

Unit: CRISIS**Lesson: The AIDS Epidemic****Time:**

4-5 hours

Objectives & Skills:

Students will learn about the AIDS epidemic in Africa through various readings and dramatizations.

Materials:

Butcher paper or chalk board
See "Preparations"

Preparations:

Print [UNAIDS article](#) for each student.

Print [Reading Guide](#) for each student.

Print articles so that groups of 3-4 students have the same article.

Be sure your students are knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS, including how the immune disorder is contracted and spread, preventatives, and current treatments. If you are unsure of any of this information and believe your students need a better foundation, invite the school nurse, a community doctor, or public health worker to visit your classroom for a presentation.

Internet Links:

worldbank.org/html/extdr/hivaids/test/villagevoice.com/issues/9944/schoofs.shtml
villagevoice.com/issues/9945/schoofs.shtml
villagevoice.com/issues/9946/schoofs.shtml
time.com/time/2001/aidsinafrica/drugs.html
salon.com/health/feature/2000/05/18/aids/
salon.com/health/feature/2000/07/13/orphans/

Although HIV/AIDS is believed to have started in Africa, it was not yet a health crisis when Dan and his friends traversed the eastern part of the continent in 1990. None of the students could then have foreseen the staggering havoc that the disease would wreck on that part of the world:

- A decade later, as many as one in seven adults in some African countries are infected with HIV/AIDS.
- 5,500 Africans died every day from AIDS in 2000; that number is expected to more than double by 2010.
- By then, there are also expected to be as many as 13.2 million children orphaned as a result of AIDS, the majority of them living in Sub-Saharan Africa.

It's quite possible that if STA were to undertake a mission today, their destination would be an orphanage or health clinic trying to manage with the AIDS epidemic. The following activities will help you to better understand the enormity of this contemporary crisis.

Premeditation:

1. As homework, have students take the quiz about AIDS and developing countries offered by the World Bank. [worldbank.org/html/extdr/hivaidstest/]. Ask them to track their answers. As a class, discuss results that surprised them.
2. Use a What do you know/What do you think you know/What do you want to know activity to begin to focus the students' understanding of AIDS and Africa. On a piece of butcher paper or the chalk board, make three columns for each heading and then at the top of the page write the following question: "Two thirds of all people in the world who have AIDS live in Africa. Why has Africa been especially hard hit by AIDS?" Fill in the columns with their responses, and then leave it up for students to consider throughout the lesson. Return to it at the end of the activities, entering answers the students have discovered during their investigations. Be sure to return to any misinformation on the list and make corrections. "Africans are dumb," for example, has very different connotations than the fact that relatively few Africans have access to secondary, much less post-secondary education.

Activity I: The Overview

1. Provide students with the [United Nations overview of AIDS in Africa](#) as well as the [Reading Guide](#). As they read, students should complete the Reading Guide. When they're finished, have students switch papers with a classmate in order to grade their work.
2. Ask students whether there are other problems they can imagine contributing to the high occurrence of AIDS in Africa other than those mentioned in the article. Return to the "What do you know" list. If students become stuck, mention some of the following:
 - high rates of poverty,
 - lack of women's equality,
 - lack of access to education,

- low literacy rates,
- high rates of migration from rural to urban areas, especially men who travel to large cities for work for long periods and then return to rural areas,
- high national debts,
- lack of access to high-priced drugs that can control HIV/AIDS.

3.

Activity II: Dramatizing an Epidemic

1. Assign the following readings to groups of 3 or 4 students. Each group will be responsible for presenting the main idea(s) of their reading to the class via a short dramatization. They should begin by reading the article individually. Provide each student with a [Dramatization Check-list](#). (You may choose to print out the following articles for students, or provide them with a URL. The reading might be assigned as homework).
 - The Virus Creates a Generation of Orphans - <http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/9944/schoofs.shtml>
 - A Tale of Two Brothers - <http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/9945/schoofs.shtml>
 - Africa Responds - <http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/9946/schoofs.shtml>
 - Paying for AIDS Cocktails - <http://www.time.com/time/2001/aidsinfrica/drugs.html>
 - The Dream and the Coming Disaster - <http://www.salon.com/health/feature/2000/05/18/aids/index.html>
 - African Mothers: Save Us Too - <http://www.salon.com/health/feature/2000/07/13/orphans/index.html>
- 2.
3. Encourage them to re-read the article as a group, discussing it as they go and responding to questions in the check list. Allow students at least a class period to complete their Check-list and create a ten-minute maximum dramatization of their article. Also provide students with the [Dramatization Grading Rubric](#) which will help them to understand how their dramatization will be assessed.
4. Have students perform their one-act dramas for classmates. Audience members will need a rubric for each play. After a drama has finished, have students in the audience complete the grading rubric. You may want to allow a time for discussion after each rubric is completed, OR wait and have the class discuss the issues after everyone has performed. In a final discussion, ask the students what more they learned about AIDS through the performances? Did they gain empathy for the people in the articles? Did the statistics become more human? Is there anything they want to change on the class' What Do You Know lists?
5. Collect the rubrics and take these into consideration as you assess the performances. Along with your own feedback and assessment, be sure to share the student rubrics with the groups.

Extending the Activity:

1. Read the Time magazine article and look at the photo essay: www.time.com/time/2001/aidsinafrica/. Have students respond in journals or personal essays.
2. Encourage students to start an information campaign in their school or community regarding the AIDS epidemic in Africa. Collect money or other resources and research how best to share the profits.

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Lesson: **The AIDS Epidemic**

Reading Guide

Directions:

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions as you read the United Nations overview on AIDS in Africa.

1. What part of Africa has been the most adversely affected by AIDS?
2. Which country has had success with prevention programming?
3. Why are young people in danger of AIDS?
4. Why might girls be being infected at a higher rate than boys?
5. How does AIDS affect the economics of a country?
6. Describe the scope of the orphan problem in Zimbabwe.

7. Why are people hesitant to become foster families?

8. Give two examples of how people remain silent about AIDS.

9. When does this article seem to have been written?

10. Do you think the situation in Africa has gotten better or worse since then? Why?

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Reading Guide Answer Key

Directions:

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions as you read the United Nations overview on AIDS in Africa.

1. What part of Africa has been the most adversely affected by AIDS?

- *Southern Africa*

2. Which country has had success with prevention programming?

- *Senegal*

3. Why are young people in danger of AIDS?

- *Teenagers start to have sex at a young age (~14-15 years old in one country) but do not have access to sex education information in school. They have sex often but without protection, putting them at risk of contracting HIV and of teen pregnancy. The result is infected young people having babies to whom they can pass on the disease.*

4. Why might girls be being infected at a higher rate than boys?

- *Adolescent girls are often the sexual partners of older men who frequently believe that the girls are yet uninfected and thus safe partners. The men then infect the girls. Unwanted sexual intercourse which includes force is also associated with a higher infection rate.*

5. How does AIDS affect the economics of a country?

- *When someone dies, families must pay for his or her funeral and outstanding medical expenses. These alone are often cost much more than many families have and the money they spend on these things is then not spent in other parts of the economy, such as for food or clothing. The person who died most likely worked somewhere and no longer brings a paycheck home to the family. He or she is also lost as a valued employee, and the workplace must find and train a new person to do the job; this means the costs of rehiring and training. Businesses are also affected by growing health costs in the form of insurance and other benefits. Governments must provide services, such as public health*

campaigns and aid to orphans, which takes money away from other necessary programs and infrastructure.

6. Describe the scope of the orphan problem in Zimbabwe.

- *As of the writing of this article, there were an average of 10 orphans per commercial farm. By 2005, it is estimated that there will be 900,000 orphans-children under age 15-who are motherless.*

7. Why are people hesitant to become foster families?

- *It is believed that orphaned children bring bad luck.*

8. Give two examples of how people remain silent about AIDS.

- *Health care workers do not report needlesticks.*
- *Pregnant women refuse testing or do not return for their results.*
- *People caring for a person with AIDS do not admit that this is the disease, saying instead that the family member or patient is ill with pneumonia or something else.*

9. When does this article seem to have been written?

- *1998*

10. Do you think the situation in Africa has gotten better or worse since then? Why?

- *The article gives multiple estimates of future statistics, almost all of which are worse than the 1998 statistics.*

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Dramatization Check-list

I. Answer the following questions alone as you read the article:

1. In one sentence, summarize the main point of this article.
2. Who are the main people mentioned in this article? Give their names, approximate ages, roles (e.g., job, place in a family, etc.), and any noteworthy characteristics.
3. What setting are mentioned in the article? Include the country as well as more specific information, such as city or country, someone's house, a medical clinic, etc.
4. Are there any important statistics or other factual information provided? List them here.
5. Find a quote that you found especially important to understanding the meaning of the article and the AIDS situation in Africa. Write it here:
6. If you could share one part of this article—a scene, a person's experience, a statistic—with the class in order to help them better understand the AIDS epidemic in Africa, what would it be?

II. Compare your answers to the first six questions with other group members. Then read and respond to the following:

Your group will dramatize and perform part of this article for your classmates in ten minutes or less. Your goal is to help them understand the main point of the article as

effectively as possible. You do not need to include every character and every piece of information in your dramatization; in fact, you might present only a fraction of it. You may also choose to embellish and interpret information that is not in the actual article—such as someone's death that is only briefly alluded to—if you think it will enhance the dramatization. However, you must stick to presenting the main point of the article. As you plan your dramatization ask yourselves the following:

- Which scenes in the article are the most compelling? Which lend themselves most to being dramatized? An interaction between two family members may be more compelling than a meeting of government workers, for example.
- Can two scenes or parts of the article be combined? Perhaps two scenes are described in different parts of the article that could be combined for one dramatization. Don't assume you have to pull one section and then not include another just because it occurs chronologically or geographically separately in the article.
- Which character(s) do you most want to share? Is there a character who you feel you can envision? Perhaps someone is funny or sad or reminds you of someone you know. It may be easier to bring this character to life for your audience.
- Are there some facts and/or statistics that are especially important to include? How will you include these in the dramatization?

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Dramatization Grading Rubric

For each category, circle the response that best describes your experience of the dramatization.

MAIN POINT

- A) I could easily understand the main point of the article as based on the dramatization. (Write the Main Point on the back of this sheet.) B) I think I understood the main point of the article as based on the dramatization. (Write the Main Point on the back of this sheet.)
C) I am confused and unsure about the Main Point of the article as based on the dramatization. (Try to write the Main Point on the back of this sheet.)

CHARACTERS

- A) There were several characters presented. I got a sense of their personality and understood their role with regards to AIDS and the Main Point. B) There were several characters presented. I somewhat understood their personality and somewhat understood their role with regards to AIDS and the Main Point.
C) I am not certain which characters were presented. I am confused by their personalities and their roles with regards to AIDS and the Main Point.

SETTING

- A) I understood where the dramatization was taking place at all times. B) I mainly understood where the dramatization was taking place. Any confusion did not hamper my understanding of what was happening.
C) I am unsure where the dramatization was taking place. I felt confused by this aspect.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

- A) The dramatization presented three or more pieces of information about AIDS in Africa that were new and important to me. B) The dramatization presented 1-2 pieces of information about AIDS in Africa that were new to me.
C) I did not learn anything new from this dramatization.

EMOTIONAL INFORMATION

- A) This dramatization portrayed the emotional, real-life effects of AIDS on individuals in Africa very well. B) This dramatization portrayed the emotional, real-life effects of AIDS on individuals in Africa relatively well. C) This dramatization failed to portray the emotional, real-life effects of AIDS on individuals in Africa.

PERFORMANCE

- A) I was impressed by the group's preparation. They were easy to hear and understand; their dialogue was well written; and they brought the information from their article to life. B) I thought the group did a decent job. I could hear most of their lines; their dialogue made sense; and I generally understood the points they were trying to make from their article. C) I was unimpressed by the group's presentation. They were sometimes difficult to understand; their dialogue did not always make sense; and I was confused as to what they were trying to tell me about their article.