

STUDENT'S HANDOUT

Children's Rights in the **WORLD**



Background Information

One of the priorities of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is the protection of marginalized children at risk in the world. The Children's Charter of Rights outlines that each child has the right to an environment favorable to self-fulfillment. Within such an environment, children can take their future in hand and bring about positive changes in family, community, and country. According to CIDA:

"They [children] are in the best position to break the ongoing cycle of poverty which has continued for generations. They also embody our greatest hope in changing attitudes and behaviour on issues such as equality between the sexes or our relationship to the environment"



Instructions

Read the following poems written by students at the Saint-Vincent-Marie School (Montreal, Quebec). As well, read and take note of the facts presented in the complementary information section following the poems.

Poem 1

Why am I a victim,
Slave of a prison?
I am forced to commit crimes.
And I am hit without reason.

I am a child-soldier,
I rise very early,
I obey like a robot
And prepare myself for battle.

How I miss my parents!
After am all, I am just a child
Who, one day, will rise
To give me back my freedom?

Ali A. et Patrice R. C. (translated from french version)

Poem 2

Stolen Freedom

Why do rich people make children suffer
It is unfair because they are all innocent
In spite of them, they are made unhappy
Every day their life is stolen

They should be singing
Laughing and playing
But who one day will rise up
And say to the exploiters to stop

Abdellah L. et Elvis T. (translated from french version)

Poem 3 (*Freedom*)

Freedom, is a right
Which the rich have stolen from me.
I must work day and night
I am a captive.

I do not have the right to play, nor study
I am a bird without freedom
Which must work without pity

We are poor, they are rich,
But they think that we are naive!
We are not objects of love,
Which we never receive!

I want to go to school and learn
When will they understand?

Juan Dario R. V. et Christopher Lea F. L. (translated from french version)

Children and War

Each year more than 300 000 children are recruited as soldiers or reduced to sexual slavery in armed conflicts throughout the world. In the last ten years, approximately 2 million children were killed in wars and more than 6 million became physically handicapped. As a result of these conflicts, 1 million children lost their parents and approximately 12 million were left homeless.

Approximately 246 million children in the world are currently working. Some 171 million of them work under dangerous conditions in mines, with chemicals and pesticides, with dangerous machinery, etc. It is estimated that more than 100 million children live or work in the streets. *Source: ACDI*

Student's name : _____ Class : _____ Date : _____

Writing Activity: Children's Rights in the World



Several youth around your age have spoken out on the situation of children in the world: their rights, their need for protection, and the injustices of which they are victimized. Now it is your turn to express yourself on this subject through a poem. To help you write your poem follow these instructions:

1. Read attentively the subject in each of the following boxes.

1. Child Labour	2. Living in a war zone	3. Poverty's impact
4. Education and self-fulfillment	5. Feeling safe	6. _____

2. Chose the topic which inspires you the most, or the subject on which you feel that you have the most to say. If you feel you have more to say about another related subject, use box 6 for the subject of your choice.

3. Now write in the appropriate box the feelings and images that this topic inspires in you.

4. Now find two verbs, two adjectives, and two common nouns for your subject.

5. Now you now have a word bank with which to write your poem on a piece of craft paper!

AN INITIATIVE OF THE
In-Terre-Actif Network of the Comité de Solidarité/Trois-Rivières



PRODUCED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA
THROUGH THE



Canadian
International
Development
Agency