



Global Voices Information Sheet

Dreams still thrive in Dadaab's refugee camp



Kenya's Dadaab refugee camp

Background Info

- In 1986 there was an uprising in Somalia against the president, Siad Barre.
- In 1991, Barre left power, but fighting continued to worsen between pro-government and anti-government groups. There was also fighting between different ethnic communities.
- Even today, fighting continues between the transitional government in Somalia and rebel Islamic militants.
- Dadaab is the largest refugee camp in the world, built in 1991 as a result of the Somalia civil war. It covers an area of 50 square kilometers in northeastern Kenya and houses refugees who have left conflict areas across Africa to seek food and shelter.
- Over years, Dadaab has sprouted business and schools, but schools have very little resources. There are not enough textbooks for students and temperatures inside schools can reach 40 degrees Celsius. Because of these distractions, many refugee students do not pass basic primary school exams.
- East Africa is now experiencing the region's worst drought in over 60 years, and many parts of Somalia are suffering from famine. Every day, more than 1,000 refugees arrive in Dadaab, and the camp is now severely overcrowded, which means education at the camp will suffer even more from lack of resources.
- Education is a key part of ending the cycle of poverty, especially for refugees, because as people are displaced from their homes and farms and jobs, they lose the skills that they would use to build the economy in their home country.

Key terms

- **Refugee**—a person who has been forced to leave their home country to escape war, persecution or natural disaster.
- **Civil war**—a war between citizens of the same country.
- **Humanitarian aid**—food, medical or financial assistance provided to help stop human suffering and death and maintain human dignity.
- **Fledgling**—a person or organization that is immature, inexperienced or underdeveloped.

Global Voices Elementary Educator Resources

Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

Themes and Course Connections

- Themes: education, girls, women's rights, Dadaab, East Africa, drought, refugees, refugee camps and perseverance.
- Course Connections: The Arts, Language, Social Studies.

Materials

- Chart paper or blackboard
- Blank paper and drawing utensils
- Global Voices column

Specific Expectations and Learning Goals

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in written and spoken language or other forms of expression.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express, and defend a position on an issue and explain how to put the ideas into action.

Reading Comprehension

1. Guided Reading: The Global Voices Column (estimated time: 20 minutes)
 - a. Have students sit in a circle and distribute one copy of the Global Voices column to each student.
 - b. Pre-reading steps:
 - i. Make predictions: ask students to read the title of the column and view the pictures. After doing so, ask them to make predictions as to what the column is going to be about.
 - ii. Introduce vocabulary from the column.
 - iii. Assess prior knowledge: ask students to discuss what they already know about these topics.
 - c. Reading steps:

- i. Go around the circle and have each student read a section of the column to the class, so that everyone gets a turn to read.
 - ii. As students are reading, offer guidance and coaching by providing prompts, asking questions, and encouraging attempts at reading strategy application.
- d. Post reading steps:
- i. Encourage students to provide a summary of the column in order to ensure they have understood the series of events.
 - ii. Ask questions about the text to judge comprehension.

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Discussing the Global Voices Column (estimated time: 10 minutes)
 - a. Ask students the following suggested questions about the column, encourage them to use evidence from the Global Voices column to support their answers:
 - i. Who is Fatumo Mohamed?
 - ii. What is Dadaab?
 - iii. What is a refugee?
 - iv. Where is Somalia? Ask students to identify the country on a map.
 - v. Why did Fatumo and her family have to flee their village in Somalia?
 - vi. What is a civil war?
 - vii. What struggles do the refugees of Dadaab face?
 - viii. How did Fatumo discover her interests?
 - ix. Why is education important?
 - x. What is the message the authors are trying to put across in this column?
 - b. Conclude this discussion by clarifying any additional questions students have on the column.

Thinking

1. Fatumo (estimated time: 30 minutes)
 - a. Ask students to think about Fatumo and everything they have learned about her from the Global Voices column. Ask students to list some of these things.
 - b. If they were to represent Fatumo in a drawn picture, ask students what this picture would look like? What would be in this picture with Fatumo.
 - c. Divide the class into groups of four. Distribute blank paper and drawing utensils to each group.
 - d. Ask groups to work together to create a picture of Fatumo, including what they feel is the most important information they have learned about her from the Global Voices column.
 - e. When the drawings are complete, ask each group to present their drawing to the class, explaining how they have represented Fatumo.
 - f. Display completed drawings around the classroom.

Communication:

2. Dadaab (estimated time: continuous project)
 - a. Explain to students that Dadaab, the place where Fatumo is from, is a semi-arid town in the North Eastern Province of Kenya. It is now the largest refugee camp in the world. Explain that refugees, the vast majority from Somalia, are pouring into the Dadaab refugee camp because of the drought. They have survived long journeys by foot, seeking food and water after their crops failed and their water sources ran dry.
 - b. Provide students with the following additional information about Dadaab:
 - i. The camp now contains over 400,000 displaced people in three camps originally designed for 90,000.
 - ii. The drought is threatening 12 million people throughout the Horn of Africa, causing the numbers in Dadaab to continue to increase.

- iii. Thousands and thousands of tents and wooden huts line the camps, held together by branches and stems and topped by plastic sheets.
- iv. Life in the hot, arid camps is hard. There is rarely enough food or water, and safety is often uncertain.
- c. Explain to students that they are going to raise awareness in their school about the situation in Dadaab and the crisis in East Africa by creating a school bulletin board.
- d. Ask students to list the things they would like to tell their school community about Dadaab. Create a point form list on the board.
- e. Go down this list and ask students to describe how they can raise awareness about each of these items on their bulletin board. List these suggestions beside each item.
- f. Allow students to begin creating their class bulletin board. Encourage students to do additional research and search for pictures and articles to enhance their bulletin board display.
- g. When the display is complete, view the bulletin board as a class. Discuss the message it sends to their school community and the repercussions they hope this message will cause.

Application

1. Overcoming Obstacles (estimated time: 45 minutes)
 - a. Fatumo is an incredible success story of a young girl overcoming obstacles and rising above the odds.
 - b. Ask students to describe the obstacles mentioned in the column and the ways Fatumo overcame them in order to receive her education.
 - c. Depending on the children's/young adult literature available in the classroom, either remain in the classroom or visit the library.
 - d. Ask students to sort through the literature and find one story each about a character (male or female) overcoming obstacles and rising above the odds, just as Fatumo did.
 - e. Once students have found their story, divide the class into groups of four and ask each student to explain the following to their group members:
 - i. What is this story about?
 - ii. Who is the main character?
 - iii. What obstacles did they overcome?
 - iv. How did they overcome these obstacles?
 - v. How has this character inspired you?
 - f. When groups are finished their discussion, bring the class back together and ask each group to share what they have learned.

Additional Resources

In addition to the above lesson plans, you may want to share some additional resources with your students. Listed below are some links to useful online resources:

Free The Children – www.freethechildren.com

We Day Teach - <http://www.weday.com/teach>