

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

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Learning about Human Rights: Torture

Section One: Introduction

‘Creating a Torture free world’

An Amnesty International package of teaching resources for school teachers and educators in the informal sector

Aim of the Package

To provide teachers and educators with a generic resource that can be used to prepare lessons to assist children to understand that torture is a violation of human rights and can be prevented

'The prohibition of torture - in other words, respect for a person's physical, mental and moral integrity - is one of the human rights that admits of no exception and that must always be applied whatever the situation' (All human beings.... A manual for human rights education: The Teacher's Library, UNESCO Publishing).

Purpose

This package was prepared:

- as part of Amnesty International's 'Campaign Against Torture'
- to support the HRE work of AI sections and structures around the world by providing teachers and educators in the formal and informal education sectors with materials and ideas.

Guidelines for Use

This material is targeted at 'upper primary school' age (estimated at 10 - 12 years) but can be adapted as required by the teacher / educator for other age groups.

Torture can be included as a topic within a human rights education program for children;

Questions to ask when deciding to include this topic:-

1. 'what is the appropriate age to introduce children to the subject of torture?'
 2. 'which materials will inform without creating fear?'
 3. 'how can the topic be introduced safely?'
-

The answers to these questions will differ because all regions of the world and even countries within regions are different - the age that children begin school, the social and cultural environment, school curricula, teacher training, human rights priorities - these are a few issues that must be considered.

The decision on the appropriate age to introduce this topic to children is the responsibility of the teacher / educator

The package provides activities and relevant information to assist the teacher / educator to plan lessons for children to help them to understand why torture happens and why it is wrong.

The subject of torture should not be introduced in isolation but should be a component of a general human rights education program.

Care has been taken within the content to avoid references to torture techniques or instruments of torture.

Amnesty International's Human Rights Education Strategy aims as one of the long term goals for HRE programs:

'To reach a wide and culturally diverse audience of all age groups and so to realize our belief that all individuals have both the right and the responsibility to promote and protect human rights'.

Content

A sequence of interactive modules:

That can assist children to understand what constitutes torture by exploring its relationship with bullying

These modules aim to bring out children's own experiences and help them to link these with the topic and consider ways that torture and bullying can be prevented.

A collection of activities, stories and drawings:

That the teacher / educator can implement or use as ideas for other activities more relevant to their own situation.

Background material :

That provides a basic introduction to the subject of torture and some references for further study for the teacher and handout material for the children. These include a glossary, supporting summaries and information about Amnesty International.

A coloured booklet:

With pictures and stories that children can use as a reference or as part of an activity. The booklet provides ideas about forms of action that children can, if they want to, participate in.

Using the Package

- Select and adapt the lessons and activities depending on age, culture, experience and existing knowledge of human rights.
- Use to demonstrate that torture can occur in any culture or country and that campaigns to stop torture can be local, national and international.
- Combine with existing education programs on human rights or the rights of the child.
- Include as part of a program to create a better school or class room environment.

Child participation is a core concept of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child which says that all children have the right to be informed of their rights (Article 42). And have the right to expression of opinion (Article 13).

It should be noted that children also have the right to choose not to participate in actions against human rights violations.

The package was prepared by the HRE Team at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International in cooperation with experienced teachers and educators from AI United Kingdom, AI USA, AI Philippines, AI Morocco, AI Belgium and AI Senegal

A special thanks to Dan Jones and Anand Naidu (AI UK) for the cartoon drawings.

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Section Two: Sample Lessons

Understanding Torture: Lessons and activities for children

Aim: to assist children to -

- understand torture as a human rights violation
- learn about actions in everyday life that can help to prevent torture happening to people.

Objectives: Children will be able to-

- Recognise that bullying and some forms of violence and mistreatment happen for the same reasons as torture and produce the same feelings.
- Explain the difference between bullying and torture
- Describe some reasons why people are tortured
- Identify who can be called a torturer

- Identify and describe why torture is wrong
- Develop activities to promote awareness of torture as a human rights violation and that can also help to create an environment that prevents bullying.

Structure, methods and materials

This material is generic and can be amended to fit the experience of the children and their environment.

- ★ The lessons describe a series of activities intended to be conducted in sequence. They attempt to take children from experiences in their own lives and link these to the concepts involved in understanding torture.
- ★ The individual activities are examples of what can be used, other activities can be designed and substituted depending on the age and experiences of the children.
- ★ It is recommended that the background to torture, ‘Resource Material for Teachers’ in this package, is read prior to conducting the session. The information can assist teachers / educators to prepare explanations and descriptions of the issue that are suitable to the age group of the children involved in the lessons.
- ★ If the children have not received any human rights education previously it is recommended that an introductory lesson on human rights is conducted first. (Sample activities attached)

- ★ Methods include: drawing, discussion, brainstorming, plays, group exercises and handouts that can be photocopied and used to reinforce the children's learning.
- ★ Materials: paper, crayons, coloured paper and a chalk or white board.

Activity 1: Bullying

Purpose: to assist the children to think about 'bullying'.

- ★ Ask the children to form small groups of three or four. Give each group a piece of paper and pencils or crayons
- ★ Ask the groups to think about the word 'bully' and draw a picture to show an image of bullying.
- ★ Ask the children to paste their bits of paper on a wall or lay them out on the floor so that they can sit around them. Lead a discussion about their drawings, asking them to explain what they mean by the images.
- ★ Write key words that the children use on the board to refer to in later activities

Activity 2: What does it feel like to be bullied

Purpose: to explore the emotions of a person who is bullied

- ★ Ask the children in pairs to think about how it might feel to be bullied and write down one or two words that describe that feeling on a piece of paper.

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- ★ Ask the children to share their words with the class. List the different words on the board and get the children to help to make a statement from the words to describe what it feels like to be bullied. Write up the statement and place next to the images.
- ★ Summarise by explaining that bullying is about making someone feel bad or hurt on purpose.

Activity 3 - The difference between bullying and torture

Purpose: to illustrate the similarities and differences between bullying and torture.

Pre class preparation 1: Write the following statements in large words on paper and display in the classroom

Torture is about making someone feel bad or hurt *on purpose*. It causes pain and injuries to your body and to your mind.

Bullying is when somebody threatens, teases or hurts someone else to make them feel bad. It can happen in the school, at play or at work.

Pre class preparation 2: Put the following signs in two corners of the classroom

(1) 'Torture is'

(2) 'bullying is'.

- ★ Explain that torture is similar to bullying but some aspects are different because torture is more severe and there is an intention to cause pain and suffering.
- ★ Read out the 8 stories from the handout (Understanding Torture) at random and after each story ask the children to decide whether the story is bullying or torture by running to one of the corners.
- ★ Ask the children why they have selected a particular corner and discuss the reasons, encouraging them to change corners if they want to. Summarize the differences when all the stories are read out.

Activity 4: Why are some people tortured

Purpose: to illustrate that people are bullied or tortured for a reason

Pre class preparation 1: Write the 8 stories on separate cards (from the handout).
Make a set of stories for each child. Or make a set of the 8 cartoon drawings for each child (from the handout but without the headings).

Hand each child a set of cards or cartoon drawings.

Pre class preparation 2: Put the following signs as headings on a wall of the classroom.

- (1) What you know or what people think you know.
- (2) Who you are.
- (3) What you believe in.
- (4) What you have done or someone thinks you have done.

- ★ Read the stories again with the children, asking for one volunteer to read each story. Or read the story while the children look at the cartoon drawings
- ★ Ask them to think about the stories and what the people are like and what they are doing. Discuss their responses and then ask them to paste their stories or cartoons under one of the headings
- ★ Bring the children into a circle to discuss which headings they selected and allow changes if necessary.
- ★ Ask children to describe people within the school environment, without naming them, who might fall into these categories.
- ★ Reinforce that torture and bullying can happen to anyone, anywhere and explain that victims are often in a less powerful role. eg. part of a minority - use examples of people within the school.

Activity 5: Who are Torturers

Purpose: to identify that people classified as torturers, as opposed to bullies, usually have a role as a government worker or state official.

- ★ Divide the children into six groups.

- ★ Write the following sentences on separate pieces of paper and hand out to each group a set of papers.

Take suspected criminals to court
Help find lost people
Make sure people do not break the law
Help people in trouble
Be ready to protect the country
Obey orders
March in official parades
Help out in disasters
Make sure people do not escape
Treat people fairly
Stop people from hurting each other
Keep people in order

- ★ Ask the groups to talk about the following people and what they do: police officer, soldier and prison warder and divide the pieces of papers amongst the them. (This should create discussion as the tasks are quite similar to the three groups of people)

- ★ Explain that all these groups of people are supposed to protect peoples rights but sometimes they torture people. List the reasons on the board from the handout 'Understanding Torture' and discuss.

- ★ Ask each group to select either a police officer, a soldier or a prison warder and write a short story showing how they protect peoples rights.

Activity 6: Why torture is wrong

Purpose: for children to understand that people have a right not to be tortured and that this right is a human right.

- ★ Explain to the children why torture is wrong and illegal with reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (see handouts).
- ★ Ask the children in pairs to draw a picture to express what torture means to them and give it a caption to describe why it is wrong.
- ★ Ask children to sit in a circle and share their pictures and captions

or

- ★ Explain to the children that they have been asked to prepare a one minute media presentation about torture and why it is wrong.
- ★ Divide the children into groups and say that they can use any form of media eg. a slogan, a TV commercial, a poster, a song.
- ★ Give the children time to prepare. When they are ready each group will perform their presentation for the other children.

Activity 7: Practising respect and tolerance

Purpose: to help children to learn that having respect for people and being tolerant of differences will help stop both bullying and torture

Part One

- ★ Ask children to brainstorm words that have an opposite meaning to torture and bullying. Write the words on the board, through discussion encourage as many positive words as possible.

- ★ In a circle ask children to look at the words on the board and in turn, name one action they did yesterday that fits with these words and two actions that they will do today and tomorrow.
- ★ Explain that everyone has a responsibility to make sure that bullying and torture do not happen, at home, in the school and in the community.

Part Two

- ★ Divide the children into four groups and give each group one of the bullying stories and matching cartoon drawings.
- ★ Ask each group to prepare a short role play to demonstrate how to change the story so that it is not bullying.
- ★ After each group has performed the role play discuss the action they have demonstrated.

Part Three

- ★ Ask the children in small groups or in plenary discussion to draw up a charter of actions against bullying for the school and that this charter must apply to teachers, children and any other group of people having contact with the school (School Boards etc). This charter could be worked on over a period of time and prepared with pictures on special paper.

Activity 8: What can we do to help stop torture

Purpose: for children to understand about Amnesty International as a human rights organisation, the campaign against torture and how they can contribute to the campaign

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- ★ Describe Amnesty International and the campaign against torture using the booklet and handouts:
 - (1) What is Amnesty International
 - (2) What is a campaign
- ★ Put up the list of possible campaign actions and ask them to select one that they would be interested in and form groups for the selected actions.
- ★ These actions will then become school projects
- ★ Depending on what is selected provide instruction and materials for the action. Ask your local Amnesty International office to assist with materials such as case studies and background stories.

Possible campaign actions:

- Hold a demonstration or a public event to tell people about torture
- Write letters and sign / organise petitions to send to people in power asking them to stop torture.
- Ask people in the newspapers, television and radio to talk about these issues
- Make a sign saying 'Torture Free Zone' and use it to declare your room, house, school, street etc a torture free zone.
- Write stories, poems, songs about everyone's right to be treated fairly.
- Draw a candle in memory of a people who have been tortured and tell your friends and family what it means.
- Hold a school assembly about torture and the campaign to stop torture.
- Visit the torture campaign website: www.stoptorture.org.

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Section Three: Activities

Introducing children to human rights

If the children you teach have not yet been introduced to the topic of human rights, it is recommended that one of the following activities (or any other of your choice) is conducted prior to the lessons on torture.

Activity 1

Aim: To help children understand what human rights are and in particular to show that human rights are based on the basic human needs of all people.

What you need:

- * Copies of attached version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- * Flipchart and pens or a whiteboard and markers

Time required: About an hour and a half

How to do it:

- ★ Ask the children to imagine that they have been asked by the United Nations to make a list of all the things which children need to be happy and healthy. For example, food, play, air, love...
- ★ Write up all of the “needs” as they are suggested by the children on the whiteboard or flipchart paper without commenting or judging them.

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- ★ When there are no more suggestions, ask the class to discuss the ideas on the list one by one in order to identify which of their suggestions are really “needs” and which are “wants”. (For example, TV and chocolate would be “wants” and not “needs”).

- ★ Now show the group the summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Explain that years ago, the United Nations made such a list, and later it became the Convention. The Convention reminds the world’s nations of the needs of their children. Countries sign the Convention to show that they agree to make these rights real for every child. If you have a law in your country which incorporates the provisions of the Convention, you can explain this.

- ★ Ask them to compare their list of needs and the summary of the Convention. Which of their needs have been identified as rights? Are there any differences between the two lists? Why?

- ★ Ask the questions below and discuss the children’s responses:

Why do you think that the United Nations thought it was important to list children’s rights?

Why do you think the Convention is a list of needs, not of wants?

Do you think all the children in your country and in the world have all these rights?

Why or why not?

Look at one or two of the rights in the Convention. What might happen to deny a child these rights?

What can be done to ensure that children everywhere enjoy these rights?

Activity 2:

Aim: To enable children to explore and understand concepts of human rights and to familiarize them with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

What you need: * Copies of attached version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

* A whiteboard and markers or flipchart paper and pens

Time required: About an hour and a half

How to do it:

- ★ Divide the class into groups of four or five.
- ★ Read out the following scenario:

“Imagine that you have discovered a new planet where no one has lived before, and where there are no laws and rules. You and the other members of your group travel in a spaceship to live on this new planet. Together you are going to create a new community where everyone will live in peace and harmony and treat each other with respect.”

- ★ Allow 5 minutes for everyone to think about and list three rights which they believe should be guaranteed for everyone on the new planet.
- ★ Now ask them to share and discuss their list with the other members of their group. Together they must choose the 10 rights which they all agree are the most important.
- ★ Ask each group to give their planet a name and to write their 10 chosen rights on a flipchart or whiteboard where everyone can see them.
- ★ In turn a representative from each group introduces their list to the whole class. As they do this, the teacher should make a “master list” which should include all of the different rights from the group lists. (Some rights will probably be mentioned several times).
- ★ When all of the groups have presented their lists, discuss with the class whether some of the rights on the “master list” overlap or contradict one another. Can some similar rights be grouped together?

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- ★ Next give each child a copy of the simplified version of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Discuss with the class what are the differences and similarities between their list and the UDHR.

- ★ Use the following questions to discuss with the class and to draw out some of the learning points:
 - ★ **Are there any rights which the class now want to add to their final list?**

 - ★ **Which of the rights do you think are most important?**

 - ★ **Did your ideas about which rights were most important change during the discussion?**

 - ★ **How would life be if we were denied some of these rights?**

 - ★ **Do you know about any countries where children are denied some of these rights?**

 - ★ **What about in your own country?**

 - ★ **What should be done to ensure that all children everywhere have these rights?**

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Section Three: Activities

Lesson on torture as part of a human rights program for children

Instructions

- ★ The activity can be used as part of a program on human rights in schools or at children's summer camps (or related activities) that have a human rights theme, such as peace.
- ★ The lesson is for a maximum of 40 - 50 children.
- ★ It should be place towards the end of the program, so that the children have already gained an understanding of human rights and are relaxed with the facilitators and each other.
- ★ The facilitator will need to prepare 3 or 4 flip chart papers (depending on number of children and groups). Select the stories or create stories and write one on each piece of paper in large writing. Pictures can be used instead of stories.
- ★ Materials: flip chart paper, a piece of paper for each child and pens.

The Lesson

1. Introduce the lesson by explaining the purpose and linking it into the human rights or peace program.

2. If the children have been learning or writing songs as part of the program ask them to begin the lesson with one of the songs. Or find a suitable song for them to learn
3. Divide the children into 3 or 4 groups and ask each group to select a leader.
4. Ask the leaders to read out the story to the children or describe the picture and get the group to write a sentence that explains the story or picture.
5. The teacher / facilitator will then bring the groups together and explain torture to the children through questions and discussion.
6. The children are then provided with a piece of paper and crayons and asked to draw a picture or write a story to show what they think torture means.
7. The children then share and talk about their drawings / stories.
8. The lesson finishes with a song.

Ideas for Stories

Police arrest a young woman. They think some of her friends took part in a protest against the government. They blindfold her, keep her all by herself in a cold cell, tell her that her family do not know where she is and threaten to hurt her if she doesn't tell them the names of those friends.

A group of people live in one country but came from another part of the world, maybe as refugees. They have a different religion, speak a different language and have different coloured skin. They are arrested and beaten, even though they have not done anything wrong.

A group of people are demonstrating for the right to practice their religion in peace. The police and some other people in the crowd try to stop them by hitting and kicking them. The demonstrators were not hurting anybody.

A 'street child' steals a piece of fruit from a market stall.
The stall holder hits the child and locks him in the back of his truck with his hands tied behind his back and says that he will call the police and beat him if he makes any noise.

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Section Three: Activities

Dramatic Presentation on Torture for a School Assembly

Instructions

- ★ This dramatic presentation can be presented following the implementation of the modules on torture. It can provide children with the opportunity to practice using the information they have learnt. It may be more suitable for older children.
- ★ The scripts for the voices can be altered / amended so that the words and phrases are suitable for a particular cultural and social environment.
- ★ To maximise the effect of the presentation the stage or space can be decorated with posters and drawings and Amnesty's 'Take a Step to Stamp out Torture' campaign symbols can be used as a backdrop.
- ★ 12 children play a part in the presentation. They are 3 'voices' and 9 'witnesses' five girls and four boys. (each witness represents an appeal case from different countries around the world or a region).

- ★ The children need to practice speaking in strong, clear voices. Each witness can hold up a picture of the person they represent or a symbol of the country that they come from. Ask your AI Section for copies of appeal cases.
- ★ The 3 voices stay on stage for the whole presentation and the witnesses come to the stage when they are called by the voices. After they have spoken they remain on the stage.
- ★ The information in this text is based on cases from Amnesty International's recent research findings on torture.

The presentation

The 3 voices walk on to the stage wearing black clothes.

1st Voice: I am. I eat. I sleep. I live in my skin. I see and hear. I feel terror and pain and hate. I bleed. I feel sadness and regret. I worry. I love. I think. I hope and believe. I am proud of my culture, my colour, my sex and my religion. I am a musician, a poet, a farmer, a teacher, a doctor, a mother, a student, a child. I am me. I am a human being.

2nd Voice: **Torture**

1st Voice: Yes look at me. Me over here. You have seen me before - for a split second on the TV news - I was that protester, I was the person running across the square through the tear gas, the suspect criminal arrested, thrown into the police wagon, that face peering through the bars of the jail cell. Did you see what they wanted you to see? Me the outsider, the alien threat, the menace in a mob, the terror. BUT I am a human being.

2nd Voice: **Torture:** it should not be allowed.

3rd Voice: **Torture** means hurting people on purpose, hurting the body, hurting the mind. Torture to punish, to make people own up

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to things, to scare them. Torture is brutal. Torture is illegal. Torture takes place in secret. Amnesty International says that more than half the countries in the world torture their people.

2nd Voice: **Torture:** it stays with you forever

1st Voice: Try and see us as we really are, not like animals, chained in the dark, gagged in silence, dirty, scared to death, blindfold. We are ordinary people caught up in events beyond our control.

2nd Voice: **Torture:** it is like a cancer. It destroys the people who suffer it, the people who do it and the people who have to watch and who order it to be done.

3rd Voice: Here are some of the secret voices, the victims of torture. They have been chosen from Amnesty's international report of torture.

1st Voice: But we could have chosen them from almost any country.

3rd Voice: Amnesty International says torture takes place in more than one hundred and fifty countries across today's world.

2nd Voice: **Torture:** it is happening somewhere as we are here talking.

1st Voice: I call for **Vanessa** from Argentina

The first witness walks onto the stage

Vanessa: I was Vanessa. I was arrested in Cordoba, Argentina in February because I was who I was and because of how I was dressed.

In the police station I was kept all alone. Five days later I was dead. Why did I die? First they said it was because I had a heart attack. But on my body you could see I had been handcuffed and beaten with sticks.

The 3 Voices: **Take a Step to Stamp out Torture**
In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Marcus** from Nigeria.

The second witness walks onto the stage.

Marcus: I was Marcus from Nigeria. I was sent out of Austria last year. When I resisted the police wrapped me up in adhesive tape like a mummy. They even taped my nose and mouth. They carried me on to the plane by force. I could not breath. I was thrashing around wildly, trying over and over to get air. The officials did nothing. I suffocated. I died on the plane. Why?

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture
In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Jose** from Brazil

The third witness walks onto the stage.

Jose: I am Jose from Brazil. I am 16. Last June we were on our bikes on our way to the Bingo in Para. The police followed us. I was scared and fell off my bike. Then they kicked me and arrested me. They said we had drugs. They beat me over two days in the police station to try and get me to confess. When my mother finally got to see me I was in a bad way. I was in pain and bruised. I was hurt not just in my body but also in my mind. Now I am in hospital. Why am I in hospital? My mates told my mother that they thought I would be killed.

My mother is very brave because she has been speaking out on TV about what the police did.

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture
In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Sophia** from Kenya

The fourth witness walks onto the stage.

Sophia: I work for human rights in Kenya with my friends Pauline and Ester. In March we went to Tinet, to tell the people what their rights were. Suddenly we were all arrested by soldiers. They

told us we were a threat to Kenya's safety. They put us in a big cell in the women's prison with 39 women prisoners. Many of them were sick. We had to sleep on the floor. The food was terrible. Most of the time we had no water. They hit us with sticks if we did not do what we were told. Why? Am I not a woman? After 5 days and nights they let us go. Now they have dropped any charges against us.

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture

In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Abdulhelil** from China

The fifth witness walks onto the stage.

Abdulhelil: I am Abdulhelil. I am a Uighur man. We look different from other people in China. We speak our own language. I work on a market stall. I am a Muslim. One day we all went on a big protest march. We had banners and placards saying 'we want equal rights! we want justice!' They arrested hundreds of us. At the police station I was beaten on my back to make me tell on my friends. In jail the guards set a dog on me. Why? Am I not a man?

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture

In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Jeanine** from the Congo

The sixth witness walks onto the stage.

Jeanine: I am Jeanine, a civil war came to our village. I tried to run away. But soldiers captured me and took me to their army camp. They said I was a traitor. They kept on hitting me with a whip and hurting me. They said they would kill me. Then they let me go. I had done nothing.

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture

In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Amal** from Egypt

The seventh witness walks onto the stage.

Amal: My name is Amal. I am a Muslim woman. The security people said we had guns in our house in Egypt. It was not true. They took me and my husband in for questioning. They put cloth over my eyes. They hung me up by a rope and beat me to try and make me confess. I could hear my husband shouting from another room. After 24 hours of this I said that I would write down whatever they wanted me to. I signed those papers. Then they took me outside and let me go.

They used my confession to send my husband to jail for 25 years. When I spoke out about my torture, the security people came to my home and beat me up again and said they would kill me if I did not stop complaining. They said I had never been arrested or hurt. When a TV company wanted to film my story the security people threatened me again and bugged our home. Nobody should be treated like this.

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture
In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Monika** from Hungary

The eighth witness walks onto the stage.

Monika: I am Monika. I am 13. I am a Romany girl, some people call me a Gipsy. Early one morning in September many armed police raided our home in Budapest, Hungary. We were all in our night clothes. They told us that a pregnant woman had been attacked and lost her baby. They dragged us girls from our beds and slapped us, hurt us and swore at us. Elvira's hearing was damaged. They blamed us but we had done nothing wrong.

Norbet and the two other boys were badly beaten and threatened with death for being Romany. Then they let us all go. Nobody was charged with anything. We had done nothing wrong.

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture
In chorus

1st Voice: I call for **Perry** from the USA

The ninth witness walks onto the stage.

Perry:

My name is Perry. I am a prisoner, locked up for 23 hours every day in a super maximum security jail in Virginia, the United States of America. It is a terrible place. They make me wear a special electric belt around my waist all the time. If I am rude or break prison rules, the guards just press a button and I get a big electric shock. It hurts. It stuns me so I fall on the ground. It is painful. I get sick and often the shock makes me lose consciousness.

Shock weapons are banned in some countries but not here. I think that no one not even criminals in jail should be treated like this.

The 3 Voices: Take a Step to Stamp out Torture

In chorus

The 3 Voices and all witnesses in chorus:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 5: says 'No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.'

The 3 Voices and the witnesses can lead the school in a human rights song from

THE END.

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Section Three: Activities

Story to use in a lesson on torture

The man who listened to the bird singing

Written by Christian Merveille, illustrations in the original version are by Veronique Hariga. (Amnesty International Belgium).

Illustrations can be downloaded from the website - www.amnesty.org.uk

Translated to English by Dan Jones (Amnesty International UK)

Attached to the story are a list of questions for students to discuss.

The aim of this activity is to assist the children to understand human rights and torture through the use of a fairy tale.

- 1. Read the story through with the children.**
- 2. Ask the children to read it page by page and use the questions as discussion points.**

Teachers will need to use their professional judgement in deciding how to use this story in the classroom.

Today is a public holiday.

The King is coming. He will be passing through the town.

A great silence reigns on the streets.

The only sound that can be heard is the clatter of the horse guards as they make sure everyone is obeying the law.

“When the King comes all subjects must line the route. No-one must look at his Majesty.

Lie down, faces on the ground, hands covering the eyes, so nothing can be seen of the Royal Person.

Any infringement of this instruction is punishable by life imprisonment.”

And in the town everything is in order.

Everyone meticulously obeys the law, their faces on the ground
Waiting for the royal procession.

Everyone?

No!

One man is still standing up, ignoring the fuss.
Perhaps he is a deaf person who hasn't heard the order,
a blind person who hasn't seen the poster that is up on the four corners of the
town,
or a simple soul with nothing going on inside his poor head.

A soldier approaches.

"Lie down!" he yells.

"Hush" replies the man, putting his finger to his lips, *"I'm listening to the bird..."*

"No matter, the King is coming. Lie down..."

"But I won't be able to see the bird,,,"

"Lie down or I'll arrest you!"

"Arrest me if you like, but I want to see and hear the bird..."

The soldier takes him for a madman, arrests him without delay and takes him
out of town so he can be judged.

Above them flies a bird. Into all the winds it sings its song
that nobody hears : neither the King , nor the soldier. Nobody except the man
who hears it and understands.

*"So you have refused to prostrate yourself before the King. What have you to say
in your defence?"*

"I was trying to look at the bird which was singing..."

"This is no excuse for disobeying the law."

"I know, but I wanted to hear and to see the bird..."

"And what was the bird saying? This is important for me."

"It doesn't matter what the bird was saying. It was important for me."

"Listening to a bird..." murmurs the Judge in a mocking tone.

Then, in a big voice, he shouts out the sentence:

*"This man is condemned to life imprisonment in the prison of the High Tower. All
birds are to be hunted and locked up in big cages. "*

The soldiers are already taking the man to the prison.

Above them flies a bird and into all the winds it sings its song that nobody hears
:
neither the King , nor the soldier, nor the Judge.
Nobody except the man who hears it and understands.

And time passes, the days pass. A year and a day,
And, despite ill-treatment, and infected food, the prisoner is still alive.

His guards say that he passes his time at the bars of his narrow cell window.
Despite the hunting, one bird comes regularly to visit him.

When he sees it, he regains his power and strength.

They take him from his cell and lead him to a room where the torturer interrogates
him.

“Is this story about the bird true?”

“Yes, it’s true...”

“And just seeing it is enough to give you the will to live?”

“Yes, seeing it gives me hope. I love to look at that bird...”

“You are either wise or you are mad. No matter. You will not be seeing it any more...”

Then the torturer tears out the prisoner’s eyes so he can never see the bird again.

They lead him back to the prison. Above this sad procession flies a bird
and into all the winds it sings its song that nobody hears, :
neither the King , nor the soldier, nor the Judge, nor the torturer.
Nobody except the prisoner who hears it and understands.

And time passes, and the days pass.

A year and a day...The blind prisoner is still alive. At night he cups his ear,
smiling.

Nobody hears the bird except for him. And what he hears delights him. Despite
all that he suffers the prisoner smiles.

This intrigues his jailers who ask:

“Why are you smiling? What is making you so happy?

Does the bird still come to visit you?”

*“I don’t know. I can’t see it, but I can hear it. It is always night for me, but
outside it must be daytime as the bird is singing...”*

“That bird again. This man must be mad...”

They call in the torturer who tears out his ears.

Above them flies a bird and into all the winds it sings its song that nobody hears
:
neither the King, nor the soldier, nor the Judge, nor the torturer, nor the jailer
Nobody hears it, not even the prisoner.

Deaf and blind, the man is very unhappy.
He cannot see or hear the bird.
He tries hard to remember its song.
Some notes come back to him, and the memory helps him not to lose hope in the depths
of his night and his silence.

And time passes, and the days pass. A year and a day...the prisoner is still alive.

One fine day the King, alone inside his castle, has died.

At the announcement of his death, the men and women of this kingdom suddenly feel
free. All the bells start to - but the prisoner cannot hear them.
The great cages where all the birds were locked up are opened - but the prisoner
cannot see them flying away.

All the people of the Kingdom go into the castle to claim their freedom.
They don't want to bow down any more, they want to stand up. Everywhere the jailers,
the torturers, the judges, and the soldiers are running away.

The prisons are opened.
The prisoners stand up and find their freedom again.

In the depths of the dungeon only one prisoner remains. He is blind and deaf. He
cannot here the public rejoicing, he cannot see the smiles on all the faces.

Someone comes up to him, takes him gently by the arm and leads him outside.

He feels the sunshine on his skin.
This soft warmth brings him the taste of freedom again.

Suddenly a thousand birds pass near him, flapping their wings.
He can't see them. He can't hear them.
But he feels the whisper of their flight against his cheek.
He understands.
He can smile again.

A Fairer World: questions for discussion

The questions will assist students to think about the imaginary world of the story and their own experiences of the reality of today's world. Children can reflect on ideas of authority, justice, torture and resistance. This will help them to reach a better understanding of human rights and the need to take action in defence of human rights.

1. The Public Holiday

This is a picture of the town on the day of a Royal Visit, a public holiday. But the streets are empty. Why? What can you add to this picture to turn it into more of a festival?

2. The horse guards and the law

Why do people have to lie with their faces to the ground when the King arrives? What will happen, according to the story, if people do not obey the regulations when the King comes?

3. Faces on the ground

Imagine that one person stays standing up. Can you think of a time, perhaps in school, on the street, at home or in the playground when you, or somebody else that you know, has had the courage to say NO to something that is wrong? Can you think of anyone in history who has stood up and said no to unjust orders or to a dictator?

4. The guard gives orders

Do you think that the soldier was doing his job properly? In your country do people get arrested by the police? Why? Can you think of a country where the security forces arrest people for other reasons?

5. The man is taken away to be tried

Why does the soldier take the man out of the town? The soldier thinks he is mad. Is he really mad? At school or in the playground do some children get excluded from activities or games? Why? Have you ever said 'you are mad!' to anyone? Why?

Some dictators prefer to put away people who oppose their rule, or those who are different - those who talk another language, have another religion, culture, language, even colour, or behave in a different way. Sometimes the reasons given for excluding them are that they are mad or a dangerous threat. Who should decide if someone is mad or needs to be put away?

6. The man is sentenced to prison in the High Tower

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

If somebody is unfairly accused of doing something should they be defended? Who by?

In this trial there was a man accused of a crime and there was a judge. But one very important person was missing? Who was this? People accused of a crime have the right to be defended by a lawyer. What are lawyers for? Why does the judge order the hunt of the birds?

7. After a year and a day the prisoner is still alive.

Do prisoners have the right to proper food and good treatment? Is it usual to hurt people in prison? Is it legal? Why does the man get strength when he sees the bird? Can you think of any connection between the bird and the work of Amnesty International? Describe the connection.

8. He is taken to the torturer

Why has the picture gone black? Is a torturer someone who is doing his duty or is just carrying out orders or is very wicked and likes to hurt prisoners or is nice because he punishes bad people?

A torturer is usually a paid official, a person who uses his / her power to deliberately hurt someone else. They have been trained to hurt people with violence. They think that they will not be punished whatever they do and continue to carry out orders whatever they are, even if they are very cruel.

9. He is taken to prison

What is the prisoner feeling? What can the bird be telling him? Try and imagine yourself in the prisoner's skin. Take a pencil and paper. Now shut your eyes and see if you can draw the bird.

10. They call the torturer who pulls out his ears

Why do they not want the prisoner to hear the bird?

11. Deaf and blind, he is very unhappy

If you could give the prisoner one thing that might make him less miserable in his cell, what would that be?

12. One fine day the King dies

How should they choose a new King? Does a dictator have to die before power changes? Can you find out about any real situation that has happened recently where a dictator has been overthrown and democracy won, political prisoners freed and the jailers and torturers ran away?

13. All the inhabitants of the Kingdom went into the Castle to claim their freedom.

How do you think that torturers, guards and soldiers who have cruelly hurt people should be dealt with?

Find out about what happened to ex General Pinochet of Chile. Under his military rule many people were killed, tortured or 'disappeared' in Chile. Find out about Hussein Habre of Chad and General Videla of Argentina.

14. Suddenly a thousand birds flew near the prisoner

What do the birds represent in this story? Is the prisoner happier now? Do you think that he now regrets disobeying the King? What can you do, like the birds, to make a prisoner smile?

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

Section Four: Handouts

Simplified Version of the universal declaration of human rights

A summary of the Articles

Everyone is free and should be treated in the same way.

Everyone is equal despite differences in skin colour, sex, religion, language for example.

Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.

No one has the right to treat you as a slave nor should you make anyone your slave.

No one has the right to hurt you or to torture you.

Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the laws of a country.

The law is the same for all people, it should be applied in the same way to every person.

Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being persecuted or are in danger of being persecuted.

Everyone has the right to belong to a country. No one has the right to prevent you from belonging to another country if you wish to.

Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.

Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.

Everyone has the right to practise and observe all aspects of their own religion and change their religion if they want to.

Everyone has the right to say what they think and to give and receive information.

Everyone has the right to take part in meetings and to join associations in a peaceful way.

Everyone has the right to help choose and take part in the government of their country.

Everyone has the right to social security and to opportunities to develop their skills.

Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and to join a trade union.

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure.

Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living and medical help if they are ill.

Everyone has the right to go to school.

Everyone has the right to share in their community's cultural life.

Everyone must respect the 'social order' that is necessary for all these rights to be available.

Everyone must respect the rights of others, the community and public property.

No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

Section Four: Handouts

Simplified Version of the Convention on the rights of the child

The aim of the Convention is to set standards for the defence of children against the neglect and abuse they face to varying degrees in all countries every day.

Provision: the right to possess, receive or have access to certain things or services (e.g. a name and a nationality, health care, education, rest and play and care for disabled and orphans).

Protection: the right to be shielded from harmful acts and practices (e.g. separation from parents, engagement in warfare, commercial or sexual exploitation and physical and mental abuse).

Participation: The child's right to be heard on decisions affecting his or her life. As abilities progress, the child should have increasing opportunities to take part in the activities of society, as a preparation for adult life (e.g. freedom of speech and opinion, culture, religion and language).

Article 1: Definition of the child

Every human being below 18 years of age is entitled to the special protection of the Convention. Even if national laws vary the Convention allows all children to make certain decisions for themselves.

Article 2: Non discrimination

All rights must be granted to each child without exception. The State must protect the child without exception. The State must protect the child against all forms of discrimination.

Article 3: Best interests of the child

In all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be the major consideration.

Article 4: Implementation of rights

The obligation on the State to ensure that the rights in the Convention are implemented.

Article 5: Parents, family, community rights and responsibilities

States are to respect the parents and family in their child rearing function.

Article 6: Life, survival and development

The right of the child to life and the state's obligation to ensure the child's survival and development.

Article 7: Name and nationality

The right from birth to a name, to acquire a nationality and to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

Article 8: Preservation of identity

The obligation of the State to assist the child in reestablishing identity if this has been illegally withdrawn.

Article 9: Non-separation from parents

The right of the child to retain contact with his parents in cases of separation. If separation is the result of detention, imprisonment or death the State shall provide the information to the child or parents about the whereabouts of the missing family member.

Article 10: Family reunification

Requests to leave or enter country for family reunification shall be dealt with in a human manner. A child has the right to maintain regular contacts with both parents when these live in different States.

Article 11: Illicit transfer and non-return of children

The State shall combat child kidnapping by a partner or third party.

Article 12: Expression of opinion

The right of the child to express his or her opinion and to have this taken into consideration.

Article 13: Freedom of expression and information

The right to seek, receive and impart information in various forms, including art, print, writing.

Article 14: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

States should respect the rights and duties of parents to provide direction to the child in the exercise of this right in accordance with the child's evolving capacities.

Article 15: Freedom of association

The child's right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly.

Article 16: Privacy, honour, reputation

No child shall be subjected to interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence.

Article 17: Access to information and media

The child shall have access to information from a diversity of sources; due attention shall be paid to minorities and guidelines to protect children from harmful material shall be encouraged.

Article 18: Parental responsibility

Both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing of the child and assistance shall be given to them in the performance of the parental responsibilities.

Article 19: Abuse and neglect (while in family or care)

States have the obligation to protect children from all forms of abuse. Social programmes and support services shall be made available.

Article 20: Alternative care for children in the absence of parents

The entitlement of the child to alternative care with national laws and the obligation on the State to pay due regard to continuity in the child's religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic background in the provision of alternative care.

Article 21: Adoption

States are to ensure that only authorised bodies carry out adoption. Inter-country adoption may be considered if national solutions have been exhausted.

Article 22: Refugee children

Special protection is to be given to refugee children.

States shall cooperate with international agencies to this end and also to reunite children separated from the families.

Article 23: Disabled children

The right to benefit from special care and education for a fuller life in society.

Article 24: Health care

Access to preventive and curative health care services as well as the gradual abolition of traditional practices harmful to the child.

Article 25: Periodic review

The child who is placed for care, protection or treatment has the right to have the placement reviewed on a regular basis.

Article 26: Social security

The child's right to social security

Article 27: Standard of living

Parental responsibility to provide adequate living conditions for the child's development even when one of the parents is living in a country other than the child's place of residence.

Article 28: Education

The right to free primary education, the availability of vocational education, and the need for measures to reduce the drop-out rates.

Article 29: Aims of education

Education should foster the development of the child's personality and talents, preparation for a responsible adult life, respect for human rights as well as the cultural and national values of the child's country and that of others.

Article 30: Children of minorities and indigenous children

The right of the child belonging to a minority or indigenous group to enjoy his or her culture, to practise his or her own language.

Article 31: Play and recreation

The right of the child to play, recreational activities and to participate in cultural and artistic life.

Article 32: Economic exploitation

The right of the child to protection against harmful forms of work and against exploitation.

Article 33: Narcotic and psychotic substances

Protection of the child from their illicit use and the utilisation of the child in their production and distribution.

Article 34: Sexual exploitation

Protection of the child from sexual exploitation including prostitution and the use of children in pornographic materials.

Article 35: Abduction, sale and traffic

State obligation to prevent the abduction, sale of or traffic in children.

Article 36: Other forms of exploitation

Article 37: Torture, capital punishment, deprivation of liberty

State Obligation of children in detention. Children under 18 years shall not under any circumstances be executed and shall not be subjected to torture

Article 38: Armed conflicts

Children under 15 years are not to take a direct part in hostilities. No recruitment of children under 15.

Article 39: Recovery and reintegration

State obligations for the reeducation and social reintegration of child victims of exploitation, torture or armed conflicts.

Article 40: Juvenile justice

Treatment of child accused of infringing the penal law shall promote the child's sense of dignity.

Article 41: Rights of the child in other instruments

Article 42: Dissemination of the Convention

The state's duty to make the convention known to adults and children.

Article 43-54: Implementation

These paragraphs provide for a Committee on the Rights of the Child to oversee implementation of the Convention.

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

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Glossary

Abuse:

to treat somebody or something in a hurtful or damaging way.

A movement:

a group of people who work together for something they all believe in.

Bring to Justice:

when a person has not treated another person or people fairly they need to understand that what they have done is wrong. If it is proved that they have done something illegal they must be punished according to the law.

Demonstration:

a group of people gathered together in a public place to speak for something they believe in.

Detained:

when a person is made to stay in a place and have no contact with other people, for example, a prison or police station.

'Disappear':

when a person is taken away secretly or without an explanation by police or people from the government and other people do not know where they are or what has happened to them.

Discrimination:

when a person or a group of people are treated unfavourably because they are different, for example, where they come from, their skin colour, their beliefs, their age, their physical appearance or whether they are a boy or a girl.

Human Rights:

the rights that we all have because we are human beings. We do not have to earn or deserve them. Everyone in the world is born with the same human rights.

Illegal:

when something is done that is against the laws of a country.

Impunity:

to know that you will never be punished even though you have done something wrong or illegal.

Justice:

to be treated fairly according to the law.

Military

includes the army, navy, airforce and other government armed forces.

Petition:

a written statement asking someone in power to do something that is signed by as many people as possible.

Political prisoner:

a person who is put in prison because they are against the government.

Prisoner of conscience: someone who has been put in prison because of what they believe in or who they are and who have not used or encouraged violence.

Protest:

to speak out in public or campaign against something that you think is wrong.

Racial origin:

describing people by their skin colour and appearance or a shared culture, language and history.

Refugee:

a person who leaves their home and goes to another country because they are frightened for their safety.

Trade Union:

a group of workers who join together to protect their wages and working conditions.

Victims:

a person who is injured or in pain or has lost something because of an abuse of their human rights.

Volunteer:

a person who works for an organisation without asking for or being given wages.

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

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Understanding Torture

Torture is carried out in order to punish or get something from a person. It is done *on purpose*.

Torture is hurting or frightening someone by causing pain or suffering. The suffering can also be caused by *threatening* to hurt a person or the people the person cares about.

Torture is wrong, unjust and illegal and must never happen to anyone.

We have the right not to be tortured and we have the right to be free from the threat of torture.

Feeling safe and protected is a human right

Why are people Tortured?

People are tortured for different reasons. The following stories describe why some people are tortured. People can be bullied for the same reasons that they are tortured. Torture and bullying can make people feel frightened and miserable.

‘Torture and bullying can happen because of what you know or what people think you know’

Story 1: Bullying A group of friends have a secret hiding place where they keep special toys and games. The school bullies want to find out where the hiding place is, they force one of the boys in the group to come with them and then lock him in a shed. They tell him that they will not let him go until he tells them where the hiding place is.

Story 1: Torture Soldiers arrest a young woman. They think some of her friends took part in a protest against the government. They blindfold her, keep her alone in a cold cell and say they will hurt her if she doesn't tell them the names of those friends.

‘Torture and bullying can happen because of who you are’

Story 2: Bullying The parents of a girl in the school come from another country. Their language, the clothes they wear and their skin coloured are all different to other peoples parents. A group of children often tease this girl. They say cruel things about her parents and make fun of them.

Story 2: Torture A group of people live in one country but came from another part of the world because they are refugees. They have a different religion and speak a different language. They are arrested, called rude names and punched by police. They have not done anything wrong.

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Story 3: Bullying A girl in the class belongs to a community where the custom is that you never look an older person in the face when they are talking to you. A teacher at the school asks her to look at him while he is talking to her. She cannot do this and is punished for not obeying the teacher.

Story 3: Torture A group of people have organised to take part in a demonstration for the right to practice their own religion. The police and some other people in the crowd try to stop them by hitting and kicking them. They arrest the leader. The people at the demonstration were not hurting anybody.

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cf`gca YcbY`h`]b_g`inci` \Uj Y`XcbYÑ**

Story 4: Bullying Some boys are playing roughly in the classroom and making a lot of noise. They push a boy who is not playing with them against the class fish tank. The tank is knocked over and the glass breaks spilling water and the fish on the floor. The noisy boys run away leaving the boy who was pushed to face the teacher. He is sent to the head teacher with his parents. The boys who ran away accuse him of giving the teacher their names, they catch him and throw dirt and grass at him

Story 4: Torture A young boy, who lives on the street, steals a piece of fruit from a market stall. The stall holder grabs the boy and hits him. He locks him in the back of his truck with his hands tied behind with a rope and he calls a policeman who also hits the boy with a stick.

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Anybody can be a torturer

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Sometimes the police are torturers.

Maybe they want information about somebody or something, or want to force someone to confess to a crime, or sometimes just because they do not like a person.

Sometimes people in the military are torturers.

They might torture civilians -- people who are not involved in fighting wars -- or they may torture the enemy soldiers they have captured. Or they may torture people to get information or punish them for supporting the other side.

Sometimes prison officials are torturers

They might torture prisoners to punish them, to make them give information about other prisoners or to make them obey the rules.

Not all people who work for the government or the police force are torturers.

Because they have a special responsibility to protect people's rights. Most of them treat people kindly and with respect.

Torture is WRONG

"The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)" and the "United Nations Children's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)" say that:-

'No one has the right to hurt you or to ill-treat you (torture you).'

Torture is also illegal

In many countries, the people who are in charge of standing up for the law are the people who break it. Some governments use torture as a way of keeping their power. Some governments talk about human rights, but do not punish the torturers.

In many countries in the world, the persons who torture other people, do it with impunity (they are not punished for their actions). This is a problem because if torturers are not punished, people think that it is OK to use torture to get what you want.

Learning About Human Rights: Torture

Section Four: Handouts

What is Amnesty International ?

Amnesty International is a movement of people who try to protect the rights of all persons in the world - these rights are called:

Human Rights

The people in this movement are called 'members' of Amnesty.

Amnesty has more than one million members from 162 different countries.

Amnesty members work together to:

try to stop people from being tortured or treated unfairly and

to tell as many people as possible about their 'human rights'

Some things that Amnesty campaigns to stop governments from doing:

- jailing people for their ideas or because of who they are;
- not giving a fair trial to political prisoners;
- hurting or killing prisoners;
- using children as soldiers;
- sending refugees back to countries where they could be jailed or hurt;
- killing those who are against the government or making them "disappear".

Many Amnesty members work as volunteers, in groups or as individuals, on campaigns to protect people's Human Rights and to stop people from abusing human rights. Amnesty also has full time staff like researchers.

Every day Amnesty International researchers work to find out when people's human rights are not respected, whoever they are and wherever they live.

They tell Amnesty members, governments and the media all over the world about the things they find out.

WHAT IS AN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN?

Amnesty International has a campaign when it needs to tell people about a serious human rights problem - like torture.

'Take a Step to Stamp out Torture' Campaign

A campaign:

- ◆ asks people in power to take action to solve the problem.
- ◆ tells people all over the world about the problem and asks their help to take actions to stop the problem.

Some actions in a campaign:

giving out leaflets and posters

holding demonstrations and public events to show what is happening

writing letters and signing petitions to send to the people in power

asking people in the newspapers, television and radio to talk about these issues

making signs saying 'Torture Free Zone' to declare a room, house, school, police station etc a torture free zone.

write and share stories, poems, songs about everyones right to be treated fairly

draw candles in memory of people who have been tortured and tell friends and family what it means

hold school assemblies, public meetings or plays about torture and the campaign

visit the Amnesty campaign website: www.stoptorture.org

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

Section Five: Background Material

Resource material for Teachers

1. Introduction

The following information provides teachers / educators with some background information on the legal aspects of torture as a human rights violation and Amnesty International's position on torture.

Torture is a complex and emotional topic and cannot be defined solely by a list of prohibited practices. Definitions are influenced by international law as well as the culture and environment within which people live. Amnesty International works within the broad international definitions of torture and is conscious that these definitions cannot be rigidly applied but are there to provide a benchmark and assist in the interpretation of individual violations.

The task of interpreting the definitions in practice - and ensuring that they are applied consistently - falls to various inter-government bodies which monitor the compliance of states with their obligation not to commit torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

It is also difficult to draw a clear line between 'torture' and other 'cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'. Whether an act of ill treatment constitutes torture depends on a number of factors including the nature and severity of the abuse.

The aim of this educational material is to assist children to understand that violence in certain forms - torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment - is a violation of human rights. This can be done by providing them with some basic definitions and relating these to the human rights principles of respect and tolerance and the fact that violence in

any form has a negative impact on the development of a human rights culture at any level of society.

When piloting the materials it was found that most children can relate to the reasons for torture and the surrounding emotions from their own experiences. These experiences can come from observations of what is happening in their communities, what they see in the media and electronic communication or what has happened to them personally.

With the level of violence increasing all over the world - whether within local communities or through armed conflict - human rights education for young people, that includes an understanding of torture, can provide a benchmark for future behaviour. The use of interactive methodology can assist children to make more informed decisions about adopting attitudes of tolerance and respect as an integral part of their lives.

This resource will provide the teacher / educator with a basic understanding of the issue which can assist in preparing for lessons and activities or selecting and including parts that maybe suitable for the level of children they are working with.

Examples of torture techniques, actual case studies, the medical issues and the treatment of victims have not been included in this text because it is recognised that the brutal aspect of the subject is not considered appropriate for children.

Included are the major international legal definitions of torture that have been established to protect people against torture and summarized information from Amnesty International's 2000 report on torture. For those that are interested a list of resources has been attached.

2. What Amnesty International says about Torture

The following are extracts from 'Take a Step to Stamp out Torture' a report published by Amnesty International Publications in 2000.

Torture now occurs in more than 150 countries around the world even though torture is absolutely prohibited in all circumstances.

Learning about Human Rights: Torture

In more than 70 countries there are reports of widespread and persistent torture.

In more than 80 countries people die from torture.

Often the people who have responsibility for implementing laws are the ones that break them. Some governments use torture as part of their strategy for holding on to power. Many talk about implementing human rights but do not have the political will to hold torturers to account. In too many countries the people who commit torture do so with impunity.

Amnesty first began denouncing torture in the 1960's during the Cold War, when torture was mostly linked to military dictatorships or authoritarian regimes. AI's first campaigns against torture focussed on the treatment given to prisoners of conscience - the 'forgotten victims' kept hidden in jail by their governments. Not only were these people locked up for what they believed; they were tortured and ill treated in order to force them to change their views and prevent them speaking out or taking actions against their governments.

The world has now changed but torture continues to be used as an instrument of political repression in many parts of the world and those who challenge the governments in power, whether non violently or by taking up arms, are still likely targets of torture and ill treatment.

It is also obvious that torture happens in democratic states, victims can be criminal suspects, political prisoners, socially disadvantaged or people who are targeted because of their identity or beliefs. Victims can be men, women and children.

A recent Amnesty global survey into patterns of torture strongly suggests that the most common victims of torture and ill treatment are convicted criminals and criminal suspects. These cases are often not reported and in many countries it is the 'normal' way to treat criminals or suspects. These people are often the poorest and most marginalised in a society and so do not have a voice, discrimination against them often contributes to the lack of action in protecting them from torture or ill treatment.

Sometimes torture is used to obtain information or a confession, sometimes it is for punishment and humiliation.

Torture is often committed by police officers, soldiers, intelligence officers, prison guards or other agents of the state. But not always. Torture can also be inflicted by members of armed political groups. In some cases, private individuals can be responsible for acts of torture. Amnesty International considers that acts of violence against women, or other groups, in the home or in the community constitute torture, for which the state is accountable when it fails in its obligation to protect people from violence, through consent, acquiescence, or inaction, and when the violence is of the nature and severity envisaged by the concept of torture in international standards.

Amnesty works primarily to combat human rights abuses by states and armed opposition groups and usually uses the terms 'torture' and 'ill-treatment' to refer to acts involving the infliction of pain or suffering by state agents or similar acts by private individuals for which the state bears responsibility through consent, acquiescence or inaction.

The understanding of what constitutes torture is not fixed for all time. The enduring image of torture in the popular imagination is that of the political prisoner in the interrogation chamber. But torture and ill-treatment are inflicted on a much broader range of people than is generally realized. Torture is committed not just in the police station or prison cell. Not just in the army barracks or in the rebel encampment. Torture is committed in all these places, and in juvenile detention centres, refugee camps, on the streets and in people's homes.

Amnesty's Campaign Against Torture: Take a step to stamp out torture.

Aims to encourage people around the world to make a collective effort to eradicate the use of torture. The campaign builds on Amnesty's experience

of over 40 years of researching and working against torture. Amnesty, with its million plus members, is collaborating with human rights organizations, trade unions, community organizations and concerned individuals in order to strengthen the global anti torture network.

The campaign's strategy is to achieve progress in three major areas:

- preventing torture
- confronting discrimination
- overcoming impunity

Ending torture is a collective responsibility. Most of Amnesty's recommendations are directed at governments as they have the obligation, as well as the means, to bring about change and ensure respect for human rights. But NGOs, members of various professions and ordinary people also have important roles to play.

Ending torture is not only about changing national laws: most forms of torture and ill treatment are already illegal. Eradicating torture must be understood in the broader sense of doing away with an unlawful and unacceptable practice.

This means working towards permanent vigilance on the part of the institutions of government and civil society. It means implementing reforms to ensure that torture cannot persist as a routine practice.

It means that if isolated cases of torture should occur, there is a strong reaction from the public and the authorities which prevents the torturer from torturing again and which deters others from committing similar acts.

Then we will be able to say that torture is virtually unthinkable and that we have come as close as humanly possible to eradicating torture from the face of the earth.

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1975. The UN Declaration on Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

1976: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

1984: The Convention against Torture

1993: The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

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'No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'.

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in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms----'.

The UDHR therefore sets the basic minimum standard for protection against torture.

In order to ensure that this article is observed and that there is adequate international and national level protection for all persons against torture, the UN developed a number of universally applicable standards which have been adopted by the international community and clearly state that there may be no exception to the prohibition of torture.

The most important of these is:-

UN Convention against Torture

Article 1 states that:

For the purposes of this Convention, the term "torture" means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions."

Torture is characterised and distinguished from other forms of ill-treatment by the severe degree of suffering involved.

Cruel treatment and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment are also legal terms which refer to ill-treatment causing varying degrees of suffering less severe than in the case of torture. It is important to note that all forms of ill-treatment are prohibited under international law, so that even when ill-treatment is not considered severe enough (in legal terms) to amount to torture there can still be a violation of that person's rights.

This Convention was adopted in 1984 to protect victims and provide governments with international standards. It is one of the least ratified of the major human rights conventions, only 119 out of 193 states had ratified it by 2000.

Those states that have ratified the Convention must:

enact state laws that make torture a punishable offence and make it illegal for any government to revoke the laws under any circumstances (including war and public emergencies).

provide compensation and rehabilitation for victims of torture.

extradite torturers for trial and not provide a safe haven for torturers.

act as the prosecutor if extradition of a torturer is not possible.

The Convention establishes a United Nations Committee against Torture which comprises 10 internationally recognised human rights experts. All governments must submit 4 yearly reports to this committee about the measures they have taken to implement the Convention in their own countries. The Committee examines the reports and looks into complaints made by governments and individuals (where the state consents to allow such complaints to be made). The Committee can make public that a particular country has violated the Convention.

- A United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture is appointed by the UN Commission on Human Rights (a UN body made up of representatives from different states) to report on the occurrence of torture and relevant issues related to torture in all countries, not just those countries that have ratified the treaty known as the Convention against Torture. Activities of the Special Rapporteur include sending out urgent appeals, carrying out fact finding missions and reporting annually to the UN Commission on Human Rights.
- Other UN treaty bodies, such as the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of the Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child also consider issues relating to torture in the particular context of the rights set out in these

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