

Language/Literature – 9-11 years

Unit and Lesson Plans



Refugees contribute to the culture of their host community. Some are well-known artists, painters, poets or novelists. Dante Alighieri created the major part of his work during his exile. Playwright Bertold Brecht, authors Thomas Mann and Franz Kafka, poets Pablo Neruda and Jorge Semprun, musician Miguel Angel Estrellas, painters Lucian Freud and Remedios Varo -- all suffered periods of exile which, in some cases, deeply colored their work. The theme of exile can be studied in literature, the history of music and art. Texts addressing refugee issues can also be used in language courses.

UNIT PLAN FOR AGES 9-11 IN LANGUAGE/LITERATURE: REFUGEE CHILDREN

UNIT OBJECTIVES

Knowledge

To understand refugee children's feelings of not belonging

To understand the notion of community

To see the application of such feelings to individuals and groups in our own community

Skills

To perceive the meanings behind a simple story

To practise creative writing skills

To practise recognition and attractive use of adjectives

Values

To avoid stereotyping and excluding people from "our" group (*The Party*)

To appreciate the importance of cooperation (*The deaf man and the blind man, Tit for Tat*).



LESSONS 1 and 2

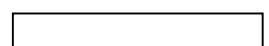
CONTENT	TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING STRATEGIES
Two stories recounted by refugee children, "The deaf man and the blind man" and "The Party."	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Students are asked to talk about the myths and legends, and fairy tales and fables they know. The teacher briefly tells the class about the refugee children at Kakuma refugee camp and that the stories in this unit are three of the stories recounted by the refugee children to a UNHCR worker.</p> <p>Development</p> <p>The story "The deaf man and the blind man" is read out aloud and through the accompanying questions, the students are led through a discussion about cooperation.</p> <p>The story "The Party" can also be read out aloud. It deals with the issue of stereotyping and exclusion.</p>
RESOURCES Sybella Wilkes, <i>One day we had to run!</i> (London, Evans Brothers, 1994), "The deaf man and the blind man" p. 42-43; "The party", p. 26-27. For background on Kakuma Camp, see Wilkes, p.24-25.	

LESSON 3

CONTENT	TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING STRATEGIES
Story "Tit for Tat"	<p>The children read the story quietly to themselves and work through the questions individually. The class comes together to share and exchange their answers and ideas.</p>
RESOURCES Sybella Wilkes, <i>One day we had to run!</i> (London, Evans Brothers, 1994), "Tit for tat", p, 22-23.	

LESSON 4

CONTENT	TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING STRATEGIES
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What are adjectives?

Using adjectives

RESOURCES

Activity Sheet: Adjectives

The Activity Sheet: Adjectives provides exercises to strengthen the students' facility in using adjectives.

LESSON 5

CONTENT

TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING STRATEGIES

Creative writing

Students compose their own stories based on the lives of two animals native to their country.

LESSON PLAN FOR AGES 9-11 IN LANGUAGE/LITERATURE: REFUGEE CHILDREN

Purpose

Myths, legends and folktales provide a rich heritage of beliefs and traditions which have been passed on from one generation to the next; they hold a special place in all cultures. However, the stories often were not written down, but were passed on as part of an oral tradition.

In the north west region of Kenya is situated Kakuma refugee camp, which is run by UNHCR. Kakuma is home to 47,500 refugees, including 15,600 children from Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia. For these children, Kakuma is the end of a long trek from persecution and danger in their own countries. Many have suffered horrifying experiences: even seeing their close ones arrested or killed, often suffering from hunger and thirst during their journey of flight, and witnessing their fellow refugees die from hunger, thirst and disease.

Most of the children arrived at Kakuma with almost nothing but their memories of the recent unhappy past, but also memories of their happier past in their own countries, amid their friends and families. They shared some of their memories and their imagination with a UNHCR worker, Sybella Wilkes, telling her stories and fairy tales and painting illustrations to accompany their stories. These stories and pictures were collected and published in *One day we had to run!*

Children from every part of the world, from every social and economic stratum love to hear and tell stories and fairy tales. This unit of lessons revolves around three of the stories told to Ms Wilkes by refugee children. As the students work through the lessons, they will have the opportunity to practise their writing and grammatical skills while at the same time sharing the common joy of story-telling.

Resource

Sybella Wilkes, *One day we had to run!* (London, Evans Brothers, 1994), the stories and illustrations "Tit for tat", p. 22-23; "The party", p. 25-26 and "The deaf man and the blind man", p. 42-43.



LESSONS 1 and 2

Procedure

Begin the lesson by asking the students to name some myths and legends, fairy tales and fables that they know of. Do they know from which country the stories originated? Are they stories about how the world was created? Are they adventure stories in which good fights and wins over evil? Is there a moral to the story as in Aesop's or La Fontaine's fables?

Use the content of the section **Purpose** as a link to the rest of this lesson and the following lessons.

Hand out copies of "The deaf man and the blind man", which was told by Batula Mohammed Ali, a thirteen year old Somali refugee at Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya. Have the story read aloud around the class.

Comprehension and discussion questions

How did the handicap of each man prevent him from following his people?
How could the deaf man be of any help to the blind man, and the blind man be of help to the deaf man? What word could be used to describe the help they gave each other?

The story is very short. Do you think the boy who told the story made it up himself, or do you think it is something that was told to him in his early childhood? Give your reasons.

Hand out copies of the story "The party", told by Abraham Marial Kiol, a 14 year old Sudanese of the Dinka Bor tribe. This story could also be read out aloud.

Comprehension and discussion questions

How were the living things divided into the two groups - the animal group and the birds group?

a) Why wasn't the bat allowed to join the animal group?

b) Why wasn't he allowed to join the bird group?

What do you think is the moral of this story?

Animals, birds, they are all living things. The division into groups was a decision made by the living creatures, and the result was that those who belonged to a group were happy, but those, such as the bat, who did not belong to any group were not happy. How about us humans? Divisions often occur in human society.

a) What are some of these divisions? (ethnic origin, colour, race, religion, sex, politics...)

b) Name the divisions that can exist in a school (grades, intellectually gifted/less gifted, in-crowd/non-in crowd, sporty/non-sporty ...)

The bat may not have been a bird, but the birds could have let him into their party. Similarly, the animals could have let the bat join their fun. However, both groups made a big issue of their division and **excluded** him because he was **different**.

a) What do you think of the animals' and birds' attitudes?

b) Describe a situation at school when someone is excluded because he or she is



different in some way. What can we all do to overcome that exclusion?

LESSON 3

Preparation

Have ready a class set of the story "Tit for tat" by Daniel Arou Diing Arou, a fourteen year old Sudanese of the Dinka Bor tribe.

Procedure

Let the children read the story quietly and individually and work through the questions as a written exercise. The class can come back together to share their answers.

Comprehension and discussion questions

How did the camel demonstrate his friendship to the fox when the two animals wanted to steal food from the farm which was across the river?

Why did the fox finish his meal before the camel?

What word would you use to describe the attitude and behaviour of the fox?

Do you think the camel was paying the fox back or teaching him a lesson?

The camel was sorry for the fox and did not let the fox drown, but saved him and took the fox safely to the other side of the river. What about the fox? He said he was sorry, but do you think he told the truth?

Is there a moral to the story? If there is, what could it be?

LESSON 4

Preparation

Run off a class set of the Activity Sheet: Adjectives.

Procedure

Students individually work through the Activity Sheet with teacher guidance where necessary.

LESSON 5

Procedure

The boy who told the story of *Tit for Tat* comes from Sudan. Why do you think he told a story about a camel and a fox, and not a story about koalas and kangaroos, or a story about penguins and seals?

Think about your own country and two of its native animals and write a story about them. In your story, say whether your animals are friends, and describe an incident that happened to them. Your incident could be humorous, serious or sad.

Remember to use adjectives, when appropriate, to give your story a lift.

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