



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
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## History and War: What About the Children?

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by Pedro Mendia-Landa

### Introduction

What is history? What is the purpose of historical accounts? Who writes historical events and why? Is history objective in its retellings? Who is writing the history of human kind today? Can a historical event have more than one interpretation? What makes one interpretation more valid than the next? When a scholar states for example " World War II was a justified war against aggression", when did it become so?

Issues of war and peace have been with us since the beginning of time and continue to plague not only the front pages of newspapers and television news reports, but also the conscious mind of every human being because of the tragic and horrific consequences, which they describe. Although the number of conflicts has declined since the end of the cold war, long lasting ethnic, religious, political, territorial, and commercial disputes continue to ignite into discord, dissension, open conflicts, and wars. The consequences mainly affect civilians and their effects can be felt long after they are over. As we undertake a new millennium, the hope for peace is still nothing but a dream. These wars are a constant menace in today's world.

James W. Loewen's (1995) thesis in *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* states that something is very wrong with the way our students learn the history of this great nation. Loewen blames the state of history education on the fact that the field is dominated by textbooks which "...exclude conflict or real suspense." (p.13), and lack the ability to make the stories meaningful to the lives of the students. This unit is intended to create a series of lessons directly and explicitly focusing on real life conflict as the central topic of study. Making the students relate to the topic of war by contextualizing to personal experiences and to areas of the curriculum will make it real and meaningful.

Point 4 of the New Haven Public Schools *A Vision for the Twenty-First Century*<sup>1</sup> : states, "in order to participate fully as informed, responsible citizens in a democratic society, must be able to make decisions about issues confronting themselves and their society in an increasingly complex world." Part of this increasingly complex world is the many wars and ethnic conflicts currently taking place, of which students are sheltered to the point they are not introduced or discussed in the classroom. If students are to meet the goals stated in this vision, it is imperative that we provide our students with the tools necessary to be active participants in society. Thus, the purpose and goal of this unit is to create a foundation at the elementary school level that provides students with some of the tools needed to analyze a current event, and contextualize it around the students' lives.

In this unit I explore issues of war and peace in the context of children and my own history as a Basque. I begin by looking at the role of the historian and authors who pass from generation to generation the 'truths' of what is often taught. I attempt to make students understand some of the most important effects these armed conflicts have on children.

## To teach or not to teach about the horrors of war

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I have discussed with other educators and given a lot of thought as to how appropriate it is to provide elementary school students with explicit information on war and the destruction and horrors it brings. However, although with some misgivings, I have come to the realization that violence is a fact of today's society (especially in poor urban centers) where children come into close contact with street violence related to gangs or crime in general. Additionally, due to mass-media information outlets and current world events, it is not unusual for anyone to watch people being killed and blown up into pieces while viewing the 6 o'clock news. Thus, I find it important that issues of war, (not the explicit showing of people blown to pieces, burned beyond recognition, death, famine, etc.) be given a context so that our students may begin to understand that war, opened arm conflicts, and ethnic violence do take place in the XXIst century. If nothing else, the lessons in this unit will provide students with opportunities to voice their opinions and fears regarding street violence and the images with which children come into contact.

Few of our students have a clear sense what a real war means and its consequences are, other than through brief television accounts. However, this country, being a humanitarian nation, opens its doors to many of the refugees of world conflicts in which it finds itself involved as a superpower. Thus, students and families, the descendants of war-torn regions, make up our classrooms. It is these children and their families who really have a clear sense of what it is to live in inhuman conditions, having found themselves in the middle of armed conflicts. But this unit is not really intended for them specifically. It is mostly intended for those students who have experienced the horrors and humiliations of war in front of a television set, through radio, or newspaper accounts. For the later, I attempt to open students' eyes to understanding not only the consequences of people and nations going to war, but also the importance of knowing whose side of the story is being narrated and how.

For those who have personally felt, either directly or indirectly, the effects of war and political and civilian unrest, this unit attempts to make them become critical thinkers, while encouraging them to tell their side of the history. It is through these accounts that we can begin to understand the real effects and consequences of war torn areas, as difficult as the retellings might be. As the poem by Bertolt Brecht *Questions From a Worker Who Reads* suggests,

Caesar beat the Gauls.

Did he not have even a cook with him?

So many reports.

So many questions.

We need our students to begin to ask who was behind either side. Our students need to be taught to recognize that often there is another side, which often is not told and look further beyond what is presented.

As a teacher, in close daily contact with young students, I find the explicit teaching of conflict and problem resolution a necessity in the classroom. The negative effects that bullying has on children have been brought to everyone's attention. This is so important that all school districts in the state of Connecticut are mandated to include an anti-bullying curriculum. We need to be able to provide our students with opportunities to solve their own problems without adult mediation by providing them with the skills for successful resolution. The analogy of today's classroom is that of the United Nations or the World International Court. The role of the teacher is to mediate and keep peace between two sovereign nations or as peacemaker between two ethnic groups or countries unable to do so alone.

This unit additionally focuses on the ethnic conflicts between the Basque country and France and Spain. I begin by stating that labels of "winners" and "losers" have connotations which hide the truth by not only their simplicity, but by attempting to minimize armed conflict into different sides of morality, demonizing the enemy and thus justifying the atrocities committed against innocent civilians. What happened in Guernica in 1937, the ancient Basque capital, is but one of the earliest examples of the first time a civilian population was intentionally bombed. I highlight the Basque conflict, as I look for parallels to classroom and school situations where students can be made active participants to these current conflicts.

Can we as teachers offer our students a view of the horrors of wars at the same time we study ways that can help decrease tensions before they escalate into something bigger both in the classroom and out of the classroom? Three stories by Dr. Seuss come to mind to explore nonviolent situations to solve conflicts, which are presented to the students as a way to contextualize further discussions on war and peace.

## Goals and Objectives

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The main purpose in writing this unit is that of making students aware that every story and thus history has a point of view, which often is not acknowledged. It is imperative to know and understand why and how the story is being told. To a stated degree or extent of this unit, I hope that students will be able to question the account of an event at the same time they study the consequences of war and ethnic conflict.

It is not the intention of this unit to be an exhaustive study of war, its consequences and on how to teach young children about it. Instead, like a good and reasonably objective historian, I focus the unit on the importance of checking the veracity of historical accounts by asking questions as to the sources of the information, while at the same time we look at some of the consequences of these conflicts. This last reason now is more important than ever, given the flood of information we receive via television, radio, newspapers, and the internet.

This series of lessons meets New Haven Public School's performance standards regarding social studies for the second grade although it can be also implemented at lower and higher grades with some modifications. I will focus on the objectives of gathering historical data from multiple sources, identifying the main idea in a source of historical information, and writing short narratives and statements presenting historical ideas. This unit will follow a three-week study on immigration (Mendia-Landa, 1996) where students gather information regarding

their families' migration journey. I will model this process as I write about my people the Basque, and of the effects of war on a nation and its people; especially the effects that wars have on children. I want to offer students a variety of primary and secondary sources so they can directly observe the nature of war atrocities and the effects in the civilian population. This is accomplished by presenting the case of refugees, Basque and Chechnyan children. The emphasis is not on learning facts of who did what, when and why. Instead I would like students to begin to understand that history is an "informed debate based on evidence and reason." (Loewen, 1996, p. 16 ) as they relate to the victims of war and ethnic conflicts.

In order to make this unit meaningful to younger students, the role of children in times of war is explored. Children as refugees, child soldiers, and famine are described and studied. The main concept to explore is that peace between two nations, or warring parties, that have faced each other in an opened armed conflict, allows extra resources for other areas of need such as infrastructure and social services instead of weapons and military salaries. In the case of the Basques during the Spanish Civil War and after the bombing of Guernica in 1937, where did the children who survived go? Did refugees ever return to the Basque country? Who in the international community got involved? What did the Spanish Civil War represent in the events that followed in Europe? How do the experiences compare to children in other parts of the world?

The side of the story that is being told, one day might look different once the objectivity of time allows historians and scholars to discern what was from what was not when those who are now oppressed come to power and are able to re-write their own stories. The case of South Africa comes to mind in thinking about how historical events can turn over in unexpected ways so that years later a new history is rewritten to reflect the story from the point of view of the victorious as the "truth" of what once happened. It is particularly the civilian populations who feel the brunt of the results of covert or overt aggression. What qualifies a conflict as a war? We hear the expressions "war on poverty", "war on drugs", etc, which although a joint and concerted effort to eradicate something considered harmful does not qualify as a war. This unit uses the definition of *The American Heritage Dictionary* .

"A state of open, armed, often prolonged conflict carried on between nations, states, or parties."

This definition of war meets the struggle of the Basques to become free if we look at Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (Basqueland and Freedom) as the armed forces of a Basque liberation movement. It is considered by the State Department as a terrorist organization. In their fight for an independent Basque nation, they have killed over 2000 people in the last 43 years since its foundation in 1959.

Was it not Benjamin Franklin who stated that revolution was legal in the first person, as in "our revolution", and illegal in the third person, as in "their revolution"? Thus, the relativity of many of the struggles for liberation from oppressive regimes in that depending on who is talking, a war can be seen as just or unjust.

## War and Children

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When we look at ongoing conflicts between nations or peoples, one of the most distressing realities is that most wars have been fought in precisely those countries that could least afford them. Consequences of these conflicts mainly affect civilians and effects can be felt long after the discord is over. Among the effects that conflicts have on civilians some of the most horrific consequences are on children because of their

vulnerability and young age. Even if children have never seen a gun, millions of children suffer from wars, as resources that could have been invested in development are diverted into armaments. In the last decade only, more than 2 million children have been killed, 6 million wounded, and one million orphaned (UNHCR, 2001).

Speaking directly of the horrors of war, we encounter the destruction of infrastructure and of normal day-to-day living conditions, death of loved ones, famine, sickness, displacement from family and loved ones, rape, and recruitment as child soldiers. Additionally, the use of landmines in these war torn regions makes the consequences of war that more serious in that long after the conflict is over, the destruction and danger remains. The relationship between war and famine can be clearly understood by children. Famine speaks directly to the horrors and the consequences of armed conflicts. The consequences are even worse when the conflict is that of a civil war. The farmers cannot sow the seeds, nor can they harvest the crops because they are either needed in the war front, or it is too dangerous to maintain and harvest them. Also, if they are allowed to harvest their goods, they can seldom be brought to the market. There are many examples of famine and starvation due to armed conflicts. To mention a few we have Mozambique, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia in the 1990s.

Although the number of conflicts around the world has diminished in quantity, still too many people are being affected by direct and indirect consequences of war. According to the UNHCR, there are approximately 50 million refugees and people displaced. Of the total number 22.3 million of these people are under the care of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Among the displaced within their own country half of them are children. At any one point there maybe up to 100,000 separated children in Western Europe alone.

"We walked for days, for months, thousands of miles. We slept on the ground and often had to eat leaves to survive. People shot at us. Many boys were killed. What happened to my parents? I don't know. But now we are here, to a new life. And I have seen snow for the first time."

A "Lost Boy" from Sudan resettled in the U.S. (Youth Ambassadors for Peace,2001).

Additional consequences of war on children are:

The recruitment through coercion and kidnapping to become child soldiers and sexual slaves. The UNHCR estimates that there are more than 300,000 youths and girls, under the age of 18, who are currently serving as child soldiers. Not only are they recruited forcibly, but technological advances have made it easier for children to operate the weapons since they are now lighter and easy enough for a 10-year-old to use. Additionally, children are more obedient, easier to enlist, and also more dispensable. Often they are also used as "human shields" on the frontlines and even in suicide missions. As with almost every other aspect of war, long after hostilities cease, these children have extreme difficulties integrating back into their communities.

They gave me training. They gave me a gun. I took drugs. I killed civilians. Lots. It was just war, what I did then. I only took orders. I knew it was bad. It was not my wish.

A child soldier in Sierra Leone (UNHCR, 2001).

Thus, effects of wars are felt long after hostilities have ceased among warring factions. These effects are both emotional and physical. As an example, in Rwanda, 45,000 households are headed by children. In some conflicts like in Mozambique between 1980-90, schools, teachers, and children were direct targets with 45% of the schools being destroyed. Also, because of the use of landmines, children in almost 90 countries live in

danger of death or maiming. There are an estimated 60 million landmines that even after the conflict is long over, keep affecting civilian populations, and especially children. In Sierra Leone 70% of the students do not attend school because of the danger due to landmines. There, 2 million died in the last decade as direct consequences of armed conflict.

## A Brief History of the Basque

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The Basques are one of the oldest cultures currently in existence, preserving one of the few languages continually spoken for thousands of years. Not even today have scholars been able to date either the origin of the people or the roots of the language they speak. However, there is no lack of theories and suppositions that have been discussed. Regardless of this, the Basques are one of the oldest living European cultures alive. The most modern and credible theory is that one brought up by the prehistorian Bosch Gimpera (Eiguren, 1972), which states that Basques are descendants of Paleolithic people who inhabited the Pyrenean Region of Southern France and Northern Spain.

Today, the Basque region is located between the Adur River, which separates it from France to the North, and the Ebro River to the South separating it from Spain. Historically the Basques have always lived in this area although they encompassed further regions in past times. Through the tumultuous history of the Iberian Peninsula (so called because the Iberians were among the first inhabitants of Hispania) the Basques never were conquered by the many would be invaders. The Basques encountered the Celts, Celtiberians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans and Germanic tribes (Visigoths, Vandals, Franks, etc).

It is not until 1789, after the French Revolution, that France annexed the Basque region between the Adur River and the Pyrenees. In the South, the Basques lost their independence after the first Carlist War in October 25, 1839 becoming the "Basque Provinces" of Spain. However the Basques never gave up their freedom making an attempt in 1872 to regain their independence. After this there was a period when the language was prohibited from being spoken, as well as censorship of the press and of educators who were removed and sent to other regions.

The Year 1892 marked the "Basque Renaissance" with the birth of the Basque Nationalist party, playing an important role in the current events taking place now in Euskadi (Basque country). As other regions in Spain became restless with the monarchy unable to create the necessary social conditions for its people, Jose Maria Primo de Rivera was established in the 1920's to remove any vestige of freedom in the Basque region and any remaining use of the Basque language. In 1927 King Alfonso XIII ousted the dictator and proclaimed a more liberal monarchy, which in 1931 lost a plebiscite. Thus we had the birth of the First Republic on April 14, 1931. Because of some of the changes (land reform, workers' rights) and dissatisfaction with the new system, as early as November 1932 the rightists tried to rise in arms and were defeated. However, in 1933 the rightist came into power and attempted to regain and roll back the changes made during the First Republic. Given the changes brought about and the brutality used against the people, the Rightists lost power to the Republicans in February 1936 and the Second Republic was born. It was in November, on what is known as the "Basque Plebiscite", when 80 percent of the Basque voted for their independence and on October 7, 1936 when the Basque Nation was born.

The Basques played a very prominent role in the 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War. They also suffered many losses



other than their independence. As a direct consequence of the armed conflict and the bombing of civilian centers such as Guernica during the Spanish Civil War, over 100,000 Basque children were shipped to countries that were supportive of the Spanish Republic. Of these, 4,000 arrived in Southampton, England, for two months stayed under canvass, and later were dispersed all over England. Seventy children were welcomed at the Cambria House in Caerleon, South Wales. Although most of them came back, there were many who did not.

## Course Outline

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This unit is anchored in the social studies vision statement of the New Haven Public School curriculum standards and frameworks. These standards and frameworks guide this unit. The principal objective of this unit is to use an interdisciplinary approach to prepare creative, critical thinkers who are able to use problem resolution strategies within their academic and personal lives as they explore the topic of ethnic conflicts and wars. Students will begin to understand that people all around the world, in time and space, share common problems and goals. Thus, students will be able to relate to the fortunes and misfortunes of different peoples and communities other than their own as they participate in this unit.

One of the key underlying concepts of the unit is the importance of cultural diversity, values, and how the world is shaped by these factors. This unit is therefore anchored on a larger thematic unit on multiculturalism and diversity. Additionally, a unit on immigration will have been implemented so that when we explore some of the reasons why some people migrate from a country of origin to another of destiny, we will focus and talk about families having to leave their countries because of armed conflict or violence. This unit is intended to serve as an extension to such a unit and center the discussion on war and peace. Additionally, this unit will help the students begin to make connections between events in the past and the influence that those events have in the present day.

The series of lessons presented includes links to past events and how they relate to the present (long term consequences of wars and conflicts on children); connections of the historical events to global issues (the United Nations and the effects on children human rights); concepts of culture and the different perspectives that emerge from different cultures (children as soldiers, diverse points of view); applying geographic knowledge, skills, and concepts to human behavior in relation to the physical and cultural environment (territorial and boundary conflicts of the Basque struggle towards independence; the Basque diasporas); law and governance (ethnic conflicts); relating science, technology and society to historical events (warfare); and issues relating civics, ideals and practice to historical events, and individual development.

Throughout this unit of study, the teacher is encouraged to create a "word bank" relating to the terms and concepts to discuss with the students as they are introduced and emerge in the context of the unit. With older students, children create a glossary of terms in the areas of peace and related processes (i.e. peace building, peacekeeping, disarmament, reconciliation), other dispute resolution processes (i.e. arbitration, dialogue, social movement, policy-making), conflict types (i.e. ethnic, justice/human rights, territorial), and other (i.e. legitimacy, democracy, socialism, international law). A time line with the main events of the conflict in the Basque country is modeled for the students so it can be replicated with other current conflicts.

Because this unit is geared towards very young students in elementary school and in order for them to better

understand the concepts here discussed, I begin the unit exploring questions of what history is, historical events and information, who, what, where, how, when, and why of an event. These lessons are focused and directly related to the students' lives. The timelines they will create relate directly to their personal histories. Therefore, the students will be able to understand that historical events are written by people and about people or places. Differences between primary and secondary or tertiary sources of information will be related as sources of information of "I have this document that tells me so" (primary) or "someone told me so" (secondary).

Once this topic has been explored through the implementation of the first four lessons, it will serve as a framework for the rest of the activities. Therefore, the previous questions will be asked over and over again throughout the curriculum and the completion of the unit. For example, in language arts we will focus on the narrator. Whose voice are we hearing? Who is telling us the story? How do they know? What are the motives or reasons for the narrator to tell the story? Which are the sources they use? Are they credible? In mathematics we ask questions such as how do you know? Can you prove what you say? How? and we make analogies to the first activity in the unit. The students make a timeline of the most important events in their lives to understand about history being the narration of events in a chronological manner and which affect the way we live nowadays.

If there is an author who is very accessible to young readers is that of Dr. Seuss. Although he never wrote any stories directly describing war, this unit explores three of his stories as stepping-stones to talk about war and its alternatives. In *The Zax*, Dr. Seuss explores the conflict between a North-going Zax and a South-going Zax, who meeting with each other in opposite ways, neither wants to move. Because of their intransigence there they stayed not wanting to budge while the whole world went on around them.

In the story *The Sneetches*, the only difference among the inhabitants of the town is that some wear a star while the others have none. The Star-Belly Sneetches have privileges that the Plain-Belly Sneetches envy, such as playing ball, picnics and marshmallow roasts. Then, Sylvester McMonkey McBean makes the Plain-Belly Sneetches happy by fixing their problem when for only 3 dollars each comes out of his peculiar machine just as a star-belly Sneetch. Those Sneetches with the original star are not very agreeable to this so Sylvester takes away the stars for only ten dollars.

The last of the stories, although mainly an environmentalist story, tells us about the exploitation of the natural resources until there is nothing but one seed left from one of the trees. *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss can be used to explain to the students the way natural resources can be exploited to the benefit of a few and the detriment of many at the same time they become a source of conflicts and wars. The Lorax does not use violence to recover his land, nor do the creatures inhabiting the land revolt against the aggressors. However, many of the characters in this wonderful story can be representative of the players in many of today's world conflicts.

These three stories, although not directly depicting an armed conflict, or show hardly any violence, do demonstrate some of the concepts in which this unit is anchored. The Zax talks about how the intransigence of two makes it impossible to move from where they stand. As a class the students will discuss how could they resolve their conflict so that each can continue on. In today's society examples of similar situations will be offered.

In the Sneetches, Dr. Seuss explores issues of differences among equals and how those differences offer privileges to some, which are denied to the rest. These differences create a conflict where a few benefit and others are made to feel inferior. In the world this can be seen in the way people are treated because of their gender, sexual orientation, beliefs, religious affiliation, ethnicity, or race.



These stories will be used as springboards in contextualizing many of the conflicts. Thus we will look for South and North-going Zaks, Sylvester McMonkey McBean, the Lorax, and all the other characters will be used as points of reference. In the introductory lessons, we will study the conflicts they present us from the framework of who is telling the story and how it is being told. The students will reflect on the struggles and propose ways of solving the problems they present. Next, we will rewrite the story to present different view points. The North-going Zax will retell the story from his point of view. So will the South-going Zax. Following we will use the story to study the Basque conflict and to explain how at times not only does either side wants to budge and violence ensues. This is the case in many of the world conflicts nowadays taking place. Alternatives to war will also be explored, although they are not the central focus of this unit.

Each of the stories will be studied in the same manner; who is telling the story, how, and why. What is the conflict? How is it solved? How does the story change when retold from the point of view of another of the characters? Does this make a difference? These lessons will be followed by a couple of lessons on feelings (anger) and on violence (gangs) so as to focus on how is it that someone can feel so angry, have a group of people who gives them cover, which leads them to harm another human person to the point of taking their lives. For such a purpose I make use of the series of children's books by Williams and Becnel (1996), which in simple language that students may understand, explore gang issues.

The unit ends with real life conflicts and war situations both in the Basque context and in context of other ethnic ongoing conflicts such as the Chechnya fight for independence against Russia. In order for the children to gain the necessary knowledge a couple of lessons on geography and some history have been provided. These lessons will help the students locate and contextualize the lessons on children refugees.

A comparison between the lives of Basque refugee children in 1937-1939 during the Spanish Civil War, and Chechnya refugee children in 2000 are directly made through the use of documents and photographs from humanitarian organizations and civilian sympathizers (see electronic resources). Here the students are able to see first hand sources and accounts of children who are touched by war and open armed conflicts. The students will be able to compare similarities and differences between the consequences and lifestyles of the children. The students will be able to gain some understanding of what it was to have lived in a war situation during the Spanish Civil War based on the experiences of this group of children. At the same time, the students will be able to view pictures of the children and compare the situation to the recent events in Chechnya.

## Sample Lessons

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As I wrote these lessons, I looked at the Center for Research, Excellence, Diversity in Education (CREDE )for recommendations in as far as proven strategies and methods that take into account the needs of English Language Learners(ELLs) in their second language acquisition process. Thus, I outline key elements necessary to meet their needs. I set up both content and language objectives as I developed the skills needed to successfully complete the tasks. Additionally, I created a series of extension activities in other areas of the curriculum to provide the student with meaningful opportunities to explore with the content and language in more unstructured situations.

*Sample lesson 1. What is History?*

Content objective: Students will create a chronological record of events, as of the life or development of a people or an institution, often including an explanation of or commentary on those events.

Content concept: History is a chronological record of events, as of the life or development of a people or an institution, often including an explanation of or commentary on those events.

Language objective. Students will be able to describe orally and in writing (following chronological order) the most important events in their lives or the lives of their families.

Curricular framework 5.0: History and People: Students will understand how history helps people view themselves over time.

Content Standard: Students will compare various cultures presented in the classroom and contrast these with their own. Students will recall, retell, and explain information based on content area activities, using appropriate vocabulary.

Data Gathering Skills: Locating information from a variety of sources.

Intellectual Skills:. Distinguishing fact from opinion.

Materials: World maps, chart paper.

Vocabulary: history, chronological order, timeline, event, ethnic group.

Supplementary Materials: See children's readings.

Links to previous concepts: Being members of a family, a church, community, class, or ethnic group. In order to better understand a story, a good reader pays attention to when the events take place. We use timelines everyday. A schedule is a type of timeline.

Links to previous content: All families are different but share some important common characteristics. We have been studying about organizers. They help us to organize and summarize information on something we know. They also help us in planing as when we are ready to write something.

Procedure: Everyone and everybody has a history of their own. Additionally, the individual lives within a group of people (family) who share a history in common, which at the same time, lives in a community and a society that makes them who they are. Today we are going to create a list of chronological events in each of our lives. We are going to call it a history of who we are. Each of us has a different history but many of our histories have many things which are the same. In order to be chronological we must order the events in our lives according to when they happened. You are to make a new type of organizer. It is called a timeline. A timeline lists the year or the time and gives the reader a phrase or sentence of why that date is important. It can be as simple as a year, a year and month, or a specific date. A timeline needs to be in "chronological" order so it makes sense. That means the dates need to be listed in the order that the events took place.

Which would be the first and most important event in our lives? (birthdate) This is the beginning of our history. What are some other events? (learning to walk, first words uttered, first day of school, hospitalizations, etc.)

First the teacher will create a listing of the most important events in a person's life. The teacher then will write them in chronological order as he/she models what a timeline looks like.

Now that I have a timeline I can begin writing my history by explaining with words the events in the timeline. Who, when, what, how, why those events are part of my history.

Assessment: Students choose main events and sort them chronologically.

Extensions: Children will read about the most important life events of other children who immigrated to the U.S. Students will locate and graph the distances from their countries of origin to where they now live.

### *Sample lesson 2. Historical Events and Information*

Content objective: Students will differentiate between primary and secondary sources of information.

Content concept: History, as a chronological record of events, often includes an explanation of or commentary on those events. Who writes down those comments and how the information is gathered is very important to the veracity of the events and makes a big difference.

Language objective: Students will list a series of life events in chronological order and orally discuss how they know if the events are a fact and how they came up with the facts. Curricular framework 3.0: Cultural Contexts: Students will use English and their native language in a variety of cultural contexts.

Content Standard: Students will investigate and clarify information.

Data Gathering Skills. Locating information from a variety of sources.

Intellectual Skills. Asking appropriate and searching questions.

Materials: Chronological individual's history, timelines.

Vocabulary: fact, fiction, primary and secondary sources and information.

Links to previous concepts: Differentiating between "I know so because it says so here" from "Someone told me so" and "I was there so I know....".

Links to previous content: Timelines and chronological order.

Procedure: Yesterday we created a list of the most important events in our lives. Then, we wrote them in chronological order in the form of an organizer called a timeline. Finally, we wrote some comments about the events. Today we are going to take a closer look at how and where did we find that information. Who did you ask? How do you know? The teacher will model differentiating between primary and secondary sources of information related to the individual's history created in the previous lesson. The teacher will take out a copy of the birth certificate (primary source) and show how this source is objective and of the type "I know so because it says so here". A sample of a secondary source, "someone told me so" is the event when I began to walk. "My mother said I started walking when I was 3 years old...." Children will be asked to talk about the information they gathered about their lives from the day before and with the help of the class and the teacher, determine if the information is a primary or secondary source.

Discuss differences and similarities. Students are asked to sort information between primary and secondary sources. Is a recollection of a past event primary or secondary? What about a photograph?

Assessment: Students make a list of life events separating between primary and secondary sources of events.

### *Sample lesson 3. History - Who, What, Where, How, When, Why?*

Content objective: Students will discuss and write different accounts of the same event.

Content concept: A chronological record of events and the explanation of or commentary on those events varies according to who is the one relaying the story and the type of sources they are using.

Language objective: Students will discuss the reasons as to why the explanation of the account of the events is different to that of others.

Curricular framework 5.0: History And People: Students will understand how history helps people view themselves over time.

Content Standard: a. Students will express interests and opinions using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication. b. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the different way people view themselves over time.

Data Gathering Skills. Extracting and interpreting information.

Intellectual Skills. Compiling, organizing, and evaluating information.

Materials: Puppets.

Vocabulary: Objective, subjective, point of view.

Supplementary Materials: See Children's readings. Three Little Pigs. The Real Story of the Three Little Pigs as told by the Wolf.

Links to previous concepts: You get into a fight with a brother or sister. Your mom arrives and sees you hitting your brother. When she asks why is it that your brother is crying each of you gives her a different story.

Procedure: Yesterday we looked over our life events history. What is a primary source? Is a birth certificate a primary or secondary source of information?

Who was able to find other types of primary information? Secondary? Tell the class that today you are going to have a puppet show about the life of a family but that they are to work divided into separate groups. Each group of students will receive a card explaining what is going to happen with the character or the situation they are going to observe.

One group is told that the boy in the family is lazy and always fights with the sister. Another group is told that the sister is always taking the toys away from the brother and that she never shares her toys. Another group is told that they are brother and sister and that because the sister is always afraid, the brother now has to sleep in the same room and he can not bring his friends home. The puppet show begins with the boy in the family room reading a book. The sister comes and begins interrupting him to come and play. He says that he needs to finish the book. She begins to cry. The boy gets mad and yells for his mother. The girl starts screaming. The mother arrives... In the groups, create a timeline of the events in the story. Tell me in your own words what happened from beginning to end. Are there similarities? Differences? Why? Whose account is the best? Why?

Assessment: Students can find similarities and differences among the different events.

Extensions: Different versions of traditional tales :i.e. The 3 Billy Goats Gruff, The Little Red Hen. Students observe three dimensional geometric shapes and draw pictures of what they see.

*Sample lesson 4.  $4 + 3 = 1$*

Content objective: The Basque country is historically formed of 7 regions. 4 regions in Northern Spain plus 3 regions in Southern France make up what was once a nation.

Content concept: The world is made up of independent nations.

Language objective: The students will be able to describe(capitals, main rivers) the 7 regions of the Basque country.

Curricular framework 1.0: Communication: Students will use English and their native language for effective communication. 4.0 Geography: Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of world geography so that they can understand its importance in influencing the development of societies and history.

Content Standard: Students will understand the difference between continents, oceans and islands.

Data Gathering Skills: Acquiring information by observation.

Intellectual Skills 1. Comparing things, ideas, events, and situations on the basis of similarities and differences.

Materials: World map, map of Europe, map of the Basque country.

Vocabulary: Independent nation, country, government, United States, Spain, France, Euskadi (Basque country).

Supplementary Materials: Geography Map of the Basque Country.

<http://free.freespeech.org/ehj/html/frmap.html>

Links to previous concepts: Where does your family come from? Where were you born? What is the name of the country where you were born?

Procedure: We are living in the United States of America. This nation has a government which is in charge of the day to day functioning. The political system of the U.S. is a democracy. Not all the countries are made up in the same way but all follow different paths to be governed the way they are. History is the narration of past events and tell us how it is we became who and what we are. Every person and nation has a history.

The world is made up of 7 continents, North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and the Antarctic. Students will locate the United States in a map divided by continents. The students will locate the state and the capital of the state where we live. As a point of reference the students will also locate the major countries where they come from (Mexico, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico) and describe them in terms of which continent they are. Because these are our points of reference, anytime we look at any other country, we will depart from these continents and focus then on the nations. We will discuss the type of government that they currently have, the capitals, and their locations in relation to where we live. Terms such

as south of the US, north of Mexico, etc., will be used. We will follow by locating Europe, followed by France and Spain. The 7 regions that make up the Basque country will be outlined and described in terms of the country which administers their land (Spain, France).

Every person lives in a country which is governed by a type of political system. The U.S. is a democracy. Spain has a parliamentary democracy with a king as the head of state. France is a republic.

Assessment: Students can locate the Basque country in the map.

Extensions: Children will read about the history of the United States. Children will write the population of each of the regions that make up the Basque country.

### *Sample lesson 5. War and Consequences: Refugees*

Content objective: Although the number of conflicts has declined since the end of the cold war, long lasting ethnic, religious, political, territorial, and commercial disputes continue to ignite into discord, dissention, open conflicts, and wars.

Content concept: The consequences mainly affect civilians and their effects can be felt long after they are over.

Language objective: The students will be able to describe some of the experiences refugees have to endure.

Curricular framework 1.0: Communication: Students will use English and their native language for effective communication. 4.0 Geography: Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of world geography so that they can understand its importance in influencing the development of societies and history.

Content Standard: Students will understand the consequences of war as it relates to children refugees.

Data Gathering Skills: Acquiring information by observation.

Intellectual Skills. Comparing things, ideas, events, and situations on the basis of similarities and differences.

Materials: Children accounts as refugees, electronic resources.

Vocabulary: Refugee, displaced person, child soldier.

Supplementary Materials: The following tour entitled "War Child Expo" (<http://www.warchild.org/artists/expo/hoffman.html>) portrays some of the consequences of open armed warfare in the civilian population, and especially some of the effects it has on children.

Children in Ingushetia: A War Child project photo exhibition

<http://www.warchild.org/artists/Ingushetia/index.html>

Students will be able to see, especially in the report on Ingushetia, the conditions in which the children and their families have to endure. Living in tents and train wagons, the children in these refugees try to lead normal lives. This photo report, made during a field trip in summer 2000 to the War Child projects in Ingushetia, depicts the horrors of ethnic conflict between Russia and Chechnya guerillas.



## Spanish Civil War Basque refugees

<http://www.caerleon.net/cambria/basque/page13.html>

The following paragraph represents an account of the situation of Basque refugee children in Wales.

.... in making known as widely as possible the fact that 30 children will be remaining under the care of the South Wales Basque Children's Committee. Need we remind ourselves that these children and their parents have suffered and are suffering because a brave attempt was made for three long years to stem the tide of Fascism in their own dear country? The challenge was not accepted, except by the Spanish people and the International Brigade. They played their part bravely and well. Let us continue to do our part for their 30 children, victims of Fascist aggression who still need our help. Jack Williams, Hon. Secretary.

This site includes children's primary and secondary accounts of the day to day living as refugees and their understanding of war.

A trench is also a good thing during a bombardment, unless a bomb falls right inside it. Trenches should not be very deep, because if a little earth falls on a person, he can still get out, but if the trench is very deep he can't. Menda

Trenches are useful for many things. When they make trenches, they make them in zig-zag form, and do you know why they make them that way? It is because a bomb is not likely to fall right inside a trench, but if it does, only the people in one part will be killed, and the others will be safe. If a trench were straight, and a bomb fell in it, all the people would be killed. The "Terrible Twins"

<http://www.caerleon.net/cambria/basque/page11.html>

Pictures of Basque children at Evington Hall, England, in July 1937.

<http://www.newitt.freeseerve.co.uk/history.htm>

Fifty children, from the ages of 7-15 who came from Bilbao, landed in Leicester on July 1937 and stayed at Evington Hall. Many of them were adopted by local people where they stayed until they were repatriated. The Secretary of the Leicester Committee for Basque children, Mary Attenborough, wrote:

"If we were to write to the refugee mother of one of our families at Evington and say that we had decided to send her children back to Bilbao into the hands of those same people who are holding her husband prisoner, it would not be much comfort to her. If we can send back children to parents with homes to receive them, then we think they should go, but we will never deliver up children to their parents' enemies."

General Spanish Civil War Pictures

<http://free.freespeech.org/ehj/html/frcwar.html>

Child Soldiers from Youth Ambassadors for Peace,

<http://www.freethechildren.org/peace/childrenandwar/soldiers.html>

Assessment: Students describe children refugee experiences and name differences and similarities between Basque Spanish Civil War and Chechnya refugees.

Extensions: Students will be able to compare the differences between the way the Basque refugee children of the Franco dictatorial regime during the Spanish Civil War were hosted by typical families before the creation of the United Nations, and the way in which Chechnya refugees are now being helped.

## Internet Resources

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A War Child project photo exhibition. Students will be able to see, especially in the report on Ingushetia, the conditions in which the children and their families have to endure. Living in tents and train wagons, the children in these refugees try to lead normal lives. <http://www.warchild.org/artists/Ingushetia/index.html>

Basque Refugees accounts and photographs. <http://www.caerleon.net/cambria/basque/page13.html>

Child Soldiers Organization. A coalition to stop the use of child soldiers. <http://www.child-soldiers.org/>

Child Soldiers from Youth Ambassadors for Peace. An excellent source of information on child soldiers. It includes photographs and personal accounts. <http://www.freethechildren.org/peace/childrenandwar/soldiers.html>

General Spanish Civil War Pictures: Basque country. A small archive of pictures pertaining to the Basques and the Spanish Civil War. <http://free.freepress.org/ehj/html/frcwar.html>

Hiroshima Archive. Dozens of photos of the devastation of Hiroshima displayed thematically. The atomic bomb, named Little Boy, was dropped on Hiroshima by the Enola Gay, a Boeing B-29 bomber, at 8:15 in the morning of August 6, 1945. The third gallery accompanying texts include descriptions of the objects and their owners. <http://www.lclark.edu/~history/HIROSHIMA/photo3-11.html>

New Haven Public Schools Website. Includes a list of mission, curricular frameworks, and standards. <http://www.nhps.net/curriculum/index.asp>

Panoramic Photos of Ground Zero of the Hiroshima Bombing. Students can view photos illustrating the devastating effects on Hiroshima of the atomic bomb blast. <http://titan.iwu.edu/~rwilson/hiroshima/>

## Students' Readings

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Adams, L. K. (1997). *Dealing with arguments*. New York, PowerKids Press. Discusses what arguments are, how they begin, and ways to solve disagreements without fighting.

American Map Corporation. (1994). *Student's Notebook Atlas*. Maspeth, NY, American Map Corporation

Feinberg, B. S. (1995). *Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. Chicago, Children Press. A fiction picture book of the main events surrounding the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Clearly written and in simple terms so that an elementary school child can understand. It

includes a glossary of terms and maps.

Holmes, R., G. Dann, et al. (1995). *Battle* . New York, Knopf. Picture book depicting different types of weapons used throughout history in battles. It has great colorful pictures and shows how weapons and tools of war have changed.

Johnston, M. (1996). *Dealing with fighting* . New York, PowerKids Press. Explains how arguments and quarrels can lead to fights and how to avoid or deflect conflict in interpersonal relations.

Petersen, D. (1998). *Europe* . New York, Children's Press. A brief overview of the geography, wildlife, history, and people of Europe geared towards beginner readers.

Seuss, D. (1989). *The Lorax* . New York, Playhouse Video. The Lorax is the spokesperson for the trees as it attempts to stop the greedy Onceler from destroying the beautiful forest. An environmental story with a clear warning as to the consequences of over exploitation of natural resources.

Seuss, D. (1989). *The Sneetches and other stories* . New York, Random House. The only difference among the inhabitants is that some wear a star while the others have none . The Star-Belly Sneetches have privileges that the Plain-Belly Sneetches envy, such as playing ball, picnics and marshmallow roasts.

Williams, S. and B. C. Becnel (1996). *Gangs and the abuse of power* . New York, PowerKids Press. The co-founder of the Crips tells how gang members abuse the power they have to hurt others and ultimately hurt themselves.

Williams, S. and B. C. Becnel (1996). *Gangs and weapons* . New York, Rosen Pub. Group. Discusses the violence that can occur when gangs have guns.

Williams, S. and B. C. Becnel (1996). *Gangs and your neighborhood* . New York, PowerKids Press. Argues against joining gangs because such groups hurt people and neighborhoods.

## Teachers' Readings

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Drew, N. (1987). *Learning the skills of peacemaking : an activity guide for elementary-age children on communicating, cooperating, resolving conflict* . Rolling Hills Estates, Calif., Jalmar Press. Many ideas to integrate conflict resolution in the curriculum. Includes references and sample lessons.

Fisher, R., W. Ury, et al. (1983). *Getting to yes: negotiating agreement without giving in* . New York, N.Y., Penguin Books. A must read in understanding ways of conflict resolution through negotiation.

Keegan, J. (1998). *War and our world* . London, Hutchinson. A concise reference book on the origins of war, war and the individual, and on war and the state. Easy to read.

Kurlansky, M. (1997). *Cod: a biography of the fish that changed the world* . New York, Walker and Co. An entertaining and easy to read account of Basques and their influence as fishermen in world history. Includes a bibliography and list of references.

Kurlansky, M. (1999). *The Basque history of the world* . New York, Walker. Anything and everything that you wanted to know about the Basques and their place in history. Broader in scope and depth than the previous book, it covers from ancient to modern historical events in the context of world history.

Loewen, J. (1995) *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* . New York, Touchstone. A must read book for the classroom teacher. This book provides the reader with many samples and illustrations on what is wrong with the way that the great history of this nation is being taught.

Mendia-Landa, P. (1996) Moving Communities and Immigration into the Bilingual Classroom. *Remaking America: Contemporary US Immigration* . New Haven, Connecticut, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute. IV: 235. (1996).

Roleff, T.(1999). *War: opposing viewpoints* . San Diego, Calif., Greenhaven Press. This book offers the readers opposing viewpoints of the same historical events. The editor contextualizes the conflicts and provides the readers with facts and introductory questions to frame each viewpoint while allowing the reader to construct their own meaning.

Teolis, B. (1998). *Ready-to-use conflict-resolution activities for elementary students* . West Nyack, N.Y., Center for Applied Research in Education. Provides many additional resources in implementing a conflict resolution curriculum with elementary students. Excellent list of references.

Walter, V. A. (1993). *War and peace literature for children and young adults: a resource guide to significant issues* . Phoenix, Oryx Press This book serves as background providing the reader with many supplementary materials to cover issues of war and peace through literature.

## Notes

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1Please see Internet Resources, Teachers' Readings, and Students' Readings for bibliographical references.

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