page journal entry about their chosen school that describes the physical characteristics of the school, positive and negative aspects of the school environment and a typical school day.

Worksheet 4 - student

New Desks

Mavis, Mary, and Oscar all attend school together in Lukata, Zambia. Their school has just received new desks. Use the flow chart below to show the kinds of impacts that you think these new desks will have on these students and others. Consider what you know about these young people outside of school and think about academic, social, and emotional impacts. Think of at least three major impacts these desks will have and expand on these impacts to show how even greater change may result for these children.



The Island in the Sky (pp. 16-24)**SYNOPSIS**

These stories take place in Mount Mulanje, Malawi (the “Island in the Sky”). We are introduced to several children who have come for a daily meal at the Friends of Mulanje Orphans feeding center.

VOCABULARY

Gogo: Malawi term for grandmother

Net ball: a sport similar to basketball and usually played by women where points are scored by throwing a ball through a net hanging from a ring at the top of a pole (without a backboard). Players can only take one step with the ball so movement to the net is accomplished by passing.

Tuberculosis (TB): a contagious disease spread through the air. Only people who are sick with TB in their lungs are infectious and can spread TB “germs” (called bacilli) into the air by coughing, sneezing, talking, or spitting. TB is a leading cause of death among people who are HIV-positive. In Africa, HIV is the single most important factor contributing to the increase in incidence of TB since 1990. (For more information: World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs104/en/>)

GUIDING QUESTIONS**Pre-Reading Discussion**

- How many siblings do you have? Are you the oldest sibling in your family?
- What extra responsibilities might oldest siblings have?
- What does a typical day look like for you? (Consider school, chores, family obligations, extra curricular activities etc.)
- What is the most important thing in your life? How would you feel if you lost it?

Post- Reading Discussion

- How have the roles of children changed with the death of their parents?
 - *Carrying and cleaning water, cooking, growing vegetables; explain the increased responsibilities that many children (especially the eldest sibling) are forced to assume with the death of their parents.*

Activity 6

AIDS Awareness Poster

Summary: Students will have the opportunity to create an AIDS awareness poster.

Goals/Objectives:

- To apply concepts discussed in “The Island in the Sky” such as AIDS awareness and lack of health education in developing countries.
- Give students an opportunity to communicate their knowledge in visual and literary forms.

Materials:

- Provide students with markers, construction paper, scissors etc.
- Access to the internet (UNICEF website: www.unicef.org) or photocopies of HIV and AIDS statistics from UNICEF publications (http://www.uniteforchildren.org/knowmore/knowmore_28702.htm)
- Laptop/screen projector

Method:

- Show students the photos of AIDS awareness billboards on the UNICEF website: http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/aids/713_824.html
- Discuss with students the various ways in which HIV and AIDS awareness is being promoted to different communities. For example, some advertisements use case stories, others use big letters and symbols, supporting HIV prevention for a better future etc.
- Give students a handout with these instructions:

AIDS awareness is a priority for aid organizations such as UNICEF. Educating people on the symptoms and treatments of HIV will make a significant difference in preventing and fighting the epidemic.

Imagine that you are asked by UNICEF to create a poster for AIDS awareness in Malawi. You will need to research on some statistical data and information about the AIDS epidemic to include on your poster. Your poster will need to be easy to understand, informative and visually attractive. Be prepared to share your poster and present it to your classmates.

On the Street (pp. 25 – 34)**SYNOPSIS**

These stories deal with the challenges that many children, mostly boys and mostly orphaned, face that force them into a dangerous life on the streets.

VOCABULARY

Tuberculosis (TB): Tuberculosis (TB) is a contagious disease of infectious lungs that spreads through the air. HIV and TB form a lethal combination, each speeding the other's progress. HIV weakens the immune system. TB is a leading cause of death among people who are HIV-positive. In Africa, HIV is the single most important factor contributing to the increase in incidence of TB since 1990. (Source: World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/en/>)

Kwacha: form of currency in Malawi (1 Kwacha ~ 0.007716 Canadian dollars)

GUIDING QUESTIONS**Pre-Reading Discussion**

- What kind of preconceptions do you have about children/youth/adults who live on the streets?
- Why do you think people end up living on the streets?

Post- Reading Discussion

- Most children on the street are boys. What reasons does the author give for this?
 - *Many girls on the street end up as prostitutes or domestic slaves so do not last as long on the streets as boys.*
- Why did these boys end up on the streets?
 - *Death of one or both paren(s), poverty in the family and lack of resources/food, sick parents who cannot work, abuse at home or with other family members*
- What was life really like for these boys on the streets?
 - *Abuse, beatings, theft by older children or adults, sexual abuse, many get sick, very cold and wet from rain, nowhere to sleep, no blankets, often no pay given for work*
- What makes these boys feel good about themselves and increase their hope for their futures?
 - *When someone (or an organization) cares about them, when they are able to eat good meals, when they are able to get back into school and/or vocational training, when they can be children again and play games/sports*
- How have these stories changed your view of people who live on the street in Canada?

Activity: Journal of a Street Youth

Encourage students to write a one-page journal entry from the perspective of one of the youth from *On the Street*. Ask students to imagine the everyday challenges (mental and physical) he faces and how he feels during his time on the street.

Trouble, Prison (pp. 34- 44)

SYNOPSIS

These two chapters highlight the impacts of AIDS on young people within the justice system.

VOCABULARY

- Kwacha: form of currency in Malawi (1 Kwacha ~ 0.007716 Canadian dollars)
 Nsima: a type of corn meal
 Brazier: a type of container used for fire; it is used for holding burning coal and fires and can therefore be used for cooking, light, or heat

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Pre-Reading Discussion

- What determines good from bad behaviour in society?
- Can you think of a time when so called “bad behaviour” might be somewhat justified?

Post- Reading Discussion

- Consider Mateni’s story. Do you think he should be held in detention? Why or why not?
- What circumstances lead to Mateni’s actions for which he was imprisoned?
 - *Both of his parents were dead, he was offered work by a man in another town so he went with him, the man never paid Mateni for the work he did and Mateni often did not even receive food, Mateni was desperate for food and fair wages so took the man’s goods and sold them for himself*
- Consider the stories presented here by the boys held in detention/prison. Look at the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Appendix 1. What are some of the rights that are violated in these stories? Provide examples.
 - *Article 19: Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body and mind.*
 - *Article 24: Children have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment and information to help them stay well.*
 - *Article 27: Children have the right to food, clothing and a safe place to live*
 - *Article 28: Children have the right to good quality education*
 - *Article 31: Children have the right to play and rest*
 - *Article 37: No one is allowed to punish children in a cruel or harmful way*
 - *Article 40: Children have the right to seek legal help and fair treatment*
- Who is responsible for upholding these rights of the child?
 - *Adults, government, law enforcement officials, and the law are all structures that are responsible for ensuring the rights of children are protected.*
- Why do children need a special set of rights?
 - *Because they generally lack power and voice in society and are particularly vulnerable to abuse, especially if they are without proper adult care*

- How is AIDS contributing to the experiences of these young boys?
 - *Many of the boys have lost their parents to illness so are without proper or adequate adult care, this eliminates an important advocate on behalf of the children so they have little power to fight the legal system. Some of the boys' families do not even know that they are in detention centres*

Activity: Debate on Ethics

Facilitate a discussion/debate about the question:

Are there circumstances when stealing can be justified?

Time: 60-90 minutes

Materials:

Copies of the Perspective A and Perspective B sheets for each group
blank paper and pencils
Internet access (optional)

Method:

1. Divide the class into two groups (either randomly or pre-selected). If you have a larger class, divide into smaller groups (groups of four or six).
2. Write the question on the board: Are there circumstances when stealing can be justified?
3. Assign a perspective to each group (Perspective A or B).
4. Students will work together to prepare their arguments for their respective Perspectives.
5. After the groups have prepared (about 20 minutes), the groups will come together. The A's will spend 10 minutes presenting their argument/perspective to the B's (the B's should carefully listen and take notes). The B's will then present their perspective while the A's take notes.
6. After presenting, the groups can ask questions and discuss the issue.
7. The debate will take approximately 20-30 minutes. Each member of the group should participate and contribute to the discussion.
8. *Optional:* Switch Perspectives with the groups and ask them to consider the other side of the argument.
9. When the groups have finished presenting, encourage a whole class discussion (allow students to fall "out" of their assigned Perspectives) about the question.
 - What instances do you know of in your community, nation or in the world in which this issue (stealing because of poverty) is the subject of controversy?
 - How do rights and responsibilities interact? Do some responsibilities by their nature impose limits on certain rights?

Source: Modified activity from "Perspectives of Justice" (pg 183) Education for Development: A Teacher's Guide for Global Education, Susan Fountain © 1995.

PERSPECTIVE A: STEALING IS JUSTIFIED IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES

In a just society, sometimes it is necessary to allow stealing because some individuals are placed in situations where they have no other choice. Stealing is justified if it is necessary for someone's survival.

Possible points to consider:

- The seriousness of poverty and survival to live
- The laws and consequences for stealing in different countries
- The conditions in other countries where stealing is tolerated
- The Rights of the Child and Basic Human Rights (E.g. The right to food, water and shelter, the right to live)
- Any other relevant issues

PERSPECTIVE B: STEALING SHOULD NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE

In a just society, consequences must be given to those who steal in order to maintain a fair and controlled society. Stealing protects the rights of others.

Possible points to consider:

- The effect of stealing on victims
- Fairness
- The chaos that stealing produces in society
- Institutions and organizations that provide individuals with support as an alternative solution instead of stealing
- Any other relevant issues

Babies (pp 45-48)

SYNOPSIS

These three short stories talk about the roles and strength of women in caring for children in the face of AIDS. When children are left without parents, grandmothers typically take on the care of the child.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Pre-Reading Discussion

- Read the poem at the beginning of this chapter. What do you think the poem is trying to convey?

Post-Reading Discussion

- One of UNICEF's priorities for breaking the cycle of poverty and protecting children's rights is early childhood development. The activity *Cycle of Life* can be used to help students see the different circumstances that can help or prevent a child from reaching their full potential.

Activity: *Cycle of Life* (from "Kids Inclusive", UNICEF)

Goals

- To look at the different circumstances that help, or prevent, a child from reaching their full potential;
- To understand that good and bad situations have an effect on how we live and who we are throughout our lives;

Materials

- Copies of the board game "Child's life cycle" - one per group of four;
- Beads of different colours;
- Life cycle cards – cut up and marked with the life cycle stage on the back;
- One dice per group.

Time 45 min to 1 hour

Method

1. Introduce the game by telling the participants that they will be playing a game based on the life cycle of a child. Ask them what a life cycle is.
2. Write **PREGNANCY** on the board. Tell them that's where it all starts, in this game anyway! Then write the other stages (**BIRTH, 0 to 2 YEARS, 3 to 5 YEARS, 6 to 9 YEARS, 10 to 18 YEARS**) in a circle.
3. Explain that the reason the life cycle of a child is divided up in this way (for this activity) is that each division is an important stage in a child's development. At each stage, influences can help a child grow physically, mentally and socially. Give examples (use the cards to help), and ask for others.

4. Difficult influences can limit a child's growth and development. Look at examples and ask for others.
5. Tell them that they will play in groups of three or four.
6. Each person throws a dice. They move according to the number thrown and then pick up a card from the correct life cycle age, according to where they are on the board.
7. They should read aloud the card they pick up and make a note of the points they score or lose. They then replace the card in the correct pile.
8. If anyone throws a six they are on 'holiday' and they automatically receive two points, but they don't move anywhere and they don't pick up a card.
9. Each player moves around the board according to the numbers they throw. They may have to pick up two, or even three cards in one section. If the cards have all been read they may read one that has been 'used' before.
10. All of the players should reach the end of the life cycle and then add up their points.
11. The 'winner' is the person with the most points at the end of the game.

Variations

The cards can be used by themselves:

1. Ask the students, in pairs, to put the negative and positive situations together. Ask them whether they think some people live their lives with just positive influences and others with just negative influences, or is it more mixed than that? Does it depend on where in the world you live? What other factors may be important?
2. Play Life Cycle Snap, pairing opposite influences.

Debriefing and evaluation

1. What did they think of the game?
2. Was there a big difference in the scores at the end? Why? (Some might have had mostly negative or positive cards, others a more balanced mix.) Is life like that?
3. Which of the cards could they relate to? Which cards were very different from their own experiences?
4. Imagine if life dealt you mostly negative cards. What would your life be like? What might happen to you?

Follow up

1. Ask participants to imagine a 'worst case scenario' for someone's life, using the cards. Go through this example with them:

A girl under 16 (give her a name), who didn't have the chance to go to school, is pregnant. She lives in a very poor, remote village with no access to clean water or health facilities. She doesn't have very nutritious food to eat.

- How could this person's life be improved? Ask for examples. (*Perhaps a clean water supply is built in her village.*)
- What might happen next? *Perhaps people start to grow vegetables and plant fruit trees because there is more water; maybe more people want to live in the village because there is clean water and so a health centre is set up. The local school has to*

grow to make room for more children and maybe they begin to offer literacy classes to adults, etc.

2. Explain to participants in pairs, or individually, that they will focus on one of the other parts of the Life Cycle each. Make sure that someone covers each part.
3. Ask them to go through a 'worst case scenario' like the example you went through with them. They should pick at least two difficult situations to address. They then have the chance to improve that person's life. How will they do it?
4. Examples could be read out in class with further suggestions added or submitted as a written assignment.
5. Which problems do they think are the most important to address? Which ones seem to be easier to do something about and which may be more difficult? Do any of the problems seem to have the same solution? Which ones?

Source: Kids Inclusive "Cycle of Life" activity page 12

Cycle of life



For every child,
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY



Cycle of Life Cards

<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother has clean water to drink and a good diet. +5 points: I won't be born with problems caused by poor nutrition.</p>	<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother only has dirty water to drink and she doesn't eat well either. - 5 points: This increases the chances of me being born weak or with a disability.</p>
<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother is between 21 and 35 years old. +3 points: She has less chance of having problems during pregnancy and childbirth.</p>	<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother is under 16 years old. 3 points: This increases the chances of me, or her having problems during pregnancy or childbirth.</p>
<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother finished high school. +3 points: This is really good for my whole family's health and welfare.</p>	<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother didn't go to school. - 3 points: This is not so good for my family.</p>
<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother has regular health checks 1 point: That's good because they will find, and try to fix, any problems early.</p>	<p>Pregnancy</p> <p>My mother lives too far from any health centre to have any checks. - 1 point: If we have problems they may not be detected until it's too late.</p>
<p>Birth</p> <p>My mother gave birth with a qualified medical person present. +3 points: She was there to help me and my mother when there were complications.</p>	<p>Birth</p> <p>My mother gave birth with no qualified medical people around. - 3 points: We had problems and both of us nearly died.</p>
<p>Birth</p> <p>There was plenty of clean water available when I was born. +3 points: The water was needed to stop either of us getting infections.</p>	<p>Birth</p> <p>There was only a little, dirty water available when I was born. - 3 points: We couldn't be kept clean and both of us became ill.</p>

Cycle of Life Cards

<p>Birth</p> <p>My mother breast fed me straight away +2 points: Mother's milk is best. It helps to protect babies from illness and is clean and nutritious.</p>	<p>Birth</p> <p>My mother bottle-feeds me. - 2 points: The water isn't clean and she doesn't use enough milk powder. I'm sick a lot and I'm not putting on weight.</p>
<p>Birth</p> <p>I was born healthy to a healthy mother. +5 points: A good way to begin my life!</p>	<p>Birth</p> <p>I was born HIV positive in a developing country. - 5 points: This is a tragic way to begin my life.</p>
<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>My birth has been registered. +5 points: That's good because my name and nationality will be recognised by the state and I will benefit.</p>	<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>My birth hasn't been registered. - 5 points: That's not good because I will not be entitled to health care, an education or even to get married!</p>
<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>I am fully immunised. +5 points: This means I have protection from diseases that could have disabled or even killed me.</p>	<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>I have not been immunised. - 5 points: This means that I am vulnerable to diseases that could leave me disabled or may even kill me.</p>
<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>I am well looked after all day. +5 points: My brain is developing a lot and all the time someone plays with me and talks to me, I'm learning.</p>	<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>I am often left on my own while my family work. - 5 points: I'm not learning anything and I might even have a serious accident.</p>
<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>I have cystic fibrosis and my parents know. + 1 points: I was routinely tested soon after birth, so the right treatment has been given to me.</p>	<p>0 to 2 years</p> <p>I have cystic fibrosis and my parents don't know. - 5 points: I have trouble breathing and my lungs are damaged, because I have not been tested for this illness.</p>

Cycle of Life Cards

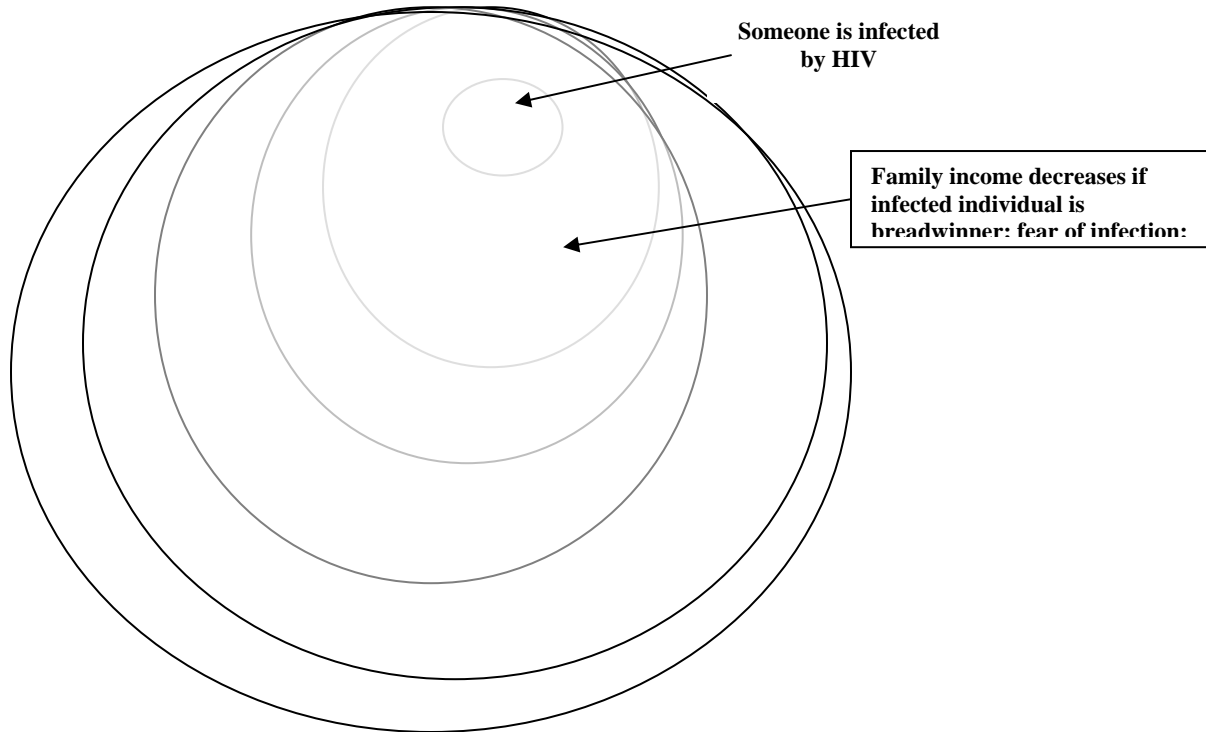
<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>I go to pre-school. +5 points: I have fun and learn a lot. My mother is free to work while I'm at school.</p>	<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>My sister looks after me while Mum works. - 5 points: She's only 8 years old. She can't go to school herself, because she has to look after me.</p>
<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>I am part of a loving family. +5 points: I feel happy and secure.</p>	<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>I live in a children's home. - 5 points: I'm shy and lonely. I want a mother and a father who will love me and think I'm special.</p>
<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>I have a disability but it was found early. +3 points: This has helped my parents to get treatment for me, to improve my life and make it easier for them to keep me at home.</p>	<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>I have a disability that isn't understood. - 3 points: My parents don't know how to cope. They hide me away and talk about putting me in an institution.</p>
<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>I eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables. +3 points I am very healthy and have good eyesight.</p>	<p>3 to 5 years</p> <p>I rarely eat any fresh fruit or vegetables. - 3 points I am often sick and my eyesight is not very good. (Vitamin A deficiency)</p>
<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>I go to primary school. +5 points: I'm learning about a lot of things and I have loads of friends.</p>	<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>I have to work for 10 hours every day. - 5 points: The work is dangerous and I have no time to go to school, or to play with friends.</p>
<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>We have clean water in our house. +5 points: Easy access to lots of clean water is very good for our health.</p>	<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>I walk for two hours every day to get water from a small lake. - 5 points: Carrying heavy water is bad for my back and the water is really dirty.</p>

Cycle of Life Cards

<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>My family came here from another country. We have been warmly welcomed.</p> <p>+3 points: We feel happy and secure.</p>	<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>My family came here from another country. We have not been welcomed.</p> <p>- 3 points: We get shouted at by some people. I feel very nervous and worried.</p>
<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>My family speak a different language at home. I get help in both languages at school.</p> <p>+3 points: I don't suffer from any disadvantage just because I don't speak the language of this country well yet.</p>	<p>6 to 9 years</p> <p>My family speak a different language at home. I'm not allowed to speak it at school.</p> <p>- 3 points: I feel stupid at school although I can read and write well in my own language.</p>
<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>I go to high school.</p> <p>+5 points: An education will be good for my future and for the future of my family.</p>	<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>I can't go to school because I work.</p> <p>- 5 points: My work is damaging my health and I will not be able to get a better job without an education.</p>
<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>I have a disability but I get a lot of support.</p> <p>+5 points: I enjoy going to the local school and I have a good social life.</p>	<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>I have a disability but I don't get any support.</p> <p>- 5 points: I have to stay at home. I don't go to school and I don't have any friends.</p>
<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>I have a happy home life.</p> <p>+5 points: I feel confident and happy about my future.</p>	<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>I don't get on with Mum or my Step Dad.</p> <p>- 5 points: I can't talk to them. They just shout and he's violent. I think I'm pregnant but I can't tell them.</p>
<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>My background is quite different to the other kids at school but we all get on well.</p> <p>+3 points: I'm confident and happy and I am getting on OK with my studies.</p>	<p>10 to 18 years</p> <p>My background is quite different to the other kids at school. They bully me.</p> <p>- 3 points: I can't study. I feel lonely and I am really unhappy.</p>

ACTIVITY: The Ripple Effect of HIV/AIDS

After reading the first section of the book *Our Stories, Our Songs*, you have learned about the many ways in which HIV and AIDS is affecting people around the world. To summarize what you have learned, consider the effects of HIV infection from the individual **INFECTED** to those **AFFECTED**. Use individual ripples to show how HIV affects those around an infected individual (think small scale (individual) → large scale (larger community/country)). Some starting ideas are provided here:



PART TWO: SONGS OF SURVIVAL

Being Sick (pp. 49-52)

These stories reveal the inadequate health services in Malawi and Zambia. Overcrowding of hospitals and the lack of health care workers is a common occurrence. Themes to be discussed in these stories include Health care and HIV, the stigma of AIDS, signs and symptoms of HIV, and gender inequalities and AIDS.

Patricia's Story

Patricia is in the hospital because of a sickness in her knee that has caused swelling. She also has tuberculosis (TB). Her mother died of a similar sickness and Patricia fears death. She used to live with her boyfriend. She developed a rash and became ill after he left her. Her sister currently cares for her in the hospital, which is far away from her home village. She lays in her hospital bed and worries that her son will not remember her if she dies. Despite her sickness, Patricia wants to go back to school and run a small business selling clothes when she gets well.

Zinenani's Story

Zinenani is very sick and has been attending the hospital with her mother for several months. Her symptoms include coughing, vomiting, loss of appetite, weight loss and being constantly tired. Her father died in 1995 of a sickness similar to her symptoms now. She is aware of AIDS because of billboard advertisements and learning about the disease in school. However she has never been tested for HIV and does not know whether she has the disease.

Vocabulary

Tuberculosis (TB): Tuberculosis (TB) is a contagious disease of infectious lungs that spreads through the air. HIV and TB form a lethal combination, each speeding the other's progress. HIV weakens the immune system. TB is a leading cause of death among people who are HIV-positive. In Africa, HIV is the single most important factor contributing to the increase in incidence of TB since 1990. (Source: World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/en/>)

Pre-Reading Discussion

- In Canada, what kind of health care services are provided by the government?
- Do you think Canada's health care system is adequate?
- What is the meaning of stigma? How is this different from a stereotype?
 - Stigma refers to the negative labelling of social disgrace, in this case, because of AIDS.
 - Stereotypes are an oversimplified, generalised attitude about a group of people. Stereotypes are often negative and are based on prejudice.
- List some examples of stigmas in your own society/culture.
 - Refer to examples such as: the homeless stigmatised as dirty and dangerous or the elderly stigmatised as sick and contagious.

Post-Reading Discussion

- What are the signs and symptoms of HIV?
 - Feeling tired, fever, chills, weight loss, swollen lymph nodes, diarrhoea, bleeding, blotches on the skin, rash in the mouth (called oral thrush), confusion and body aches.

- What health care services should be provided to these individuals?
 - HIV testing – emphasize the importance of testing for HIV positive in communities
 - Increase in HIV testing can help by:
 - Preventing the spread of HIV (through mother to child transmission, further unprotected sexual contact)
 - Identifying and treating those infected with the disease

- What are the stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS and people with this disease?
 - People with AIDS are often viewed through the perspective of their disease rather than the person itself.
 - In these stories, the two sick girls reveal their own emotions, fears and aspirations. Even though people may have a certain disease or illness it does not define who they are.

Further Discussion

- In Zinenani's story, the lack of testing for HIV is mentioned. Why do you think this is a major problem/obstacle in the fight against HIV and AIDS?
 - Causes feelings of uncertainty among people who are sick
 - Can cause problems such as the lack of health education
 - If people are not aware of that they have HIV, they will be more likely to engage in unprotected sexual activity or pass it along to their children through childbirth.
 - By testing for HIV, early treatment can be given.
 - Importance of prevention (E.g. UNAIDS strives to fight against HIV and AIDS by targeting young women and children orphaned by AIDS).
 - For more information on this topic: <http://www.uniteforchildren.org/index.html>

Activity/Worksheet: *The Story of Two Communities*

Goals/Objectives

- To understand stigmatisation associated with AIDS
- To teach young people respect for people with AIDS

Materials

- Copies of “The Story of Two communities: Community A and Community B”
- Pens

Time 45 minutes to 1 hour

Method

1. Introduce the activity by leading a discussion about HIV and AIDS. Find out how much the participants know about it, for example how it is and is not transmitted.
2. Get the participants to work in pairs.
3. Give each pair a copy of ‘Community A’ and ‘Community B’
4. Explain to the participants that this is the story of Ryando, the true story of a person infected with HIV, who moved from community A to community B.
5. Read the stories to the class.
6. Tell the class to read the stories again to themselves and to answer the questions at the bottom of the page. Allow 15 minutes to complete the tasks.
7. Go through the answers with the participants.

Debriefing and evaluation

Start the discussion by asking the participants:

1. How did you feel about the people in Community A and the people in Community B?
2. Why do you think there was such a difference between the two communities?
3. Why do people discriminate against others?
4. Why is it important not to?
5. What could you do if you heard derogatory remarks about a person with HIV or AIDS from someone in your community?
6. What would be most difficult for you if a friend or relative of yours had AIDS?
7. What would be most difficult for the person with HIV?

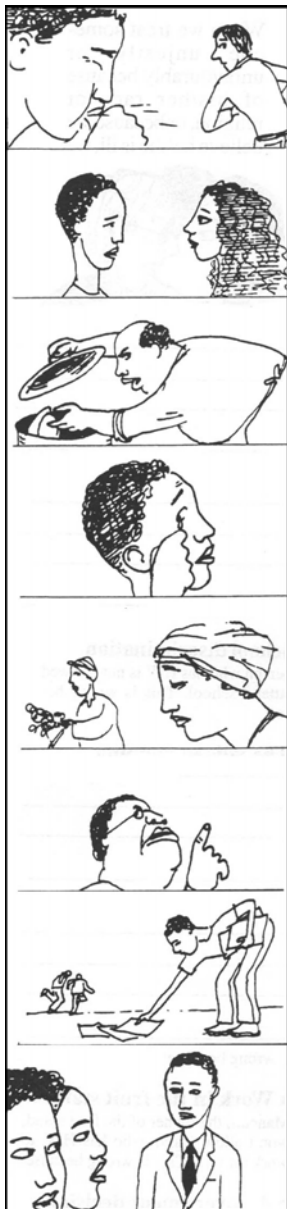
Variations

For the 14 –17 age group: get the participants to read the story aloud to the class.

Follow up

- Have a follow up group discussion about HIV and AIDS. Find out how much the participants have learnt about HIV and AIDS from this activity.

The Story of Two Communities



-Community A

- a) Every time I coughed, people turned around to see how close I was to them. On the way out of church, people told their kids to move away from me.
- b) One day I went to see a girlfriend of mine. She did not seem happy to see me. What's wrong? I asked her. My parents don't think we should see each other any more, she mumbled.
- c) The shopkeeper of the restaurant recognised me when I asked for a glass of water. How wouldn't let me have any. He gave me a can of coke instead. As soon as we finished eating he threw away all my dishes.
- d) My parents heard from a friend that one of my teachers didn't want me back in school. I can't believe it, I said, he was my favourite teacher.
- e) My mom got it worst. She had four friends at work who wouldn't even talk to her. In the food store she wasn't allowed to touch any of the food. Some stores didn't even want to take money from her.
- f) Kids in my school were warned about me by their parents, so they stayed away from me. They told me I would have to use paper plates and plastic cups, spoons and forks that could be thrown away when I was done. They thought I shouldn't use the toilets and water fountain.
- g) Someone stole one of my books and wrote bad things about me in it. They threw it on the street and ran away laughing at me.
- h) No one would play with me and when I asked two girls to the dance they said 'no'. Their parents had told them they weren't to go near me.

In your opinion which three comments would be the most hurtful to Ryando?

Most hurtful	Reasons why

- Community B



- a) A student in the community came by to see me. She said, I want to welcome you to our school. Now, you'll know someone when you come on your first day.
- b) I found out that school officials had talked to the students and teachers about how you can get AIDS, and they had nothing to fear. They even informed the press and the churches in town. What a difference from community A.
- c) Kids told their parents how you get AIDS, and that they weren't scared of me and they wanted to be in the school with me. One family asked their kids to stay home and he said he didn't want to.
- d) When I walked into my classroom, a number of students said, Hey, Ryando! Sit beside me! In another class a pretty dark-haired girl asked me to do a project with her.
- e) I asked my mom if she thought it would be OK to ask Alyssa (a friend from another country) for a kiss goodbye. Mom said, She can only say no! Well, she gave me a kiss and a hug. I felt eight feet tall.
- f) A famous soccer player visited our community and invited me and my family to watch the game. After, he signed his name in my book and told me he was proud of me.
- g) When I turned 18, a man offered me a job at his vegetable stand. My first money. I guess he took a chance on me. Most people were very nice and stopped to buy and talk to me.
- h) What a difference at church. People stopped to talk to me and put an arm on my shoulder. Some even bought food for us – bread, fruit, jam. When I became sicker they brought us a whole meal at home. That sure helped mom.

In your opinion which three comments would be most helpful from this community?

Most helpful	Reasons why

Peer Counselling (pg 53-58)

These two stories are told from peer counsellors at the Kara Counselling Centre in Lusaka. The centre provides services for those suffering from HIV and AIDS, especially young people. The counsellors at the centre are HIV-positive and youths themselves. Their stories reveal an attitude of hope and fight for survival against HIV and AIDS. More importantly, a focus is placed on breaking the stigmas surrounding those who have HIV and AIDS.

Grace's Story

After finding out that she was HIV-positive, her boyfriend left her and Grace began her work as a peer counsellor for those with HIV and AIDS. She openly reveals her HIV status and currently does radio and newspaper interviews and talks in churches. In her story, she discusses the discrimination against people with HIV and AIDS. Her family feared and discriminated her because of her HIV-positive status and she has also lost some friends. However, her story is special because of the hope and enthusiasm in the fight against AIDS. Many girls who come to the centre have been raped by relatives after being orphaned by AIDS. The vulnerability of girls whose parents have died of AIDS is the greatest.

Liz's Story

Liz is 18 years old and is also HIV-positive. She believes that because she looks normal, many people feel more comfortable talking to them about their HIV status. She is not fully open with her family about her HIV-positive status because of the shock and emotional trauma it may cause them. Liz believes that sadness is like an illness itself and more emphasis should be placed on good things like her work as a peer counsellor. As a peer counsellor, she speaks at schools and encourages other youth to be tested for HIV. She believes that young people should respect themselves and know their rights as human beings. Most importantly, she emphasizes that despite being HIV-positive, people can still live proud and strong lives.

Vocabulary

HIV-positive: someone who has been infected with HIV

Pre-Reading Discussion

- What are some illnesses that are not displayed on the physical surface? Do you think these types of illnesses are harder to diagnose or more severe?
- When faced with a challenge are you usually more likely to adopt an attitude of hopelessness or put up a strong fight?

Post-Reading Discussion

- Do these two girls in the stories have any evidences of being HIV-positive in their physical appearance?
 - No – some people who are HIV-positive look perfectly normal and show no signs or symptoms of the disease.
 - Stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS often include undesirable physical symptoms. Students should be aware that not all HIV-positive people display physical symptoms.

- Do you agree with Liz that sadness is like an illness itself?
 - Students will discuss the different attitudes that are experienced when faced with challenging circumstances. (E.g. giving up versus perseverance)
 - Being pessimistic versus optimistic

- What are the stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS and people with this disease?
 - People with AIDS are often viewed through the perspective of their disease rather than the person itself.
 - In these stories, the two sick girls reveal their own emotions, fears and aspirations. Even though people may have a certain disease or illness it does not define who they are.

Further Discussion

- How are the stories in “Being Sick” different from the stories told in “Peer Counselling”?
 - The stories in “Peer Counselling” reveal a struggle for survival by youth and those with AIDS. The positive examples of change defy commonly held stereotypes that the AIDS crisis is hopeless. In addition, a focus is placed on breaking the stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS. It is becoming more evident in these stories, the actions taken to combat HIV.
 - The stories in “Being Sick” reveal the stigmas of HIV and AIDS from a less hopeful perspective.

- What are some evidences of gender inequality in these stories?
 - Young girls being sexually abused by older relatives. If these older relatives are the breadwinner of the family, these sexual abuses will not be reported. This is the violation of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (Article 34: The right to be free from sexual abuse).
 - Males often abuse younger children, especially girls.
 - Women are responsible for taking care of children while also working to earn money.

Activity/Worksheet: *Rebecca's Story: Fighting HIV and AIDS in the Classroom*

Summary

Students read and discuss “Rebecca’s Story: Fighting HIV and AIDS in the Classroom” and learn about the importance of HIV/AIDS education in developing countries.

Goals/Objectives

Learn about the high rates of HIV in developing countries

- Understand the need for HIV and AIDS education in schools
- See the connection between HIV and AIDS education and children’s rights

Materials Needed

- Photocopies of “Rebecca’s Story” for each student

Method

- Students will each have a copy of “Rebecca’s Story: Fighting HIV and AIDS in the Classroom” and read the article.
- After reading the article, students should divide into small groups of 4-5 people per group.

Questions for Discussion

- Why is HIV/AIDS education particularly important for the people living in Malawi?
- Discuss how the violation of rights such as poverty and homelessness increase the risk/vulnerability of HIV infection.
- Are the factors that make children and youth vulnerable to HIV the same in Canada as in developing countries?
- At what age should AIDS education begin? Why?
- How does AIDS education help to break down stigmas and gender inequalities?

Source: “Rebecca’s Story: Fighting against HIV/AIDS in the Classroom” activity found in *Children’s Right and Global Citizenship*, UCCB Children’s Rights Centre © 2003.

Living (pg 59-66)

The National Association of People with AIDS, Malawi (NAPAM) headquarters are located nearby to a street of coffin shops in Lilongwe. The centre welcomes many families and HIV-positive people to get information, find friends and helping inform others about AIDS. Many young children come to the centre with their parents and some of them tell their stories.

Loti's Story

Loti is 13 years old and attends NAPAM with his mother. His mother sells beer as her own business and his father is a carpenter who makes coffins. Loti wants to become a secretary and work in an office when he finishes school. He also dreams of owning a car and driving. His only fear is the lack of money when his parents are sometimes too sick to work. He wants to finish school and have a good job in order to have money.

Chosadziwa's Story

Chosadziwa is also 13 years old and the oldest sibling in her family. She attends the centre with her aunt who wants to learn how to stay healthy. She learns about AIDS at school but at NAPAM people are taught to love. Her aunt is HIV-positive and is always positive about life. She loves her aunt because of her humour but she is afraid of AIDS.

Sophilet's Story

Sophilet is 10 years old and comes to NAPAM on Saturdays. She describes her visits to the centre as "little parties every week" where she is able to play, sing, pray and learn English. Both her parents attend the centre because it is a good way to keep feeling good. Her father sells ground nuts on the street and her mother sells charcoal. She desires to be a nurse when she grows up. Her parents often get sick and she has been sick before. She would like to heal people of their sicknesses.

Arix's Story

Arix is a 7 years boy who is brought to NPAM by his father. He desires to be a kind man and to have his own car.

Ernest's Story

Ernest is 9 years old and comes to NAPAM to learn and play. His ambition is to become a truck driver. His father died of AIDS and his mother brings him to the centre. Here they sing, pray and learn from the Bible. His mother takes good care of him by making sure that he eats fruits and vegetables. Ernest describes himself as smart and brave.

Yamikani's Story

Yamikani goes to NPAM to learn about HIV and AIDS and to find other young people who want to learn about HIV and AIDS. The support created from people who attend the centre is something that assures many people with worries about AIDS. She also stresses the distinction between living with AIDS and dying with AIDS. She also thinks a lot about death, whether she is dying, what will happen after she dies and when she will die. She wants to be ready for death. In her story, she refuses to mention whether she is HIV-positive because she feels that everyone is the same whether HIV-positive or HIV-negative. Near the end of telling her story, she sings an AIDS song because she wants to become a famous and rich musician in the future.

Namitso's Story

Namitso lives with his relatives because his father lives and works in another village. He comes to NAPAM to learn about HIV and AIDS and also because of the care and love from the people who also attend the centre. His mother died of TB and AIDS a year ago. Namitso took care of her when she was sick in the hospital. He would sleep under her bed, wash her clothes and feed her. In his story, he describes how he learned to care for other people in the crowded hospital. He learned to love people by taking care of his mother. He gets encouragement at NPAM and getting the support from others at the centre makes him want to become a better man.

Vocabulary

Tuberculosis (TB): Tuberculosis (TB) is a contagious disease of infectious lungs that spreads through the air. HIV and TB form a lethal combination, each speeding the other's progress. HIV weakens the immune system. TB is a leading cause of death among people who are HIV-positive. In Africa, HIV is the single most important factor contributing to the increase in incidence of TB since 1990. (Source: World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/en/>)

HIV-positive: someone who has been infected with HIV

HIV-negative: someone who has tested and is found not to be infected with HIV

Pre-Reading Discussion

- When people are faced with challenging situations, they often require some form of support and encouragement to help them cope. Where or who do you turn to for support when you are discouraged?
- What are some other examples of support structures in Canada that help people undergoing emotional and physical stress?
 - Counselling centres with social workers
 - Psychologists
 - Support groups (E.g. Alcoholics Anonymous, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Heart and Stroke Foundation etc).
- What do you think is the best form to educate people about AIDS?

Post-Reading Discussion/ Further Discussion

- How does the emphasis on living with HIV rather than dying of AIDS change one's perspective on AIDS education in Malawi?
 - More positive outlook on combating HIV (more hope)
 - Changes the perception of death and purpose in life
 - When HIV-positive individuals embrace life, they are more likely to help in educating others about the disease (a preventative strategy)
- Do you think some forms of AIDS education are more effective than others?
 - Ask students for their opinions about the most effective methods to create AIDS awareness in their own communities and in other communities such as Malawi.
- Should AIDS education be modified and targeted towards certain social/cultural groups in order to be most effective?

- This question will encourage students to consider and appreciate the differences in other cultures other than their own.
- Examples of cross-cultural differences that need to be considered for AIDS education are: gender roles, family structures, openness to discussing health issues, availability of health care and access to technology (internet).
- What are some AIDS education methods that would be most popular and effective with younger populations living in Canada/your community?
 - Using media – internet popularity, websites, videos
 - The Project (Red) campaign – marketing of consumer products as a method of raising funds for HIV and AIDS. (www.joinred.com)
 - School presentations
 - Celebrity endorsements
 - Internet discussion forums

Activity/Worksheet: *Internet Game: What would you do?*

Summary

Students will participate in an Internet game about HIV and AIDS and evaluate the games effectiveness for AIDS education.

Goals/Objectives

- To understand the different forms AIDS education in the technological, industrial world.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of these AIDS education methods.
- To understand that AIDS education exists in both developing and industrialised countries.

Materials

Computers with Internet access

Method

1. After discussing the different types of AIDS education for younger populations in Canada, introduce this Internet activity.
2. Students will each play UNICEF online game “What would you do?” about making everyday decisions. http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/aids/explore_1360.html
3. After playing the game, students will divide into smaller groups of 4 or 5 and answer the discussion questions below.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think the Internet has become so popular for advertising and education?
- By using the Internet for AIDS education and awareness, do you think more people in Canada will become informed about the global epidemic?
- In what other ways could the Internet be used to educate people on HIV and AIDS?

PART THREE: SONGS OF VICTORY

Ramsy's Story

Ramsy takes his schoolwork very seriously because that is his chance to have a good life. His father is a building contractor and his mother runs a small business. His aunt died of AIDS and he recalls how fearful he was to see her illness progress. His parents told their relatives the truth of her battle with AIDS but they argued and would not believe him. They felt that mentioning AIDS brought shame upon the family. His cousins became orphans because the father was not around and as a result, the children were split up. There is stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS and many families refuse to discuss the topic. Ramsy learns a lot about AIDS in school and there is an Anti-AIDS club. Ramsy's story reveals the struggle between trying to follow anti-AIDS campaigns and dealing with the reality of loneliness and relationships. He wants to become a doctor and prove that even though Malawi is a small country, its people are just as strong as people from "important" countries.

Marantha's Story

Marantha is 15 years old and is a prefect at her school. She describes herself as responsible and entertaining. Everyone at her school has been affected by AIDS but they look normal. Many people who have AIDS are looked down upon and lose many friends. Her aunt has AIDS which was given to her by her husband. Many cannot tell if someone is HIV-positive. Marantha worries that her husband in the future will give her HIV. She feels that AIDS spreads in teenagers because they are trying to experience things and may not get love from their families so they seek security in other places. She does not want a boyfriend because she does not want to lose herself. As a prefect for her school, she wants to care for young people like herself. She believes that the problems that teenagers face are caused by a lack of care from their parents. Her greatest fear is losing her parents and siblings.

Pre-Reading Discussion

- What do you think the title "Songs of Victory" means?
- Have you experienced any songs of victory in your life?

Post-Reading Discussion

- What negative stereotypes or stigmas surrounding HIV and AIDS did you notice in the stories?
 - People who have HIV don't necessary look sick, many of them appear to be normal.
 - Dying of AIDS is a disgrace to your family.
 - Teenagers are promiscuous and more vulnerable to HIV because they want to experience new things.

Activity/Worksheet: *Stepping Out*

Goals/Objectives

- To promote empathy with those who are different.
- To raise awareness about the inequalities of opportunity in society.
- To foster an understanding of possible personal consequences of belonging to certain social minorities or cultural groups.

Materials

- One role card per participant (adapted, if required, to your situation);
- Question sheet;
- An open space (a corridor, large room or outdoors).

Method

1. Explain to the participants that they are going to be asked to 'step into someone else's shoes'. They will be told who they are going to be and they will need to use their imagination to respond to questions as that person.
2. Hand out the role cards at random, one to each participant. At least three participants should be handed cards that tell them to be themselves. Tell all the participants to keep their roles secret.
3. Line the participants up and ask them to begin to get into their role. To help them, read out some of the following questions, pausing after each one, to give the participants time to think and build up a picture of themselves and their lives:
 - What was your childhood like? What sort of house did you live in? What kind of games did you play? What sort of work did your parents do?
 - What is your everyday life like now? Where do you socialise? What do you do in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening?
 - What sort of lifestyle do you have? Where do you live? How much money do you earn each month? What do you do in your leisure time/ in your holidays?
 - What excites you and what are you afraid of?
4. Tell the participants that you are going to read out a list of situations or events. Every time they can answer 'yes' to the statement, they should take a step forward. Otherwise, they should stay where they are and not move.
5. Read out the situations one at a time. Pause for a while between statements to allow people time to step forward and to look around to take note of their positions relative to each other.
6. At the end invite everyone to take note of his or her final position. Then give them a couple of minutes to come out of their role before debriefing.

Debriefing and evaluation

- Start by asking the participants about what happened and how they felt about the activity.
- Talk about the issues raised and what they have learnt:
- How did the participants feel when they stepped forward?
- How did they feel when they were not stepping forward?

- For those who stepped forward often, at what point did they begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as they were?
- Can the participants guess who was who? (Read out some of the more extreme roles).
- How easy or difficult was it to play their role? How did they imagine what the person they were playing was like?
- Are they sure the information and the images they have of the characters are reliable? Or are they based on stereotypes and prejudice?
- Does the exercise mirror society in some way? How?
- What are the rights some people are denied?
- What first steps could be taken to address the inequalities in society?

Tips for the facilitator

Make sure the participants can all hear you, especially if you are working outdoors or with a large group. You may need to use co-facilitators to relay the statements.

In the imagining phase at the beginning, it is possible that some of the participants may say that they know little about the life of the character they have to act. Tell them that this does not matter and that they should use their imagination as much as possible.

The power of this activity lies in the impact of actually seeing the distance increase between the participants, especially at the end when there should be a big distance between those who stepped forward often and those who did not. To enhance the impact you should adjust the roles to reflect the reality of the children's own lives. As you do so, be sure you adapt the roles so that only a few people can take a step forward (i.e. answer yes). This also applies if you have a large group and have to devise more roles.

Situations and events

1	You have always had enough money to do as you wanted.
2	You have a nice home with a telephone and a television.
3	You feel that you are respected by everyone around you.
4	You feel that your opinions count and people listen to you.
5	You have completed or will complete your secondary schooling.
6	You are not afraid of being stopped by the police.
7	You know where to turn for advice and help if you need it.
8	You have never felt discriminated against.
9	You can see a doctor and get medicines when you need it.
10	You can go away on holiday once a year.
11	You can invite friends round any time.
12	You have an interesting life and are positive about the future.
13	You feel you can study and follow the profession of your choice.
14	You are not afraid of being harassed or attacked in the street.
15	You can go to the cinema or the theatre at least once a week.
16	You can fall in love with the person of your choice.
17	You eat healthily and what you want.
18	You can use and benefit from the Internet.
19	You can easily go out with your friends.
20	You can work for money.

Role cards

You are a 16-year-old pregnant school girl.	You are the daughter of a wealthy businessman. You are 18 and studying at University.
You are 15 and you suffer from dyslexia.	You are a 15-year-old boy who lives in the street; you left home because of your abusive father.
You are the daughter of an ambassador to the country where you are now living.	You are a disabled university student, you use a wheel chair to get about.
You are an illegal immigrant from a war-torn country, you don't have your family with you.	You are a fashion model of African origin.
You are a 17-year-old exchange student from the Middle East.	You are a 13-year-old boy who has been bullied at school.
You are a famous children's television presenter. You are Muslim.	You are an 11-year-old orphan, living in an orphanage in Eastern Europe.
You are a 16 year old girl soon to be married to a man you have never met.	You are a 13 year old student with learning difficulties.
You are a 17-year-old political refugee; you are looking for asylum.	You are the son of an Asian immigrant who runs a successful business.
You are a brilliant footballer playing for a top European team. You are black.	You are 14, and your father is an unemployed alcoholic.
You are a teenage pop star.	You are yourself.
You are yourself.	You are yourself.

Source: "Stepping Out", Kid's Inclusive © UNICEF 2003 pg. 21

Anti-AIDS Club

Nchinunya's Story

Nichinuya was orphaned by AIDS and now lives with her uncle. She is happiest when she is at school and wants to be an accountant in the future. The Anti-AIDS Club helps to keep her focused on important things as opposed to drugs and boyfriends.

Osward's Story

At 16 years old, Oswald is confused about what it means to be a good man. He struggles between society's expectation of men to be sexually promiscuous and dominating over women and his own view of a good man. Since his father died, he has had no example of how to be a man. Both of his parents and two of his siblings have died from AIDS. He wants to help other children in Zambia who have harder lives and being a part of the Anti-AIDS Club is a statement of his identity.

Pre-Reading Discussion

- How would you define a role model?
- Do you have any role models in your life? If so, who are they and why?

Post-Reading Discussion

- What types of mixed messages about role models are we presented with in the media?
 - Role models have to be strong (super heroes)
 - Female role models are often movie stars or singers.
 - Distorted body images for women
 - You need to have a lot of money in order to be successful.
- What are common emotions and beliefs that are in these stories?
 - Confusion about the definition of a good man (Osward's Story)
 - Struggle to survive and have a better life in the future. (Hope)
 - Trying to break free from having your identity defined by HIV or AIDS.
- Why do you think being a part a part of the Anti-AIDS Club is important for one's statement of identity?
 - Being a part of the Anti-AIDS Club signifies a bold statement against AIDS.
 - This is a statement of identity because there is still much stigma surrounding the topic of AIDS.
- What examples of organizations or clubs in North America are similar to the Anti-AIDS Club?
 - Health organizations such as the Breast Cancer Society and Alzheimer Society of Canada.
 - Organizations dealing with social problems such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Activity: Collage of Role Models**Kicking AIDS Out****Brenda's Story**

Brenda has been involved with Edusport, which is an organisation that uses sports to build leaders and communities. The program “Kicking AIDS Out” combines AIDS education with games. Examples of other programs are the girls’ empowerment project called “Go Sister” and POWER (People Organizing and Working for Economic Rebirth) which gives poor farmers money to repay loans and contribute to HIV support activities. Another program called AID Yourself sends teams into the city slums to clean up. When people help out, they feel pride about their accomplishments. At Edusport, children are encouraged to help in the fight against deforestation by planting trees. Sports are the foundation for many activities that help the community. Brenda’s father died of TB and possibly AIDS. She will be studying Social Work at the University of Zambia on an Edusport scholarship. Edusport pays for education fees in exchange for volunteer coaching and help. Brenda feels that sports are important for girls because it challenges traditional gender roles. She often is challenged for her involvement with Edusport because of her gender. Overall, she feels that playing sports encourage a healthy lifestyle and self respect, especially for women.

Pre-Reading Discussion

- What types of sports are you involved in?
- Are these sports team-based or individual based? What do you think the difference in sport experience is between these two?
- What kind of emotions do you feel when you play sports?

Post-Reading Discussion

- In Brenda’s story, how is sports used to fight against the spread of HIV?
 - Sports programs are used to motivate young people to participate in their community. The goal of the sports programs is to build leaders and communities. Many of the programs address issues such as HIV and AIDS support, environmental responsibility, urban poverty and girls’ empowerment.
- What are some of the programs which are mentioned in the story?
 - Go Sister
 - POWER
 - AID Yourself
 - Kicking AIDS Out
- What are the positive attitudes that result from participating in these sports programs?
 - Confidence for women to stand up for their rights
 - Self respect and independence
 - An appreciation for a healthy body
 - A sense of pride in making a difference in the community
- What Rights of the Child are honoured/restored through the programs offered by EduSport?
 - The right to play
 - The right to have an education
 - The right to be free from kidnapping

- The right to an identity
- The right to be free from harm
- The right to be free from any sexual exploitation

Activity/Worksheet: Make your own sports program

Sport for AIDS?

Goals/Objectives

- To understand the potential role of sport in development.
- To develop a sports program which incorporates healthy activities and education about healthy living and children's rights.

Materials

- Provide students with markers, construction paper, scissors, etc.
- If you decide to play the games are part of the activity, provide students with (or ask students to provide) the appropriate sports equipment.
- Other materials as decided by class in planning process.

Method

- Share with students all of the different ways UNICEF has incorporated sport and development. <http://www.unicef.org/sports/index.html>
- Discuss the different ways AIDS education could be incorporated into a school or class wide sporting event. Select a sport. Brainstorm ideas from promotion through the event.
- If you decide not to run an actual event, have the students plan as if they were and develop an extensive promotional campaign.
- Break the students into small groups based on the above discussion, make one group responsible for each of the following:
 - Pre-event publicity
 - Selection of teams/participants
 - Schedule of day
 - Planning of educational workshops?

Arts Against AIDS

These stories take place at a party for children in Mulanje. There is a rock band performance, plays and poetry performed by children.

Christopher's Story

Christopher is part of a band called The Last Message. The message behind the band's music is a call to end HIV. He plays the guitar, which he borrows from his friend Felix. The band writes their music and lyrics. Both of his parents died of AIDS when he was younger. He wants to become a football player or work with computers when he is older.

Chris' Story

Chris is the drummer in the rock group. He built his own drums from old tin cans and cow skins. He wants to become a keyboard musician in the future. Although his parents are still alive, he knows of many children orphaned by AIDS. He wants to make people happy with his music and also give an anti-AIDS message as well.

Ghosta's Story

Ghosta enjoys acting in plays because it makes him feel like he's in a different world. His father and mother both died and he lives with his grandmother. He helps his grandmother make beer to sell. He remembers his father before he died and the sadness that he felt. Ghosta likes to sing and entertain people because he knows that many people have lost loved ones. He puts on plays with his friends about HIV and AIDS. He attends the Orphan Club where he talks to his friends about being orphans. He describes this support group as his new family.

Robert's Story

Robert lives with his aunt and two brothers in Chita village. He likes to sing and be in plays. He wants to be a professional singer in the future. His mother died from a sickness where she had stomach pains, sores in her mouth and face and loss of weight (AIDS). Robert does not know the exact sickness that she had. His father died from the same sickness. Robert describes himself as healthy. He is scared of AIDS. He wants to be a successful recording artist in the future.

These stories are from singers in the Anglican Voices Choir. They are performing in the auditorium of a teacher's college in Lilongwe. Many people in the audience are dancing and singing along with the choir.

Nedia's Story

Nedia has sung with the Anglican Voices Choir for two years. She is compassionate towards suffering in Malawi from AIDS and other diseases. She desires to make people feel better with the music and songs. Her biggest fear is getting AIDS because there is no cure. She wants to be a nurse when she grows up and also continue singing.

Dave's Story

Dave loves to sing and dance because it allows people to bond together. His parents are both alive, however he knows many kids who are orphaned because their parents were sick. They do not know if they died of AIDS because it is not polite to ask. The stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS and dying from the disease is still prevalent in the society. Dave performs with the Choir

in different places. He likes to travel and meeting new people from different places. The choir has a professionally recorded CD which they sell for money.

Prisca's Story

Prisca works as a journalist at the Trendsetters Newspaper office. Trendsetters is Zambia's leading youth newspaper which includes articles on arts, sports, celebrities and series life and death stories about coping with AIDS, rape and poverty. The newspaper is an example of positive actions encouraging the youth in Zambia to become leaders in their country. The editorial board consists of young people who are writers, photographers, managers, art directors and editors. Prisca believes that it is important for young people to be in charge of the newspaper. After reading stories on child abuse, many readers are able to realize that the abuse was not their fault. Many discussions on women and children's rights come from the articles. Prisca promotes the Youth Friendly Societies in Zambia which are health clinics to test HIV status for young people. The life of young women in Zambia depends on their circumstances (education, family wealth, health etc). Prisca believes that AIDS is a women's rights issue because men still think of women as inferior and take advantage of their bodies. The newspaper hopes to aid in the fight for women's rights and AIDS.

Pre-Reading Discussion

- What are some examples of music groups/bands in North America who have a message for society in their music?
- When you listen to your favourite musician, do you pay attention to the lyrics? Why or why not?

Post-Reading Discussion

- In these stories, what forms of the arts were used to convey Anti-AIDS messages?
 - Music – band played songs with Anti-AIDS messages
 - Drama – plays about HIV and AIDS (Ghosta's story)
 - Literature - using journalism and writing to reach the youth population (Prisca's story)
- Do you think that using the arts to talk about HIV and AIDS is effective?
 - Discuss with students about different methods for AIDS education.
 - Media (advertisements on posters, TV, movies)
 - The Arts (music, drama, literature)
 - Schools (teaching about AIDS awareness)
 - Sports (programs – refer to “Kicking AIDS out” on page 75)
 - Support groups (refer to “Anti-AIDS Club” on page 73)

Activity: *Journalist/Song Writer in Zambia*

Summary

Students will write an article for the Trendsetters Newspaper concerning either women's rights or dealing with AIDS OR write a song/poem about HIV and AIDS that they would present to an audience in Zambia.

Goals/Objectives

- Give students the opportunity to express and respond to a range of ideas and opinions concisely, clearly and appropriately.
- To produce pieces of writing for the purpose of creating HIV and AIDS awareness.

Materials Needed

None

Method

1. After discussing the stories from "Arts Against AIDS", ask students to imagine themselves as a youth living in Zambia.
2. They will have to pick between these two choices for the assignment:

Imagine you are a young journalist who has just been asked by Trendsetters Newspaper to write a feature article. Your editor wants you to write about either women's rights/female empowerment or coping with HIV and AIDS. You may get some ideas from any stories in the book and also do additional research for your article.

OR

You are the lead musician in a popular Zambia music band. Your band is going to record its newest CD and you need to create a new song for AIDS awareness. Using some of the stories you have read from the book, create the lyrics for your new song. Your lyrics can address any issue related to HIV or AIDS (e.g. children orphaned by AIDS, stigmas, female empowerment etc).

Story Workshop

Every week, many listeners tune in to hear the radio soap opera “Zimachitika”. The radio show addresses issues such as AIDS, poverty and child abuse. These following stories are told by two young actors in the radio drama.

Macford's Story

Macford lives with his parents in Naperi, near the Malambalala River. In the radio show, he plays a character named Tobias who is beaten by his father. Macford is not abused by his own father but he knows of many children who are. His typical day consists of waking up, drinking tea, going to school, reading, playing outside, having dinner, doing homework and going to sleep. He is very afraid of getting HIV because of the uncertainty of death. In his story, he explains how someone can contract HIV from using a bad needle or being promiscuous. He would like to be a lawyer when he finishes school because he wants to wear a nice suit and have his own desk. He was chosen to be an actor on the radio drama because he had a good speaking voice. With his pay, he buys video games. He is happiest when playing video games.

Enelesi's Story

Enelesi lives with her parents and six siblings. Her father works at Malawi Telecom Ltd. She is able to have tea, bread and an egg for breakfast. She learns about HIV and AIDS at school, however she doesn't discuss it among her friends because it is “teacher-thing” to do. She knows many of her classmates have lost their parents to AIDS. Contracting HIV and becoming pregnant are her two biggest fears. She often argues with her brother about keeping bags to make into a ball. She is grateful that she is hardly sick. Her sister is always sick and is behind in school. Her parents will not tell Enelesi about her sister's sickness. Enelesi was selected for the radio drama after many auditions. Even though today is her first day on the radio, she is not nervous and knows that she will be good.

Pre-Reading Discussion

- What types of issues would you expect to be discussed in a Canadian radio show?

Post-Reading Discussion

- Compared to some of the other stories in this book, what is different about these stories?
 - More of a positive outlook on life.
 - These children have not been orphaned by AIDS. They probably have a different perspective on the devastation of AIDS (less personal)
 - These children have less impoverished families
- What similarities do you notice between these children and yourself?
 - Emphasize the similarities that these children have with your students (E.g. enjoying video games, listen to the radio, go to school and have favourite subjects, ambitions for the future)
- How do these two stories reflect the title “Songs of victory”?
 - Hope for the future

Appendix 1

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in child-friendly language

Article 1

Everyone under 18 has these rights.

Article 2

All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

Article 3

All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

Article 4

The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family to protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.

Article 5

Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

Article 6

You have the right to be alive.

Article 7

You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

Article 8

You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.

Article 9

You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.

Article 10

If you live in a different country than your parents do, you have the right to be together in the same place.

Article 11

You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

Article 12

You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

Article 13

You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

Article 14

You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

Article 15

You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.

Article 16

You have the right to privacy.

Article 17

You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspapers, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.

Article 18

You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.

Article 19

You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

Article 20

You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.

Article 21

You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.

Article 22

You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.

Article 23

You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

Article 24

You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.

Article 25

If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.

Article 26

You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.

Article 27

You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.

Article 28

You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

Article 29

Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

Article 30

You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion – or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

Article 31

You have the right to play and rest.

Article 32

You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

Article 33

You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.

Article 34

You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.

Article 35

No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

Article 36

You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

Article 37

No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

Article 38

You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.

Article 39

You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.

Article 40

You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the justice system that respects your rights.

Article 41

If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than the articles in this Convention, those laws should apply.

Article 42

You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too.

Articles 43 to 54

These articles explain how governments and international organizations like UNICEF will work to ensure that the rights of children are protected.