



“Send My Friend to School” Lesson Plan for Educators

Global Campaign for Education – Action Week: April 24-30 2005

Overview

This lesson plan accompanies the Action Week “Send My Friend to School” action opportunity. The lesson plan is provided as a general framework for introducing the issue of access to education to students of various age levels. The lesson plan is designed with the intention that it will be adapted to various audiences by the educator.

Another activity you may also want to use in the classroom is the NetAid World Class Game “Grab Bag” Edition which is available for download on the GCE Resource page.

If working with younger audiences, see www.sendmyfriend.org for lesson plan activities geared toward grades 1-5.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance of education
- Understand the challenges that prevent many students around the world from attending school and how they differ from challenges faced by students in the United States
- Understand the role that American youth can play in ensuring that all children have the opportunity to complete primary education

Curriculum Standards and Skills

- **History** (National Center for History Standards 9:2, 9:3, 5:E, 5:F)
 - World History, Historical Thinking
- **Economics** (National Council on Economic Education Standards 1,13,15)
 - Scarcity, Role of Resources, Growth and Standard of Living
- **Geography** (National Geographic Society Standards 4:2, 6:2, 11:4, 16:5)
 - Physical and Human Characteristics of Place, Culture and Perception, Patterns of Interdependence, Distribution of Resources
- **Language Arts** (National Council of Teachers of English Standards 5, 11, 12)
 - Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
 - Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
 - Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.
- **Social Studies** (National Council of Social Studies: Standard 9)
 - Global Connections and Interdependence
- **Skills**
 - Reading, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Cooperative Learning, Group and Individual Decision-Making, Letter-Writing



Instructions

1. Start by asking students the following question:
“If your mother or father said that you could stay home from school today, how many of you would have stayed at home?”
2. Assuming most of the students would not have elected to come to school, ask them what they would do on their “day off.” As they brainstorm these activities write them on the board. Typical answers are sleep-in, play video games, and watch movies.
3. Once the students have developed an exhaustive list of “things they would rather do than attend school,” inform them that more than 100 million children around the world do not get an opportunity to attend school.
4. To put this number in context, ask the students to explain how large 100 million is. After entertaining their suggestions, inject examples such as:
 - It would take over 9 years to count to 100 million.
 - Combining the population of the 50 largest cities in the United States yields only 45 million people; 55 million would need to be added to this number to reach 100 million. This includes cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Diego, San Antonio, Dallas, Detroit, San Jose, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, San Francisco, and Columbus.
5. Next, ask the students what they could do in their life if they received only a fifth-grade education and then were free to work. Ask if they could take care of themselves, manage money, read, etc. Ask them to brainstorm the types of struggles would they encounter by having five years of schooling.
6. Inform the students that of the children attending school in the world, 150 million will not complete five years of schooling, the minimum required for basic literacy.
7. Have students brainstorm some of the reasons why kids in the world do not attend school.

Part II: Discussion Stimuli

1. Based on the age of the students you are working with, you may choose to read the discussion prompts or distribute them to the students to read to themselves.
2. The first case consists of two parts: Part A and Part B. Part A states a problem or dilemma and Part B finishes the story by concluding with how the situation was remedied by an international development program.



3. Start by having students read (or read to the students) Part A: “A Boy Dreams, Despite Incredible Odds.”

Note: Part A is located on the top half of the page; the bottom half containing Part B can be cut off and distributed after the Part A discussion.

4. Ask the students the following questions once they have completed reading the case study:
 - a. What is Swami’s family life like?
 - b. Does he have parents?
 - c. How much money does the family live on? Can they afford their basic necessities to live?
 - d. Does Swami attend school? If he did attend school, what would happen? (his sister would have no one to care for her)
 - e. Is it fair that Swami cannot attend school?
 - f. If Swami had the opportunity to attend school, could life be different for his family?
5. Distribute Part B. Have the students read Part B (or read Part B to the students).
6. Ask the students the following questions:
 - a. What happened that could change Swami’s outlook on school?
 - b. Ask the students if they think that they can play a role in children’s lives like Swami who cannot attend school.
7. Distribute the stimulus “Esse’s Story.”
8. After having the students read the stimulus, ask students what obstacles Esse overcomes to attend school. How do these compare to the obstacles that students in the United States must overcome to attend school? Does Esse have an appreciation for school?

Segue into the Send My Friend to School Activity

- Inform the students that not everyone is as fortunate as Swami and Esse to have programs that help them obtain the opportunity to attend school.
- To put millions children across the world into school requires rich countries to increase their foreign aid to poorer countries to help overcome obstacles.
- In July, leaders of the most economically-advanced countries will meet in Scotland at what is called the G-8 Summit, an annual event to discuss



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global economic cooperation. On the agenda is fighting global poverty. This year, many US organizations and individuals will be asking President Bush to take action against global poverty. With this activity, you can urge President Bush to support universal education and provide enough foreign assistance to achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015.

- The commitment to primary education is not new – rich and poor countries of the world decided this is an essential goal in 2000 when they declared the Millennium Development Goals, 8 steps to eradicating extreme poverty by 2015. World leaders will meet in New York City in September at the MDG +5 Summit to discuss progress to date. You can use this activity to ask the US government and other leaders to make the goal of ensuring access to primary education for all of the world's children a priority.



Part A: A Boy Dreams, Despite Incredible Odds

Date: January 21, 2003
Location: Andhra Pradesh, India



Six-year-old Swami lives in a small, crowded hut with his father, his mother, his father's second wife, and three younger siblings. Because of a disability, Swami's father is unable to work, and his first wife (Swami's mother) must stay at home and care for her infant son, Gopi. The burden of sustaining the seven-member family, therefore, falls solely on the second wife, whose seasonal agricultural job earns her a meager 25 Rupees--less than 50 cents--a day.

Neighbors have tried to help Swami's family by sharing their food grains, but it is still not enough to sustain the large family. Because of this complex situation, Swami is unable to go to school: He must stay at home and look after his three-year-old sister, Aadhilakshmi.

Part B: A Boy Dreams, Despite Incredible Odds

Under these difficult circumstances, Swami may never have had the chance to get the education that could help his family have a better life. "If somebody helps me, I shall go to school and study," says the six-year-old.

That "somebody" is the Sanghamitra Service Society. Sanghamitra works in Andhra Pradesh, where Swami and so many other impoverished children live, to increase retention rates and overall student enrollment in local schools. The community-focused organization is also working to ensure that all children, regardless of social or economic backgrounds, are able to earn an education to improve their quality of life now and in the future.



Esse's Story – Overcoming Barriers to Attend School

Date: October 3, 2003

Location: Lomé, Togo



Esse is 7 years old and lives on the outskirts of Lomé, the capital of Togo, with her Aunt. Her parents and 5 brothers and sisters live in Ghana, where her father works as a fisherman. Like many other students in her school, she is also the homemaker and is responsible for the household chores, while her aunt works for 12 hours a day at market. During lunch break, Esse goes to help her aunt sell trinkets in a street-side market stall. When school finishes at 5pm, Esse returns to the market, where she usually stays until 9pm.

Esse was not attending school until she enrolled in PEP, the Promotion of Girls Education and Employment Project. Despite this, her grades are now the best in the class and her teacher, Mme. Atayi cites Esse's attitude as an example to her other students.

"In the past people had to read for me," Esse explains. "When someone called to leave a message for my aunt I couldn't even write it down. My life is much easier now. I am responsible for cooking at home and now I know how to do everything and write a plan so that is easier. I also know about hygiene now so my family are safer."