



Lesson Plan: Landmines

Standards

Established Goals:

This lesson presents an overview of where, why and how landmines are used. This activity examines the impact of landmines on ordinary people, particularly children. Students will identify the physical and emotional challenges that people face after they have been affected by a landmine. Students will study the efforts by the international community to eliminate the use of landmines.

National Council for Social Studies Standards:

- V. Individuals
- VI. Power, authority, and governance
- IX. Global Connections
- X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Transferable Concepts/Links:

Conflict, Civil War, Poverty, Developing World, Technology, Hazardous Conditions, Exploitation, Atrocities, Controversy, Debate, Civil Society, International Cooperation, Collaboration, Weapons, Citizenship, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations)

Course Connections:

- American History
- World History
- Government
- Global Studies
- Current Events

Understandings:

Landmines have long term affects on individuals, societies, and the world at large. Civilians are affected by landmines long after wars end.

Landmines are difficult to see and expensive to remove from the land.

International institutions and documents are in place to protect people from landmines.

The UN and grassroots organizations are working to combat the use of landmines.

Essential Questions:

What are the moral issues behind the use of landmines?

Describe how and where landmines are used.

Identify the reasons for and against the use of landmines.

How do communities suffer when landmines are present?

What is the role of international documents and what do they say about the use of landmines?

Students will know:

Human rights vocabulary.

What the international community is doing to combat the use of landmines.

What international documents are in place to address the issue of landmines.

The names of NGOs and international organizations that are aiding people affected by landmines.

Equipment and Materials:

'What's Going On?' Landmines in Cambodia, hosted by Laurence Fishburne
["Landmine Problem in the World" Map:](#)

Pictures of Landmines:

[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#) and [5](#)

Handout #1 [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Note: To open handouts or save them to your PC, click on the link. Or right click on links and select "Save Target As" option.

Learning Activities

Activity 1:

1. Give students the definition of a landmine:

Landmines are an explosive device placed onto or into the ground. This small, but deadly weapon lays dormant until triggered by a person or vehicle. Once detonated a landmines can cause injuries like blindness, burns, maiming and can even kill. There are approximately 40 new landmine casualties per day, most being civilians living in countries that are now at peace.

Anti-personal mines were first used in World War II to protect strategic areas and to prevent enemy movement. Since then they have been used in many conflicts including the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and the first Gulf War and are still being used today.

2. Hand out copies of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 1989, world leaders decided that children under 18 years of age often need special care that adults do not. The Convention is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate a full range of human rights such as civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for children.

The Convention is an international document negotiated by Member States at the United Nations. Every Member State of the United Nations has ratified (or adopted) the treaty except the United States and Somalia, who have only signed it.

The Convention offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development. By recognizing children's rights in this way, the Convention firmly sets the

focus on the whole child.

Madeline Albright, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, signed the Convention in 1995. However, the United States Constitution requires that such documents receive a two-thirds approval by the Senate to be adopted. There are some articles in the Convention that the US Senate has yet to come to an agreement on.

Ask Students:

What is the difference between ratifying and signing a treaty?

Why do you think the United States has not adopted the Convention?

Answers can include:

a. Signing does not create a binding legal obligation but does demonstrate the State's intent to examine the treaty domestically and consider ratifying it. Ratification signifies an agreement by the state to be legally bound by the terms of the treaty.

b. Some US legislators feel that the provisions or certain articles of the Convention could interfere with the role of parents in their children's lives.

The Convention is the most widely supported international treaty because nations, organizations and individuals realize that the future of humanity is in the hands of our children.

Activity 2:

1. Introduce these basic facts in a handout or transparency:
 - Landmines were first used during World War II to protect areas from enemy tanks.
 - The German "Bouncing Betty" was often used during World War II and received its name because it would catapult out of the ground to waist height and explode when triggered.
 - A person is killed or maimed by a mine explosion every 30 minutes.
 - 20,000 civilians are injured or killed every year by landmines.
 - An estimated 70,000,000 landmines are embedded in the ground in approximately 80 countries.
 - Landmines are designed to inflict maximum pain, not just to kill the victim.
 - Landmines cost approximately \$1.00 to make but \$1,000.00 to find and destroy.
 - Mine deaths over the past decades now total in the hundreds of thousands.
 - Children are the most vulnerable as their small size brings them closer to the source of the explosion.
 - Children who are injured by landmines are a financial burden to poor families and sometimes are no longer perceived as being productive.
 - In Cambodia there are over 45,000 landmine survivors recorded between 1979 and 2005. Approximately, 20,000 people were killed by landmines during this period, 75% of the total were civilians.
 - Land in some of the poorest areas cannot be farmed because of contamination by landmines.
 - Mines don't recognize ceasefires; they keep killing long after peace is declared.
 - Landmines injure or kill livestock and wild animals.
 - Children typically tend to livestock that wander into remote areas where mines haven't been cleared.
 - Some landmines are colorful and resemble a toy more than a deadly weapon.
 - Children's natural curiosity makes them more vulnerable especially when they explore in areas with landmine.
 - Rain can wash landmines into fields that have already been cleared.

- Some of the countries most contaminated are Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chechnya, Colombia, Iraq Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- At present, 38 nations have stopped production and global trade of landmines.
- 13 countries continue to produce and trade landmines: Burma, China, Cuba, India, Iran, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, United States & Vietnam

Source: International Campaign to Ban Landmines www.icbl.org

2. The Convention is not being observed when families and children are living in areas infested by landmines. Ask students to identify and highlight which Articles of the Convention are violated by the use of landmines.

Answers are:

Articles 3, 6, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 31, 32, 37, 38 and 39.

Ask students to rephrase the Articles 3, 6, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 31, 32, 37, 38 and 39 for an in class discussion.

Note to teacher: Students should hold onto their copies of the Convention for further use during other "What's Going On?" lesson plans. It is recommended that you have students use the following initials next to each article that is violated for each topic they learn about from the "What's Going On?" series. (Child Soldiers (CS), HIV/AIDS (AIDS), Refugees (RF), Child Labor (CL), Landmines (LM), Girl's Education (GED), Indigenous People (IP), Northern Ireland (NI), Poverty in America (PA), Street Children (SC).

Activity 3:

1. Hand out copies of the ' [Landmine Problem in the World](#) ' Map and discuss:

What does the map show us about the extent to which landmines are used world wide?

Why are landmines found in some countries and not others?

Hand out pictures of landmines printed from the following links: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#) and [5](#).

Activity 4:



1. Screen the documentary "What's Going On?," Landmines in Cambodia with Laurence Fishburne.
2. What rights were violated in the cases Suk Ratha and Mon Man?
3. Ask students to discuss their emotional responses to the documentary.

Activity 5:

1. Divide the class into two separate groups.
 2. One group must defend the use of landmines while the other must argue against such weapons. Each group should formulate clear arguments and think of examples to support their case.
 3. The teacher should give each side an initial 2 minutes to make their statement and then a 1 minute rebuttal. While each side is speaking the teacher should record relevant points about each argument on the board.
 4. The teacher should ask:
 - a. Are landmines good or bad? Each side should have 2 minutes to argue their case and then 1 minute to respond to the opposing argument.
 - b. Should landmines be banned? Each side should have 2 minutes to argue their case and then 1 minute to respond to the opposing argument.
 5. After the debate the teacher should explain: The Ottawa Convention (a.k.a. The Mine Ban Treaty) was signed on December 3, 1997 and became international law on March 1, 1999.
 - o The Convention makes landmines illegal in two-thirds of all countries.
 - o The United States, Russia, China, Israel, India and Pakistan have not signed the treaty.
 - o The Mine Ban Treaty forbids the use, production, selling, storing, or transfer of antipersonnel landmines
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 - o As of 2006, 40 countries have not ratified the Treaty. Find out which countries have not ratified the Treaty: <http://www.icbl.org/treaty/snp>
 - o This treaty requires that participating governments must provide resources to mine clearance and survivor assistance.
 6. The Ottawa Convention has worked to:
 - o Reduce the amount of mines being placed in the ground.
 - o Limit countries that produce mines (14, down from 54)
 - o Destruct 30 million stockpiled landmines.
 - o Decrease the trade of landmines.
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1. Ask students what actions they think the rest of the world can do to eliminate the use of landmines. Who is responsible for taking action against the use of landmines? Ask students to develop a plan that would help educate people about landmines and offer ways for civilians to get involved.
 2. Discuss ways that students can get involved in the fight against landmines.
 3. Write a response to the lesson's focus questions: How big a problem is the use of landmines in today's world and why should we care? Answers should include: Geographic distribution; number of killed or injured by land mines; the types of landmines, why are landmines so threatening?
 4. Research and report on UN agencies and NGO's that are working to end the

use of landmines. Below are some resources to investigate:

- [United Nations Mine Action Service \(UNMAS\)](#)
- [International Campaign to Ban Landmines](#)
- [Human Rights Watch](#)
- [Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict](#)

5. The class should form teams of 2-5 students. Each team should develop a 'game plan' for how they are going to help stop the use of landmines.

Students should come up with the following:

- a. Develop a group name and logo.
- b. The group's mandate and mission statement.
- c. Long and short term goals for the group.
- d. Find other organizations to collaborate with.
- e. Come up with a PR campaign to inform the school and public about their mission and the issue.

See other student's campaigns.

6. Have students respond to the following quote:

"The landmine is eternally prepared to take victims. It is the perfect soldier."
— Jody Williams, 1997, Noble Peace Prize winner, founding coordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Get Involved

Adopt a Mine Field <http://www.landmines.org/>

United States Campaign to Ban Landmines <http://www.banminesusa.org/>

International Committee on the Red Cross <http://www.icrc.org/eng/mines>

E-MINE <http://www.mineaction.org/>

Landmines Blow <http://www.landminesblow.com/>

Students Against Landmines <http://www.occdsb.on.ca/~sel/mine/>

Safelane <http://www.mines.gc.ca/>

Goliath <http://library.advanced.org/11051/>

Landmines Survivor Network <http://www.landminesurvivors.org/>

OneWorld Guide to Landmines <http://www.oneworld.org/guides/landmines/index.html>

International Campaign to Ban Landmines <http://www.boes.org/coop/lmines/>

Resources

Learn More

Documents

Landmine Monitor Report: Toward a Mine Free-World

By ICBL-Landmine Monitor Core Group. Available from HRW Washington DC
Tel: 1 202 612 4356, Fax: 1 202 612 4333 Email: hrwdc@hrw.org. Web: www.hrw.org or from
ICBL Resource Center Email: resource@icbl.org. Web: www.icbl.org. Soft cover 1115 pp,
ISBN 1- 56432-250-5.

The Mine Ban Treaty and the Americas, a Human Rights Watch Fact Sheet

Prepared for the Canada-Mexico regional seminar, Mexico City, Mexico 11-12 January
1999. Available from HRW Email: hrwdc@hrw.org. Web: www.hrw.org. 14 pp.

Exposing the Source: U.S. Companies and the Production of Antipersonnel Mines, April 1997. Vol.9, No 2,

by HRW. Soft cover 47 pp., ISBN:1041-9197. Available from HRW Email: hrwdc@hrw.org.
Web: www.hrw.org.

In its own Words: The US Army and antipersonnel mines in the Korean and Vietnam Wars, July 1997. Vol.9, No 3,

by Human Rights Watch and Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation. Available from
HRW Email: hrwdc@hrw.org. Web: www.hrw.org.

Banning Landmines in American Century.

By Richard A. Matthew and Ken R. Rutherford. International Journal on World Peace,
Vol.XVI No.2 June 1999. Available from Ken Rutherford Tel: 1 703 522 6609, Fax: 1 703 522
1371 Email: krrphd@aol.com. Web: www.hrw.org.

Books

To Walk without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines,

edited by Maxwell A. Cameron, Robert J Lawson, and Brian W, Tomlin, 1998. 491 pages
with illustrations. Available from Oxford University Press, Email: books.orders@oup.co.uk.
Web: www.oupcan.com.

After the Guns Fall Silent: The Enduring Legacy of Landmines,

written by Roberts and Williams, Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, 1995. Available
from Oxfam UK 274 Banbury Road Oxford, OX2 7DZ UK. Soft cover 554 pp. ISBN: 0 85598
337 X

The People's Treaty,

by Mine Action Canada (MAC). English. Available from MAC Email: macinfo@web.net.
Web: www.minesactioncanada.com.

Hidden Killers 1998: The Global Landmine Crisis,

September 1998. Prepared by the Office of Humanitarian Demining Programs. Available
from Office of the International Security and Peacekeeping Operations, US State
Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. US State Dept., PM/HDP Room 3328,
Washington, DC 20520. Soft cover 126 pp.

Guidelines for the Care and Rehabilitation of Survivor.

By ICBL Working Group on Victim Assistance Available from ICBL Resource Center. Email:
resource@icbl.org and from Landmine Survivors Network. Tel: (202) 464-0007.

International Guidelines for Landmine and Unexploded Ordinance Awareness Education,

by UNICEF, 1999. Available from UNICEF New York Tel: 1 212 326 7068. Soft cover 52 pp.

A Child Rights Guide to the 1996 Mines Protocol,

Office of Emergency Programs, UNICEF, 1997. Available from UNICEF Division of
Communication Email: pubdoc@unicef.org. Web: www.unicef.org. Soft cover 37 pp.

The Scourge of the Earth, The Impact of Landmines on the Environment,

by Monica Newton, February 1997. Published by Group for Environmental Monitoring.
Available from GEM. Email: gem@wn.apc.org.

Films

U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines Action Video

Produced by: Physicians for Human Rights
Length: 10 min.
System: VHS
Language: English
Subtitle: No
Available from: Physicians for Human Rights.
Web: www.phrusa.org

The Ottawa Treaty, Towards a World Free of Antipersonnel Mines

Produced by: Daniel Farhi, 1999.
Length: 14 min.
System: VHS-PAL.
Languages: English, Portuguese, French, Arabic.
Subtitle: No.
Available from: ICRC Publication, Geneva. Email: icrc.gva@icrc.org. Web: www.icrc.org.

One Step at a Time: The Campaign to Ban Landmines

Produced by: Mines Action Canada and WETV with Corvideocom, 1998.
Length: 24:20 min.
System: VHS-PAL, VHS-NTSC and VHS-SECAM.
Languages: English, French, Spanish and Russian.
Subtitle: No.
Available from: DFAIT/ILX. Email: mary.oneill@extott08.x400.gc. Web: www.mines.gc.ca.

Are We the Enemy? Produced by: Women's Media Center in Cambodia, 1995.

Length: 10 min.
System: VHS-PAL
Language: Khmer.
Subtitle: English
Available from: ICBL Resource Center. Email: resource@icbl.org. Web: www.icbl.org.

Survivors' Stories: Americans & Landmines

Produced by: Center for Defense Information, 2000
Length: 2 parts, 20 min. each.
System: VHS-PAL
Language: English
Subtitle: No.
Available from: CDI: (202) 332-0600. Web: cdi.org/adm.
Produced by: Physicians for Human Rights
Length: 10 min.
System: VHS
Language: English
Subtitle: No
Available from: Physicians for Human Rights.
Web: www.phrusa.org

The Ottawa Treaty, Towards a World Free of Antipersonnel Mines Produced by: Daniel Farhi, 1999.

Length: 14 min.
System: VHS-PAL.
Languages: English, Portuguese, French, Arabic.
Subtitle: No.
Available from: ICRC Publication, Geneva.
Email: icrc.gva@icrc.org. Web: www.icrc.org.

One Step at a Time: The Campaign to Ban Landmines

Produced by: Mines Action Canada and WETV with Corvideocom, 1998.
Length: 24:20 min.
System: VHS-PAL, VHS-NTSC and VHS-SECAM.

Languages: English, French, Spanish and Russian.

Subtitle: No.

Available from: DFAIT/ILX. Email: mary.oneill@extott08.x400.gc. Web: www.mines.gc.ca.

Are We the Enemy?

Produced by: Women's Media Center in Cambodia, 1995.

Length: 10 min.

System: VHS-PAL

Language: Khmer.

Subtitle: English

Available from: ICBL Resource Center. Email: resource@icbl.org. Web: www.icbl.org.

Survivors' Stories: Americans & Landmines

Produced by: Center for Defense Information, 2000

Length: 2 parts, 20 min. each.

System: VHS-PAL

Language: English

Subtitle: No.

Available from: CDI: (202) 332-0600. Web: cdi.org/adm.