WAR CHILD
SCHOOLS
RESource PACK

Lesson plans and worksheets on issues related to children in conflict
Curriculum opportunities across learning episodes

**KS3 Citizenship**
In Citizenship, use all the learning episodes to focus on the roles played by voluntary groups in society. Learners get opportunities throughout to examine a variety of evidence to increase their knowledge and understanding of war and conflict and its effects on children, and to express their views in a variety of ways. Learning episode 6 supports active global citizenship.

Learners can focus on the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities, including opportunities to participate in school based activities (all). Learners have the opportunity to use and apply their knowledge and understanding whilst developing skills to research and interrogate evidence, debate and evaluate viewpoints, present reasoned arguments and take informed action (all).

By focusing on participation, learners can also learn about how the political system of democratic governments works, including the roles of citizens, providing context for their study of the UK Parliamentary system. This supports opportunities to increase their knowledge of UK Parliament (learning episode 6).

**KS3 English**
Throughout the learning episodes there are many opportunities for learners to focus on developing their spoken English. Learners discuss topics in small groups and as a class, giving them opportunities to build their viewpoints and knowledge to speak confidently and effectively, using Standard English confidently in classroom discussion.

They can give a short speeches or presentation, expressing their own ideas and keeping to the point (learning episode 2), and participate in structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said (all, especially learning episodes 3 and 6). They can improvise, rehearse and perform short role-plays or freeze frames, using role, tone, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact (learning episodes 1 and 4).

**KS3 Geography**
Take up War Child resources in Geography as part of a human geography focus on international development or migration and population change. Learning episodes 1, 2, 3 and 5 are most relevant.

Using case studies and stories focused on contemporary conflicts, learners build their locational knowledge of locations in Africa / Asia / Middle East (learning episodes 1, 2, 3 and 5). Learners develop their geographical skills: analysing and interpreting different data sources; and use maps to analyse and draw conclusions about patterns (learning episodes 1, 2 and 3). Learners can increase their understanding, through the use of place-based exemplars, migration and refugee movement as a key factor in migration (learning episode 5).
The learning episodes focus on the rights of children and the safety and protection they need, as well as enabling learners to develop their own sense of responsibility for those around them. A focus on the causes of conflict (learning episode 2) or child soldiers (learning episode 3) could lead learners on to talk about the notion of power and how it is used and encountered in a variety of contexts including persuasion and bullying, as well as reflecting on how their peers have coped with change and developed resilience in response to their experiences.

The learning episodes relate to the study of matters of global significance; provoking challenging questions about beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human (learning episode 3). They encourage learners to explore their own beliefs in the light of what they learn, and to express their responses. This helps build resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives and to develop respect for others including in the school environment (learning episode 3 and 6). The resources can prompt learners to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society; encouraging empathy, generosity and compassion (learning episode 6, further learning and action opportunities throughout).
What’s it all about?
These activities are curriculum-relevant learning episodes written for teachers of young people in Key Stage 3. They’re also easily adapted for ages 11-15 across the whole of the UK, and many of the activities could be led by young people. Check out the curriculum links document to see how the activities fit into your particular subject.

What are they?
There are six learning episodes covering six topics exploring the impact of war and conflict on children, children’s rights and children’s stories. Each one has a structured ‘lesson’ plan that’s relevant to one or more curriculum subjects, plus ideas for extension, further learning, and more listings for other interesting and inspiring viewpoints. These sections are consistently subtitled across the set for ease of use: ‘further resources’, ‘further learning’, and ‘further action’. Have a browse around and see what inspires you!

What do I need?
For most activities all you need is a copy of the learning episode, a way of projecting webpages and film so everyone can see them, and a group of creative and curious young people with pen and paper at the ready. There are resource lists to help prepare too. For many topics, we’ve also included a little extra information about the issues, so whoever’s delivering the activities can stay one step ahead. But the resources are designed so that you do not need to be an expert on any of these topics.

How about technology?
All the resources make full use of both War Child UK’s website and YouTube channel. Activities could be delivered without them but it’s worth checking if any restrictions on web access could be altered to allow everyone to watch the engaging films on offer.

What if I’ve only got time for one thing?
All lessons are freestanding to a greater or lesser degree. The first episode – What are war and conflict? – is an introduction to the issue of war and how children are affected by it. The outputs from this lesson are perfect as a starting point for a whole school assembly led by young people. As most of the episodes are freestanding you could pick one of the others in the same way.

What’s the most popular resource?
Teachers often tell us they find the resources War Child produces about child recruitment, or child soldiers, particularly powerful. War Child works with children who have been part of armed groups, and their stories and testimonies appear throughout the activities, particularly in Episode 3 – Issues in conflict: Child Soldiers. This is only one aspect of War Child’s work, however, so we would really encourage exploration of the other resources that include issues that are often more forgotten and need the awareness of young people.
What if we want to take action to support children affected by war and conflict?

Episode 6 - What difference can one person make? – gives young global citizens the chance to examine what action they can take, what might be more or less effective and then plan their action. There are suggestions for advocacy, awareness-raising, campaigning and fundraising activities throughout all the resources too. If your class wants to fundraise (thank you!), War Child are more than happy to support them, please contact fundraising@warchild.org.uk for help from the War Child team.

Want support from War Child?

For support on resources, visits, workshops and assemblies, please contact War Child’s schools team on schools@warchild.org.uk
LESSON 1

WHAT ARE WAR AND CONFLICT?
Lesson 1
What Are War and Conflict?

Objectives:
2. Examine the notion that conflict inside and between countries can be measured.
3. Learn about what war can mean for children and how they might be particularly vulnerable.

Young people also get to work together in groups, use their critical thinking skills, think about ethical or philosophical questions, and build empathy with children affected by war by imagining how their lives are affected by it.

Resources:

In the classroom:
- Whiteboard/large paper
- ‘World Conflict’ worksheet copied. One per pair
- Optional Global Peace Index ‘Highlights’ printed out one per pair from the website – visionofhumanity.org and click on the ‘Report and Highlights’ button or web search for Vision of Humanity/Global Peace Index
- Optional Old magazines, newspapers etc. plus scissors and glue if creating vision boards
- Optional ‘Testimonies’ worksheet copied for each learner

On screen:
- Global Peace – visionofhumanity.org or web search for Vision of Humanity/Global Peace Index
- ‘Syrian Children’s stories, told by London’s ones’ on War Child Channel on YouTube youtube.co.uk – then search term War Child UK
- Optional Global Peace Index ‘Highlights’ from the website – visionofhumanity.org and click on the ‘Report and Highlights’ button or web search for Vision of Humanity/Global Peace Index

Key Terms and Questions:

What are ‘war’ and ‘conflict’?

What is ‘peace’?

How might war and conflict affect children?

What conflicts am I aware of?

What patterns exist around conflict today?

Are most wars across borders or inside them?

War
Conflict
Rights
Peace
Security
Civil War
War Child looks forward to a world in which the lives of children are no longer torn apart by war.

Our mission is to support and improve the protection and care of children and young people who live with a combination of insecurity, poverty and exclusion in some of the worst conflict-affected places around the world.

We’re providing life-changing support to the most vulnerable children whose families, communities and schools have been torn apart by war.

We work in areas devastated by armed conflict, helping children suffering some of the worst effects of violence. This includes child soldiers, sexual violence, abduction and children living and working on the streets. We are committed to standing by children and families long enough to provide them the best possible assistance in overcoming their experiences. This means we respond to emergencies but stay long after the TV cameras have gone home.

We aim to deliver three life saving interventions:

1. **Protection**
   - of children, their families and their communities before, during and after a crisis.

2. **Education**
   - getting children into school or informal learning in situations where war means they’re missing out on an education.

3. **Livelihoods**
   - helping young people or their families to learn the vocational skills they need to earn a sustainable living that is safe (e.g. getting children off the streets).

We work in three ways:

- **Direct delivery** of projects to support children (often through local partner organisations), such as providing trauma counselling.

- **Investment** in local structures and communities that can have a long-term impact, such as setting up child helplines within the local government.

- **Influencing** decision-makers and those with a responsibility to protect children by doing advocacy to change attitudes, behaviour and policies. For example, a new law could be passed by the government to make it illegal to for the army to recruit children under the age of 18.
**What are war and conflict?**

**ACTIVITIES**

**Starter game**

In two teams, learners queue up at two sides of the board/two large pieces of paper. Put ‘conflict’ at the top of each piece of paper. Learners then have a minute to take turns writing up words that they associate with conflict – followed by another two rounds of the game using the words ‘war’ and ‘peace’.

Which team got the highest number of words? Which team wrote the most interesting words?

You could pick out some and ask learners why they wrote them.

**Main activity**

**Group creative 15 – 20 minutes**

Using the resultant six lists, each group of five takes one piece and works together to try and come up with a definition – they can use words, draw pictures, create a freeze frame/performance, or a vision board for their word. They then take turns sharing their definition with the rest of the class e.g. ‘What conflict means to us’.

Follow up with some reflection questions for the whole class.

- What is the main difference between ‘war’ and ‘conflict’? Is it about scale, numbers of people involved or affected, about territory? Is it about what happens inside a state versus what happens between states? Is it the level of organisation?
- We know war is a bad thing, but is conflict always a ‘bad’ thing?
- Is peace simply the absence of conflict or is there more to it?
- How does the class think war and conflict affect children?

**World conflict pair work 15 – 20 minutes**

Now that young people have thought about what war, peace and conflict mean, ask them where they think there is conflict at the moment and make a list on the board or on a large piece of paper. They then look at the ‘Global Peace Index’ on the ‘Vision of Humanity’ website and compare their own thoughts with the Index.

Looking at the interactive, and/or at a printed copy of the highlights, they answer some key questions in pairs on the ‘World Conflict’ worksheet.
Plenary

Having thought about war/conflict and what they mean for people through the ‘Global Index’, time to imagine that they live in one of the least peaceful places in the world – what do they think the main impacts of that conflict would be on them as young people? Do they think they would be more or less at risk than adults if they lived in a place where there was conflict going on?

Finish by watching ‘Syrian Children’s stories, told by London’s ones’ on War Child’s YouTube Channel. Think about the key question:

What surprised young people about what their peers in Syria were saying about conflict?

Alternatively, learners could take it in turns to read the Testimonies worksheet and answer the question above.

Further resources

If there’s time you could share different definitions and thoughts on peace, war and conflict in groups or with the whole class, for instance:

TED: ’Jody Williams: A realistic vision for world peace’ (10 minute TED talk) [ted.com](https://www.ted.com) (and search for Jody Williams)

Defining conflicts: ‘What makes it a war? The Economist’ (short written article) [economist.com](https://www.economist.com) (and search for What makes it a war?)

BBC Ethics: War (website section to browse) [bbc.co.uk/ethics/war](https://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/war)

Further learning

Learners use links above or do further research to find out what other sources (journalists, films online, family, friends) think war, peace or conflict are. Then write a paragraph reflecting on the question ‘Do different people have different perceptions of what war, conflict or peace mean to them? If so, why?’

Further action

Learners work in groups/individually to write a film script based on the Syrian Children film they watched. They could write this using their knowledge about a conflict they’ve heard a bit about in the news. What do they imagine children are saying there?

Record the film at the beginning of the next lesson and show in assembly along with the War Child UK film to raise awareness of how war can affect children’s lives.

Why not follow this up with raising money in school to help children affected by war?

Check out War Child’s current campaigns, share your voice and get involved at [warchild.org.uk/campaigns](http://warchild.org.uk/campaigns)
Using the *Vision of Humanity Global Peace Index*, search for answers to the following...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which are the most and least peaceful countries in the world?</td>
<td>Most peaceful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which parts of the world are most affected by conflict?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which areas of the world is the most peaceful?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Global Peace Index measures peace using three themes. What are they?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the world getting more or less peaceful over time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does the Index tell us about refugees?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have any countries gone down sharply in the Index during the last year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If so, what do they all have in common?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write something down that surprised you about the Index.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Global Peace Index uses 22 ‘indicators’. Do you think some are more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important than others? Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which indicators would you use to find out where in the world children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>might be most affected by conflict?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are war and conflict?

**TESTIMONIES**

All of these testimonies come from children who have been affected by the war in Syria

I was playing with friends and a plane dropped a bomb, so everyone in the village told us to run away... we ran to our house and they bombed it. I fell unconscious... there were seven children and one old lady killed inside the house.

*A 13-year-old boy*

They bombed and demolished my school... they don’t want my generation to be studying.

*A 13-year-old girl*

I’m afraid of rockets and bullets.

*A five-year-old boy*

My house was demolished. I don’t have a home anymore. They stole my bike and they should bring it back to me in Jordan.

*A five-year-old boy*

They won’t let me into the Madrassa [school] because my face is yellow because I have no food. They think because I am yellow that I have a disease. One boy inside the school said Syrian children were diseased so they won’t play with us or let us into the school. One Jordanian girl wouldn’t sit next to my sister because they think she is ill. I don’t leave the house.

*A nine-year-old girl*
Lesson 2

The Impact of War on Children

WAR child
1. Explore the geography of conflict, the notion that conflict arises from a narrow set of causes and that many wars have common threads.

2. Examine the wide impacts of conflict at different scales.

3. Learn how these wide impacts have a disproportionate effect on children.

Young people also get to work together in groups, use their critical thinking skills, think about ethical or philosophical questions, and build empathy with children affected by war by considering and researching the long-lasting effects on their lives.

**RESOURCES**

**In the classroom**

- **Optional** Large piece of paper with a large concentric ring drawn on it
- Sticky notes/small pieces of scrap paper and blu-tak
- **Optional** Enough tablets for one per group of four-six and links to short films on the War Child UK YouTube channel (see below for recommendations)
  - [youtube.co.uk](https://youtube.co.uk) (search term War Child UK)
- **Optional** A selection of stories printed from the War Child UK website – [warchild.org.uk/impact/stories](http://warchild.org.uk/impact/stories)

**On screen**

- **Optional** A definition of (armed) conflict from the UN (see PowerPoint slide 1)
- **Optional** Image of target with key questions (see PowerPoint slide 2)

**KEY TERMS AND QUESTIONS**

- **What causes conflict and war?**
- **What are the impacts of war for children, communities and countries?**
- **What humanitarian assistance might children need when they’re affected by war and conflict? Why?**
- **What are the most serious and long-lasting effects of war and conflict on children?**

**UNITED NATIONS**

- **HUMANITARIAN**

  - What are the impacts of war for children, communities and countries?

**OPPRESSION**

- **TERRITORY DISPUTE**

  - What humanitarian assistance might children need when they’re affected by war and conflict? Why?

- **DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES**
The impact of war on children

War Child UK
An independent humanitarian organisation

Humanitarian work can be dangerous, and the places where War Child operates – such as the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan – are risky environments. When a conflict flares up children are among the most vulnerable people affected. They often don’t understand how to keep themselves safe in the same way adults do, and are particularly at risk if separated from their families.

War Child is a charity that exists to protect children living in conflict zones. Our job is to prevent and respond to the physical and emotional harm children face during war. It’s also to help children to recover when they do suffer severe consequences, such as being traumatised by what they have seen or experienced.

To be effective at addressing grave violations to children’s rights, we take a neutral approach to conflicts and help children on all ‘sides’. This means remaining independent, non-political and talking to all sides of a conflict – our focus isn’t on apportioning blame for a war, but on supporting the children caught up in it.

Child Protection is integral to what we do, just like it is in UK schools. We work to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children.

We provide Child Protection by, for example, creating what is called ‘safe spaces’ where children can play, learn, receive counselling and regain some sense of normality and childhood. We offer schooling to children who have fled their homes, or whose schools have been destroyed or closed during war and we set up child helplines to respond as quickly as we can to their concerns.
Starter game

Recap on the work learners have done to define ‘conflict’ or ask learners to share their own definitions.

Use the United Nations (UN) definition and explain that it is the most accepted around the world because the UN is an international body that all the majority of countries are part of.

Then using the concentric ring on the board or a printed/drawn version, learners write a one-two word answer to the following questions (going out from the centre):

Are any of the answers the same? What else changes as the scale of a conflict changes? Does conflict at varied scales have different potential for escalating?

While the existing answers will be wide ranging and very different, it is possible to get learners to categorise most of them as a class, by moving the sticky notes under the following headings:

- Land or territory disputes
- Politics
- Religious/cultural differences
- Unequal distribution and use of resources
- Oppression

Is there a pattern? Are most of the examples from learners under one or two common headings (i.e. are there certain key causes)?

Can young people think of a war or conflict going on today that is caused by one or more of the categories?

What do they think caused conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Central African Republic, DRC, Colombia, Israel/Palestine and others?

How about historical conflicts they might have studied? What were the causes then? Were they different to more modern conflicts?
Main activity

Split class into groups of four – six. Each group watches a short video from the War Child YouTube library on tablet, PC or screen.

Note some of these videos contain dramatic stories that some learners may find challenging.

Suggestions from the War Child UK YouTube channel:

- ‘Al Jazeera interview on CAR Crisis’
- ‘Children of Syria: War Child Interview’
- ‘People fleeing fighting between M23 Rebels and Govt Troops in Goma’
- ‘Sunday’s story’
- ‘Francis’ story’
- ‘Juliet’s story’
- ‘War Child in Uganda’

Alternatively, each group uses a case study from the War Child UK website ‘Stories’ section which can be printed. There are lots of stories to choose from.

Young people watch/read through for meaning and facts, to prepare a one-minute presentation about:

The country and scale of the conflict – is it about an individual, a community or a country? Identify and communicate briefly what has happened in their example.

What they think the impacts have been on the person/people affected – thinking about this in relation to whether it’s a young person, a community or a country.

What humanitarian assistance or other help was needed or received?

Each group then spends two minutes noting down the key impacts of war and conflict on young people, using their story to help. The class displays them together, then works to categorise the impacts of war and conflict on children and their families according to:

**Physical**

**Economic**

**Psychological**
Plenary

Finish by asking learners about the impacts of war:

- Which are the most serious? Why?
- Which impacts are the most long-lasting?
- Which would be most important for young people, families, communities or countries?
- Encourage thinking about less tangible aspects of assistance (e.g. challenge the traditional focus on poverty, thirst and starvation)
- Introduce concepts like feeling/being safe, feeling/being protected from harm
- What kind of assistance could be provided in this case?

Further resources

If there’s time, you could share some different perspectives (which learners may challenge) on the causes and impacts of war in groups or as a class. For instance:

Film: ‘What caused civil war in Syria?’ – Syria conflict explained on the ITN channel on YouTube

Written article: ‘The Causes of Conflict’ – worksheet based on an academic article by the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre

BBC Ethics: War (website section to browse)
bbc.co.uk/ethics/war

Further learning

Learners look at the contents of the ‘UN Convention on the Rights of the Child’ (UNCRC). You can download a one-page summary of the Convention from the ‘Rights Respecting Schools’ website (Click on ‘Children’s Rights’). Learners use the document to make a list or write a paragraph about how children’s rights can be affected by war and conflict.

They could focus on just one right (e.g. the right to education, play, security) and write about the examples they have watched or read during the lesson, and how that particular right has been affected by war. Or they could look at which rights are most likely to be impacted if a war broke out.

Do different people have different perceptions of what war, conflict or peace mean to them? If so, why?

Further action

Young people think about what they could do to help children who are affected by conflict – they make a list of possible options, and choose one thing to do.

Students could think about what they can do to raise awareness about children who are affected by conflict, raise money or do something to persuade others e.g. policy makers or decision-makers, to change what they do. You could use some of the activities in ‘Lesson 6: Participation’, to support young people to reflect and discuss what impact they can have as citizens.
THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT

There is no single cause of conflict. Each conflict is unique, has a number of causes and has arisen because of a range of factors:

- **Political and institutional factors**
- **Resource factors**
- **Socioeconomic factors**
- **Environmental factors**

**Political and institutional factors** might include weak state institutions, political exclusion, corruption, and identity politics. If governments can’t manage the differences of opinion between particular groups peacefully, or make sure that people feel they can have their say, by voting or being listened to, this can cause conflict. If people perceive that those in power are corrupt, spending money on themselves or a select group of people because of who they are or where they live, rather than to make the whole of society better, this can also cause unrest.

**Resource factors** include things like greed, unfair access to resources like land, and unjust resource exploitation. Have you ever heard the phrase ‘Blood Diamonds’? There’s a link between high value commodities and illegal drugs, and conflict. A group that wants to control access to natural resources, without getting proper permission or paying taxes, might have to use violence to keep control of the land they need and exclude those who want to live, farm or work there. The money earned will probably go straight back into funding the conflict.

**Socioeconomic factors** include things like inequality, exclusion, marginalisation and poverty. If certain groups are treated differently, excluded from a government’s decisions or from the benefits and protection the rest of society gets, then they will feel a sense of injustice based on who they are or what they believe. This can cause resentment to grow over time and lead to conflict. Poverty and conflict are often linked – the majority of wars happen in poorer countries, however this should not be assumed. Modern conflicts like Syria demonstrate this. It’s hard to say whether poverty causes conflict, or whether conflict makes poverty even worse. Based on conflicts you know about, what do you think?

**Environmental factors** have to do with the unequal distribution of natural resources, such as water. Experts say that environmental factors are becoming more important in conflicts, especially those in poor countries, due to climate change. Soil degradation from over-farming or pollution, or desertification can cause resentment, hardship, and migration. A rising population in one area can make this worse; with the increased pressure on land or water they can get even scarcer. Environmental factors are rarely the only cause of conflict, but can combine with other factors to cause conflict.
THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Can you think of war going on today that has been caused by one or more of these factors?

Since the end of the Cold War, many experts have drawn attention to the rise of new forms of violent conflict. They argue that wars and conflict today differ in several ways. Firstly, they tend to be internal rather than between countries; so civil war is becoming much more important. Secondly, those who fight in wars are more likely to be rebels, gangs or guerrillas, rather than soldiers who are paid by the government. Thirdly, they’re more likely to get the money they need for weapons and activities from abroad. Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly for the children at risk of being affected by war, the methods are also different. Armed groups are now much more likely to use terror, and to deliberately target civilians and children, rather than fight in traditional ‘battlefields’.

Try comparing a historical conflict you know about, for instance, the First World War, with one that’s currently happening to see how the approaches/methods of war have changed.

Whether the causes of war have changed is a different question. Wars are still fought for economic, political, ideological and geopolitical reasons. For instance, control over and access to resources is still important in many violent conflicts.

Many experts argue that even civil wars and conflicts can have a global dimension. For example, in the Great Lakes region, internal conflicts have produced regional civil wars. Some terrorist activities are global in their reach, with loosely linked groups fighting in lots of places at once and moving from country to country to fight.

Along with the rise in ‘terrorism’, there are new pressures caused by migration, urbanisation and ‘youth bulges’ (where a country’s population is dominated by children and young people – this is the case in the majority of conflict affected places). Combined with poor job prospects, this seems to have resulted in a rise in urban violence.

Violence can take many forms and is not just about guns and other weapons. For instance, men, women, boys and girls all experience targeted sexual violence during peacetime and conflict. Rape and other forms of gender-based violence are used as instruments of war to control populations, but are also the result communities being torn apart by war. Children are statistically more likely to experience this kind of violence from a family or community member than from a stranger in an army uniform. Why do you think this method of war is used so widely and have you heard about it before? If not, why do you think that might be?

Adapted from an article from the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre entitled ‘Chapter 1 – Understanding violent conflict’ For more visit gsdrc.org and click on ‘topics’ and ‘conflict’
LESSON 3

ISSUES IN CONFLICT: CHILD SOLDIERS
EXPRESS OPINIONS ABOUT A VARIETY OF ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS THE WORLD, AND LISTEN TO OTHERS’ VIEWS

EXPLORE HOW AND WHY CHILDREN BECOME ‘CHILD SOLDIERS’, AND HOW IT AFFECTS THEIR LIVES IN DIFFERENT WAYS

BUILD EMPATHY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO EXPERIENCE CHILDHOOD

LEARNERS ALSO GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK TOGETHER IN DIFFERENT GROUPS, TO REFLECT ON CONTroversIAL ISSUES AND DEVELOP THEIR OWN VIEWPOINTS, TO MAKE JUSTIFIED ARGUMENTS AND USE MAPS AND TESTIMONY TO DEVELOP THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF AN ISSUE AFFECTING THEIR PEERS IN CONFLICT.

KEY TERMS AND QUESTIONS

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS AND DO CHILDREN AND ADULTS HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS?

RECRUITMENT

 HOW DOES CONFLICT AFFECT CHILDREN’S RIGHTS?

REBELS

HOW DO CHILDREN BECOME CHILD SOLDIERS?

MILITIA

CHILD PROTECTION

WHAT SHORT AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS DOES BEING A CHILD SOLDIER HAVE ON YOUNG PEOPLE’S LIVES?

SECURITY

HOW DOES WAR CHILD WORK TO PROTECT CHILDREN’S RIGHTS?
ACTIVITIES

Starter game

Start by displaying pieces of paper with ‘agree’ and ‘disagree’ written on them at opposite ends of the classroom. Explain to learners that you will read some statements and they can stand near one of the words to express whether they agree or disagree with it, as depicted below.

E.g. If they strongly agree, they could stand directly under the ‘agree’ sign and if they’re not sure, they should stand somewhere in the middle between the two words. There is only one rule: everyone has the right to choose where to stand and what to say.

Start with some statements that relate to learners own lives that might provoke debate and discussion. Move on to focus on some statements around children’s rights, and how children can be affected by conflict. Here are some suggestions but you could also add your own:

- School food is always healthy
- Premier League footballers deserve the wages they earn
- Education is a human right
- Children need the same rights as adults
- Children need more protection from the effects of war than adults
- Some children choose to fight in wars

Ask one or two learners why they decided to stand where they did. After they explain their reasons, other learners can move if they have been swayed or persuaded in any way by their peers (and in turn explain why they have moved).

This would be a good point to explain that the process of trying to persuade others to change their views and act on them is called advocacy.
Main activity

Display the first two PowerPoint slides for lesson 3 and ask learners to work in pairs. What do they think of when they hear the term ‘child soldiers’? Learners spend 2 – 3 minutes writing down as many words or phrases as they can think of.

The questions can prompt their thoughts and discussions:

* Where in the world do child soldiers exist?
* What do child soldiers do?
* What rights do children miss out on when they become soldiers?
* Are they always forced to fight?
* What do you think the impact of being a child soldier could be on a young person?
* Who should protect children from becoming child soldiers?

What do we mean by ‘child soldiers’?

The term ‘child-soldiers’ conjures narrow images of children in army uniforms wielding AK-47’s – but in-fact, the problems linked to child-soldiering are widespread and broad in terms of both their impact and the involvement of children. A more appropriate term for this group of children is; ‘children associated with armed forces and armed groups’ (or ‘CAFAG’ for short).

A child soldier is any person under 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers and anyone accompanying such groups. The definition includes girls recruited for sexual purposes and for forced marriage. It does not, therefore only refer to a child who is carrying or has carried arms.

Learners now join with another pair and find at least three words or phrases they have in common – taking those common terms and getting together with another group to again find common terms until the whole class has found at least one common word or term that is brought to mind when they think of ‘child soldiers’.

What do learners think of the term or words they came up with as a class? Does this common word represent the experiences of all child soldiers, e.g. both genders, the variety of things they might do, the experiences they have?

Before looking in more detail at the real stories of child soldiers, use the rest of the PowerPoint slides to give learners a quick quiz (either in pairs, groups or in two teams), to find out more about child soldiers.
Main activity (cont...)

Watch the first 5 minutes 30 seconds of ‘CNN report on child soldiers, featuring War Child beneficiary Juliet’ from the War Child UK YouTube channel. Ask learners to write down:
- Something that they found out
- Something that surprised them
- Something they felt they were already aware of

Then ask learners some questions about Juliet’s story:

- How did Juliet become a child soldier?
- What was life like for her?
- Which of her human rights did she lose while she was a ‘child soldier’?
- What were the key events in her story?
- How might Juliet’s experience have been different if she was a boy?
- What would you ask Juliet if she visited your school?
- How is Juliet’s life similar or different to yours?

Finish by freezing the film at the world map which appears at around 5:19 minutes. Can learners point out any other countries around the world where children were fighting in recent wars? What do those countries have in common, if anything? Are they surprised by anything on the map? Do they think the map might look different if it was reproduced today? What would be different?

It’s worth pointing out at this stage that although we might think of Africa when we think about child soldiers, this stereotype should be challenged. There are actually lots more countries around the world outside Africa where child soldiers have and are being used in conflicts, such as Syria, Afghanistan and Thailand.

Use the ‘Child Recruitment: Testimonies’ worksheet printed out or on screen to focus on the different experiences of children associated with armed forces and armed groups, and the locations where children face this challenge. If there’s time, you could get learners to read silently or together the section of War Child UK’s website on child soldiers (click on ‘issues we work on – Child Soldiers’), focusing on where child soldiers fight, why and what the impact might be on them. Show on screen or print out the relevant section.

Ask learners to consider the similarities and differences between the lives of young people in a war-torn country and young people in a peaceful country. You could record their responses in a Venn diagram on screen or on the board. Ask them: What sorts of help and support might child soldiers need in the short-term, and in the long-term? Who can protect children who are part of armed groups?
Plenary

Ask learners to consider the importance of the lasting impacts that Juliet’s and other children’s experiences may have had on them. They have all had to cope with change and develop resilience to come to terms with their experiences. Ask them:

- What impact do you think this experience has had, in the short and long term?
- How do you think Juliet has been able to move on after her experiences? (she is now an advocate for change and has spoken at international events with stars like Angelina Jolie)
- In her position, how would you have felt coming face-to-face with an abductor after the war?

Now that learners have found out more about the issue of child soldiers, why not ask them if they think the term ‘child soldiers’ reflects the experiences of the young people whose stories and words they’ve looked at during the lesson. Is there anything wrong with this term?
Further resources

Film: Emmanuel Jal, a musician, actor and former child soldier, tells his story on TED. Find the film on War Child UK’s website warchild.org.uk/issues/child-soldiers/child-soldiers-videos

Written article: If there wasn’t time during the lesson, share the section of War Child UK’s website on child soldiers (warchild.org.uk/issues/child-soldiers) which gives an overview of where child soldiers fight, why and what the impact of fighting might be on them. Show on screen or print out the relevant section.

Feature Film: Use introfilm.org to show the film ‘Africa United’ through your school’s film club. The film tells the story of three Rwandan children who decide to travel to Johannesburg to audition for the 2010 World Cup opening ceremony. On their way, they meet Foreman George, a soldier whose story is in part based on Emmanuel Jal’s real life experiences of being a child soldier. The film stars Emmanuel Jal.

Further learning

Learners have explored how children across the world become child soldiers and what their experiences are, they could now reflect on this further by completing a creative writing task. Imagine they are a child soldier like Juliet, Hannah or the boy from Iraq, and have a rare chance to write a diary entry about their experiences. Alternatively, learners could look at what the opportunity to create a social media post or blog might give child soldiers. Would appealing for help and giving away their location or the names of their commanders bring further consequences? Will they risk everything to try and get help, or decide to document their experiences anonymously in the hope that those reading would be able to raise awareness in their communities?

Further action

Learners could work together to raise awareness of child soldiers in the school community and beyond, using some short films and music videos on the War Child UK YouTube channel made by other UK schools, as inspiration for their own awareness campaign youtube.co.uk (then search term War Child UK).

Kingsbury High School in London created their own version of War Child’s single I Got Soul. It’s called ‘Kingsbury Angry Mob – Singing for children in war zones’. They also made the short film ‘Kingsbury High – I Got Soul remix’.

Learners from Gaynes School in Essex helped to raise awareness about child soldiers and made a video of their campaign called ‘A Child’s War – Child soldiers campaign’. Use this video to look at the different ways the campaigners raised awareness of the issue, and examine which routes might be most effective.

Ben, a student at the Anglo European School in Essex wrote a song inspired by War Child’s work, called ‘Ben’s song for War Child’.

Check out War Child’s current campaigns, share your voice and get involved at warchild.org.uk/campaigns
Hannah’s story, Democratic Republic of Congo

Hannah – let’s call her Hannah, but it’s not her real name – lived in a small village with her parents in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The countryside has rainforests that are home to animals like gorillas, and elephants. It’s beautiful, but remote: there aren’t many roads or towns, and most people live in small isolated villages. There are enormous areas of forest where it’s easy for people to disappear. That’s just one of many reasons why lots of armed groups have made the forest their base.

One day, Hannah’s life was turned upside down when her village was attacked by a military group called the FDLR. Along with several other girls, Hannah was abducted and taken back to the FDLR military base in the forest. She was given as a ‘wife’ to one of the soldiers. Her family lost all contact with her and had no idea where she was.

Hannah was held captive, followed everywhere by a guard with a gun. When the FDLR forces left their base to attack other villages, Hannah and the other ‘wives’ were guarded by junior soldiers so they wouldn’t run away. But when the soldiers’ base was attacked by the country’s military forces (called the FARDC), she saw a chance to escape and in the confusion and fighting, managed to run away into the forest. By this time, Hannah had been living with the soldiers for over two years – and she was pregnant.

Hannah eventually reached a village and explained to the people she met what had happened to her. They helped her get back home, where she was reunited with her astonished parents. They were overjoyed! They had assumed Hannah was dead.

Hannah gave birth to a baby girl, but even though she was back home, she was still far from safe. Because she had escaped from the military base, the FDLR were looking for her and would make trouble for her family and the village if they found her hiding. Living at home was putting her, her baby and the rest of her family and friends in danger.

Luckily, there was somewhere she could turn to. War Child UK helped Hannah and her baby move to the city, to live in a centre for other girls like her. Hannah enrolled in catering classes and learned how to cook things like bread and pizza, studied food hygiene and got work experience at a restaurant. Thanks to the centre, she could turn her life around.

‘I want to set up my own catering stall, maybe in the market,’ Hannah told War Child. Hannah, and young people like her, can get help including a small loan and some basic equipment to get their business started, to make sure there is a positive long-term impact, even when War Child is no longer there.

*Hannah’s name has been changed to protect her identity.*
Father of a 14-year-old boy living in Iraq

‘I was in my shop with my son, when members of an armed group came and asked for money. I gave them all I had. They said it wasn’t enough and so my son had to join them in their fight. They took my son away, and I haven’t seen him for three months. I don’t know what’s happened to him but I have seen the armed group giving guns to children and ordering them to fight. I do not know what to do.’

A 5-year-old boy from Syria who is living as a refugee in Jordan

‘I want a gun so I can fight’

This picture was drawn by a child from the Central African Republic living as a refugee in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It shows how children were recruited into armed groups during the peak of conflict in the Central African Republic. Children in War Child projects often use drawing to help express themselves when they have experienced trauma, this is part of the healing and recovery process.
Examine the different ways that children’s rights are protected, the actors involved and their roles

Learn how children’s rights can be compromised by conflict and what they need if they don’t have a safe place to live

Reflect on the similarities and differences between life in the UK and life for street children

Learners also get the opportunity to work in small groups and consider the ways in which they can support their peers in countries affected by conflict.

In the classroom

- A set of cards from the worksheet ‘Who keeps children safe?’ for each pair of learners, cut up so learners can match them
- ‘Street Children’s Stories’ worksheet printed for learners

On screen

- Street Children of Bangui from the War Child UK YouTube channel [youtube.co.uk](http://youtube.co.uk) (then search term War Child UK)

What is daily life like for street children?

What are the key actors in Child Protection and what are their roles?

What do children need to ensure they can have a childhood?

What do children in the UK have in common with a street child?
Starter game

Working in pairs, learners use the ‘Who keeps children safe?’ worksheet to match the different actors in child protection with what their responsibilities are, using the cut-out words and statements to help. Try to get learners to make the link between child protection, family, and the importance of a safe place to live, by asking them – what might be the consequences if one of the actors in child protection failed to do their job because of conflict?

Main activity

Explain to learners that ending up living and working on the street is one potential result when children aren’t protected. Ask learners:

1. What does the term ‘street children’ mean to you?
2. What do they think life might be like for a street child? What would they miss out on? Would their lives be worse or better than living at home?
3. How similar or different do they think a street child’s life might be to their own?
4. How many street children do they think there are globally? (around 100 million)

Learners watch the first 5 – 6 minutes of ‘Street Children of Bangui’ from the War Child UK YouTube channel, and look for clues as to how the young people ended up living on the streets. What do the young people say about their families?

In groups of 4 – 6, learners then re-watch the short section of the film – this time, they choose a situation or anecdote from the stories to create a freeze-frame or short role-play, based on an aspect of life for street children in Central African Republic.

They have 5 – 10 minutes to prepare their performance then share with the rest of the group.

Now that learners have examined the different challenges that street children face, they can discuss some key questions about life for street children:

1. How can war and conflict make things even worse for street children?
2. What might happen to them?
3. What sort of help, support or change might they need? Help from the other countries like the UK is often called ‘humanitarian aid’ or ‘international development’

On the board, make a list of the types of intervention and support that learners have mentioned.

Learners then read the ‘Street Children’s stories’ on screen or printed out and discuss them either in groups or as a class, using some questions to help:

1. What did their experiences as a street child have in common with the boys in Bangui? Was there anything different?
2. Did the changes in their lives match the types of support that learners mentioned beforehand? What was different? What do they think about the support they received?
3. What does the support they received have in common with the things that children have in the UK to keep them safe?
Plenary

Now that learners have found out about life for street children and the sort of support they need, they could reflect on how conflict intensifies the challenges children face, and how this affects the kind of support that is needed. What do they think they could do to help street children? If there’s time, use a short news report form the War Child UK YouTube channel called ‘War Child: Al Jazeera interview on CAR crisis’ to facilitate this discussion.

Further resources

You could share with groups or the whole class some different perspectives on Child Protection and the issue of street children, for instance:

- **Film:** ‘Midnight in Kinshasa – Helping Street Children Stay Safe’ from the War Child UK YouTube channel [youtube.co.uk](http://youtube.co.uk) (then search term ‘War Child UK’). This video examines the impact War Child projects are having on street children’s lives in DRC.

- **Written article:** Learners could look at ‘What happens in conflict-affected countries’ from the Child Protection section of War Child’s website, for a fuller examination of how communities, families and government can break down in the face of war and conflict [warchild.org.uk/issues/child-protection](http://warchild.org.uk/issues/child-protection).

- **Websites:** [streetchildworldcup.org](http://streetchildworldcup.org) or [streetchildrenday.org](http://streetchildrenday.org). Learners could look at one or two resources or films from either website and examine why they think street children might want to have this kind of event, what they might get out of it, and whether learners think it’s a good idea or not.

Further action

Learners think about the question ‘what makes you feel safe?’ and complete a creative activity based on War Child’s 2014 campaign ‘Draw me to Safety’ in collaboration with iconic fashion designer Stella McCartney. They create a piece of artwork answering the question ‘what makes you feel safe?’

Children who are part of War Child’s projects in conflict countries took part and their pictures, along with European entries, can be seen on War Child UK’s Pinterest site [pinterest.com/warchilduk](http://pinterest.com/warchilduk).

Are there any similarities between what makes young people in conflict countries and the UK feel safe? (This activity would also work well to replace the role-play activity in this lesson if there isn’t enough classroom space.)
Copy and cut up enough sheets for each pair of learners to sort them into sets: actors in child protection and their responsibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Safe home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Knowledge about rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Safe environment to play in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Write laws to protect children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills so children can protect themselves from harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic needs like food and clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chance to socialise and learn right from wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loving environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide legal protection of children’s rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social services to step in if something is at risk of going wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abbas and Matteen from Afghanistan

What are you doing when the sun comes up?
Abbas, 15, and Matteen, 14, already work. They’re good friends. They work together on the streets doing odd jobs and selling whatever they can to help make money for their families, who struggle to earn enough to buy food and pay for the basics like school and medicines. Matteen’s parents died when he was quite young, while Abbas’ father is addicted to drugs. The boys earn around 60p a day working from 6am till late in the evening.

What’s the most exciting thing you’ve ever done?
Matteen’s brother-in-law, Sher Khan, asked the boys if they were interested in learning how to ride motorbikes. This was an exciting prospect for the boys and they started taking lessons from Sher Khan. As he taught them to ride bikes, he became one of the boys’ best friends, and he convinced them that if they could steal a motorbike, he would sell it and give them a portion of the profits. One morning Abbas and Matteen found a motorbike parked in front of a restaurant with its keys still in the ignition.

What would make you risk everything?
The boys saw a chance to earn some extra money and make their friend happy. So they stole the bike and rode it over to Sher Khan’s house. But Abbas’ dad spotted them going in, and later on, he confronted the boys about the bike. Abbas and Matteen admitted stealing, and Abbas’ father made them promise to return it straight away.

When was the last time you did something you regretted?
The boys went to retrieve the bike from Sher Khan’s house, but Sher Khan wasn’t happy about the prospect of giving up the bike and threatened to report the boys to the police. Abbas and Matteen decided to ignore Sher Khan’s threats and took the bike back to the restaurant anyway. It must have taken a lot of courage to return to the scene of the theft. Suddenly, the police arrived and arrested them.

Have you ever felt like it’s the end of the world?
The boys were taken to a children’s jail, called a Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre. Abbas’ family were horrified about what he’d done. Both boys were stuck in the centre while the case went to trial, and for a while the future looked very bleak for the two friends.

Have you ever had a second chance?
Luckily, Abbas and Matteen weren’t sentenced to time in prison, and finally they were released when the trial ended. After the trial, War Child workers met with Abbas’ family and eventually his family agreed to take Abbas back into their home.

With War Child’s help, Abbas is learning to read and write in a War Child education centre. Matteen didn’t even have a family to go back to. With War Child’s support he moved to a local orphanage, where he is going to class. Life is still tough but thanks to War Child they’re slowly turning their lives around.

continued on next page...
Abbas and Matteen from Afghanistan (cont...)

And as for Sher Khan, Abbas and Matteen filed a police report about his involvement in the bike theft. He was arrested and now he’s in jail.

What do you collect?
Football cards? Lego? Badges? Key rings?

When Faheema was 12, she used to collect rubbish.

She should have been in school. Instead she spent her days walking the streets, going from bin to bin. She was looking for paper to use as firewood so she could bake bread for her family. And for plastic bottles she could wash and sell to local shops. Her family had nothing to survive on, so they had to let Faheema work on the streets.

Dressed in dirty rags, she was often violently abused by the street boys. There was no one she could turn to for help.

Have you ever meet someone that changed your life?

Here’s the part where Faheema’s story changes. Up until recently, life had dealt her a rotten hand. But one day she was handed a lifeline by one of War Child’s outreach workers who found her and took her to their drop-in-centre. It’s a warm, safe haven from the dangers of life on the streets.

She comes to the centre regularly and attends the literacy and numeracy classes. She also uses the children’s club where she can play with toys and, for a few hours a week, enjoy the simple pleasures of childhood.

War Child’s team are working with Faheema’s parents and are helping them find ways of earning more money so they don’t need to send Faheema back onto the streets.

What do you want to be when you grow up?

App developer? Nurse? Film star? Chef?

Faheema’s future is in the balance. Hopefully one day she’ll go back to school and get a proper education. But this is a War Child story not a Walt Disney one – and they don’t always end happily ever after.

Maybe she will go on to become a teacher. Faheema has dreams just like any other teenager. But maybe, despite her best efforts, conflict in the country will force her family back into the clutches of poverty and she’ll end up as a 21 year old rubbish collector...

Abbas, Matteen and Faheema’s names have been changed to protect their identities.
Think about what emergencies mean at different scales, and the different human and physical factors that cause them.

2. Investigate how conflict can change communities by focusing on the experiences of refugees.

3. Examine the different and specific types of consequences of emergencies for children.

Learners also get the opportunity to work in a variety of groups, to make justified arguments, and to respond creatively to what they learn.

**RESOURCES**

**In the classroom**
- Key statistics from ‘Conflict Briefing’ worksheet, cut up for each group of children
- Copies of the ‘Mystery Activity’ worksheet, cut up for each pair or group of learners

**On screen**
- Watch ‘Alice’ from the War Child UK YouTube channel [youtube.co.uk](http://youtube.co.uk) (search term ‘War Child UK’)
- Optional ‘War Child – Children of Syria Appeal’ from the War Child UK YouTube channel [youtube.co.uk](http://youtube.co.uk) (search term ‘War Child UK’)
- PowerPoint presentation: ‘Lesson 5: Emergency!’

**KEY TERMS AND QUESTIONS**

**What is an emergency?**

**What might an emergency be for an individual, a community or a country?**

**What effects do emergencies have on children? Are they direct or indirect?**

**What does War Child do to help give children affected by emergencies a sense of normalcy/childhood?**
Starter game

Start by making sure everyone in the class feels secure by letting learners know that this lesson is about ‘emergencies’. Some learners in the class might have been in an emergency but they don’t have to share anything about it if they don’t wish to.

Ask learners whether they or anyone they know has ever had to dial 999.

If they don’t mind sharing, ask one or two learners why the call had to be made. What happened? Was it an emergency?

Alternatively, you could share a story you know or choose an incident from a local paper that involved the emergency services.

Ask learners what they think constitutes an emergency.

- What’s the difference between a problem and an emergency?
- Is it about urgency, a threat to life, possessions, relationships?
- Are some emergencies more serious than others?
- What might the most serious emergencies involve?

Ask learners to think about emergencies that might affect whole families, communities or countries.

Split the board in four and put ‘human cause’ and ‘physical cause’ on different sides at the top, and ‘small scale’ and ‘large scale’ along the side to look at the different types and scales of emergencies.

You could prompt by asking learners to think about tectonic activities or flooding, and human emergencies such as war, abduction, disease or famine. You could point out that in some cases emergencies have both physical and human causes.
Main activity

The main activities give learners the chance to focus on a current or recent conflict using the separate information sheets and worksheets.

First, spend a few minutes watching and discussing the short film ‘Alice’ from the War Child UK YouTube channel. Ask learners what caused an emergency in Alice’s life, and what the consequences of her emergency were.

Then learners work in pairs or small groups to look in more depth at how an emergency can impact on a child’s life by completing the ‘Mystery Activity’ worksheet, cut up to separate the clues.

Using slide 2 of the ‘Lesson 5: Emergency!’ PowerPoint, learners read the key facts and mystery question and give their initial thoughts about the possible answers.

Explain that the character they’re focusing on isn’t a real person but their experiences reflect those of many children affected by war. The clues are inspired by the real stories children have shared with War Child staff about what they have seen and experienced.

Learners then sort the clues into ‘important’ ‘not important’ or ‘not sure’ and come up with a theory to address the key question.

After each group has shared their theory with another group, you could reveal Lilith’s quote on slide 3 of the PowerPoint that helps answer the mystery. It’s important to note that there are many possible answers.

Finally, ask learners to identify the different sorts of support that children like Lilith need. How important are education, security, food, shelter, healthcare or any other basic needs to her? What one thing would help children like Lilith begin to rebuild their lives?
Plenary

Having focused on an example scenario of, the plenary helps learners reflect that the story is repeated thousands or even millions of times around the world.

Learners work in groups as indicated on the ‘Conflict Briefing’ worksheet – give each group the two corresponding key statistics and tell them to illustrate one or both of these to the rest of the school by taking a photo or short video of themselves. They then show the rest of the class.

Further resources

If there’s time you could share some different perspectives and information about emergencies and refugees, for instance:

Film: CBBC’s Newsround website has short films and reports on current conflicts, and is a good place to find up-to-date films on emergencies from children’s points of view.

Website: The UNHCR website www.data.unhcr.org is a portal for information on current emergencies, up to date statistics and background information on conflict, and a good starting point for further research. Learners can look in more depth at issues like education and protection, study demographics and graphs.

Further learning

Having focused on a particular conflict and emergency for children during the lesson, learners could follow this up by researching more on that location using the websites above and the latest news and blogs from War Child UK. They could focus on using research to answer the question ‘How does war and conflict affect development?’ thinking about the effects on areas like education, health, economic development and population.

Further action

Learners could use the photos or video they took during the lesson activities as the starting point to tell the rest of the school about what’s happening around the world and how children can be affected by conflict. The short film ‘War Child – Children of Syria Appeal’ on the War Child UK YouTube channel could be used as a prompt or inspiration for this activity.

Check out War Child’s current campaigns, share your voice and get involved at warchild.org.uk/campaigns
The ‘Arab Spring’ reached Syria in March 2011 but was resisted by President Assad’s regime, and conflict in Syria has contributed to wider unrest, instability and conflict in the Middle East. Protests were met with a brutal response from the country’s security forces, and civilian populations have been attacked with heavy weaponry. The initial clashes resulted in a full-blown civil war where all sides of the conflict have committed violations against children.

Estimates indicate that over 100,000 people were killed in the first two years of fighting, and nearly three million had fled by mid-2014 over the borders as refugees into Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. Over half of them were children. Stories have emerged of children being detained, tortured and even used as human shields. In August 2013 chemical weapons were allegedly used against civilians.

How would learners communicate these key facts about the Syrian conflict to other young people, using the medium of photo or video?

- 12 children: killed in the Syrian conflict every day
- Around 4 in 10 people: refugees living outside Syria or internally displaced (meaning they have left their home but are still living inside Syria)
- 3 children: forced to leave their home every minute
- 3 million Syrians: living outside Syria (they are refugees)
- 3 out of 5: Syrian children missing out on school once they leave their country
- 5,000 people per day: fleece from Syria

The information and statistics are accurate at the time of production and are designed to be used to stimulate discussion around the consequences of emergencies for young people. Conflict has profound impacts on countries that can change rapidly as the conflict changes. The facts and statistics do not therefore necessarily represent the ongoing reality of the conflict over time but a snapshot of its impacts on children at time of production. Updated facts and statistics can be found via the War Child website.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lilith’s mum is expecting a baby in two months</th>
<th>Lilith used to be top of her class at school</th>
<th>Four out of five children like Lilith are missing out on going to school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees do not often have the right to work (have a job) in Jordan</td>
<td>Lilith used to enjoy writing stories but has forgotten how to write many words</td>
<td>Lilith has met lots of children in Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilith’s old house was destroyed by a bomb. Lilith bumped her head when it happened and fell unconscious</td>
<td>Lilith has three older brothers and a younger sister</td>
<td>When Lilith left her old house she left her favourite teddy behind by mistake and it makes her sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One day, a bomb hit Lilith’s school. Luckily, it wasn’t a school day</td>
<td>Lilith has yellow skin because she doesn’t always get enough to eat</td>
<td>When Lilith left her old home she had to leave behind her clothes, her books and her friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilith is afraid of loud noises, and gets really scared whenever there’s a celebration with fireworks</td>
<td>The last time Lilith saw her dad, he was being taken away by a group of men with guns</td>
<td>Lilith has heard stories about children, like her, being attacked by men in the washrooms by her tent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilith is Syrian</td>
<td>Lilith has nightmares every night about soldiers and bombs</td>
<td>When Lilith’s family left their old home they had to go really quickly. Lilith’s mum didn’t even have time to go to the bank or say goodbye to anyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilith lives in a tent made from plastic and wood</td>
<td>There are over half a million refugees from Syria living in Jordan</td>
<td>Some children think yellow skin is a sign of a disease that you can catch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 6

What difference can one person make?
Explore the notion that individuals’ actions can impact on society (and that a lack of action has an impact too)

2 Understand that there are different ways to engage their peers, the public and decision-makers to influence change, and that it is part of the job of an MP to listen to young people

3 Make decisions about which actions are the most appropriate when seeking certain outcomes, based on a number of factors, and reflect on their effectiveness

Learners also get the opportunity to express personal opinions, justify them and listen to others’ views, to work together and make decisions based on viewpoints they have developed.

In the classroom

- ‘Ways We Can Speak Up’ worksheet copied for each learner
- Optional ‘The Mission’ worksheet copied for all learners to see

On screen

- Optional ‘The Mission’ box so all learners can refer to it

1 Which actions are most effective?

2 Can you think of a time when you haven’t spoken up about something that made you sad, angry or frustrated? What kept you silent?

3 What would have been the impact of speaking up?

4 What actions can individuals take to change society?

5 Which actions might be less effective and why?
**ACTIVITIES**

**Starter game**

Ask the students to silently think of a time in their life where they would have liked to speak up about something that made them sad, angry or frustrated, but didn’t. It could be about something they have experienced personally or about an issue they care about. It should also be an example that they’re happy to share with those around them. Then ask them:

1. **Why didn’t you speak out?**
2. **What was the result?**
3. **Looking back, could you have done something differently?**
4. **Would the outcome have changed if you had?**
5. **Would the change have been positive or negative if you had acted differently?**

Ask learners to talk it through with the person next to them and then ask for a few examples to be shared with the whole group. Try to get learners to focus on how action can change the outcome of events, by asking what the impact might have been if they had decided to speak out.
Main activity

Using the last activity as a starting point, ask learners to think of as many ways as they can that young citizens in the UK can change the world around them for the better – in their school, in their community and the wider world.

Which actions would be most effective to improve young people’s lives in the community, in the UK or across the world? Are they the same actions or different?

Some learners might feel frustrated that they don’t seem to be listened to; even if they don’t, it’s worth reminding them that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) states that children everywhere have the right to be heard, and that youth voice is crucial in protecting children and making changes that affect them. This would be a good opportunity to show learners the CRC or recap on it if they have learnt about it in other classes. Which articles in the Convention deal with the right to be heard and participate in society?

The CRC includes Article 38, that, ‘governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war’. Ask learners to consider what action they might take to improve children’s lives in countries where there is war and conflict.

Learners who have completed some or all of the other lessons focusing on issues for children in war could come up with a change they want to make for children and young people affected by conflict.

Alternatively, give learners the following mission on screen or printed:

**MISSION**

To take action to increase the levels of child protection across the world by ensuring that children affected by conflict have:

1. A space in or outside the home where they can play, socialise and feel secure

2. A decent education and access to future opportunities (e.g. safe employment)

3. Access to the care they need (physical and emotional)

This might seem daunting but there are many things young people can do, and using the ‘Ways We Can Speak Up’ worksheet, learners can work in to analyse what actions are available to them and which might be more or less effective, and why.

They might want to add their own actions to the sheet and analyse those.

Finish by asking learners to highlight one action that they think they should do, and one that they have ruled out.
Plenary

Ask learners to share with the class which action or actions they would and wouldn’t do. Ask them to give the reasons for their decision. Have they decided they would do the action that might be most effective or was there a reason not to? Has everyone chosen the same actions? Are there any actions that everyone ruled out?

Learners should then be able to focus on what rights they could be exercising if they carried out any particular activities. They could refer to key elements of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, such as articles 12, 13, 14, 15, 29 or 42.

If there’s time, the group could start to make plans to carry out their chosen actions, working together to prepare their action and decide on who in the group will undertake the different necessary tasks.

Further resources

Share with groups or the whole class some different perspectives on participation, youth action and campaigning on issues related to War Child’s mission, which learners might agree or disagree with, for instance:

**Films**: Natalie Warne’s TED talk ‘Being young and making an impact’ tells her personal story of how she ran a campaign with Invisible Children to rescue child soldiers from Joseph Kony’s army in Uganda. While the campaign was both applauded for its innovative methods and criticised for misinformation and ‘hollywoodising’ the issue of child soldiers, her own story could nonetheless provide inspiration for learners’ own campaigning action [ted.com](http://ted.com) (search term ‘Natalie Warne’).

**Written article**: The BBC gives a good summary of the criticism of the ‘Kony 2012’ campaign and gives learners the opportunity to focus on the benefits and drawbacks of social media in campaigning [bbc.co.uk/news](http://bbc.co.uk/news) (search term ‘Joseph Kony campaign under fire’). As a follow-up, learners could watch the short film ‘Kony is famous. Where he is isn’t’ from the War Child UK YouTube channel: [youtube.co.uk/warchilduk](http://youtube.co.uk/warchilduk) (search term ‘War Child Kony Isn’t Famous’).

**Website**: If learners are interested in active global citizenship, they can browse Giving Nation [g-nation.org.uk](http://g-nation.org.uk) and find out more about all the different ways that young people can make a difference.

Further learning

Learners could focus more on how citizens create change through the political process. This is called advocacy, where people try to influence decisions made by political and economic leaders. Firstly, they could use their mission and action to think about the right decision-maker to try to involve, persuade or make act – perhaps it’s someone locally, or in the UK, or somewhere else around the world. They could find out more about Parliament and government at the website [parliament.uk](http://parliament.uk).

They could play games and discuss voting and why it’s worth voting, via Bite the Ballot [bitetheballot.co.uk](http://bitetheballot.co.uk). They can play as a group or even use a film where celebrities guide them through the activities.

Further action

Learners can plan and do the actions they decided on during the lesson and take part in current War Child campaigns via [warchild.org.uk](http://warchild.org.uk).
What difference can one person make?

**THE MISSION**

To take action to increase the levels of child protection across the world by ensuring that children affected by conflict have:

1. A space in or outside the home where they can play, socialise and feel secure
2. A decent education and access to future opportunities (e.g. safe employment)
3. Access to the care they need (physical and emotional)

To take action to increase the levels of child protection across the world by ensuring that children affected by conflict have:

1. A space in or outside the home where they can play, socialise and feel secure
2. A decent education and access to future opportunities (e.g. safe employment)
3. Access to the care they need (physical and emotional)

To take action to increase the levels of child protection across the world by ensuring that children affected by conflict have:

1. A space in or outside the home where they can play, socialise and feel secure
2. A decent education and access to future opportunities (e.g. safe employment)
3. Access to the care they need (physical and emotional)
What action would you take to improve the lives of children affected by war and conflict?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How easy is it?</th>
<th>How effective is it?</th>
<th>Would you consider doing this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Email an MP
- Ask a celebrity or influential person to get involved and speak up
- Go to a demonstration or march
- Do something creative to draw attention to the issues

Continues on next page...
# WAYS WE CAN SPEAK UP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How easy is it?</th>
<th>How effective is it?</th>
<th>Would you consider doing this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is it quick?</strong></td>
<td>What impact could there be?</td>
<td>Why or why not? Is there anything stopping you doing this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is it cheap?</strong></td>
<td>Will life change for children affected by war? How? Which rights might they be able to help children in conflict to meet?</td>
<td>What would change your view of this action?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does it appeal to you?</strong></td>
<td>Will anyone else take action?</td>
<td>Are there risks involved?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Organise an event at school and tell local media about it
- Make different choices about what I buy, my bank or the brands I choose
- Raise money for a relevant cause
- Start a petition online or join an online campaign
- Put a link, photo, film or post on social media about the issue

What difference can one person make?