



*When children are denied their education, society as a whole loses out. Because education is more than a right. Education is a remedy. In a world gripped by economic crisis, conflict, and contagious disease, education can be a pathway to growth...a boost to public health...a stepping stone toward peace.*

**Queen Rania**  
Queen Consort of Jordan, UNICEF  
Eminent Advocate for Children

## Why Are So Many Children Still Not In School?

### Subject

Geography, Social Studies, Development, Citizenship.

### Learning Outcome

- To explore issues about the lives of children that cannot go to school.
- To empathise with the circumstances of other children.
- To learn about the barriers that some children face that stop them from being educated.



This lesson plan has been provided by A World At School. It can be used alone or as part of a series. See note at end of lesson plan. Written by Catherine J Nyman

### Preparation

Print or make available on screen the stories in appendix 1 and 2 for students to read.

### Teacher Note

Carefully assess if there are any children in the class who might be affected by the issues that the real stories raise. Offer support to these pupils.

Total Time:



Age Range:



World's Largest Lesson is a collaborative education project to support the announcement of the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development. The project is living proof of the importance of Global Goal 17 "Partnerships for the Goals" and would not have been possible without the help of all of our partners working with us and with each other.

Thanks to our Founding Team:



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Lesson plans created in collaboration with Think Global [www.think-global.org.uk](http://www.think-global.org.uk). Promoting learning for a just and sustainable world.



## Lesson Starter - Investigating the Issue

15  
mins

Look at Nick Sharratt's illustration in appendix 1.

Before beginning the activity, share with students that they will be investigating a problem and need to think like a journalist. They need to use 5 Ws and 1 H question throughout the lesson (who, what, why, where, when and how). Make it clear that not all the answers are here and they might need to do some further investigating.

Consider this text: A group of children from all corners of the world all sitting together at summer camp discussing their school stories. It is revealed that they don't all go to school, and some of the school kids are jealous:

US kid: 'I can't believe you can play all day, and don't have to do any homework.'

Indian boy: 'I can't because I have to go to work from noon till night, otherwise my family can't afford to eat. I so wish I could see my friends, and learn new things.'

Nigerian girl: 'I can't go to school because I'm a girl. People think I should be married and having babies, not at school learning. They think it's a waste of time. I want to be a doctor, but I won't ever have the chance.'

UK kid: 'You have to work but you're only 8? And get married.... ?'

## Differentiation and Alternatives

Consider asking what the pupils think the children in the picture will say before you read the text to them...does this match up with what the children are really saying?

Note on a board the key phrases that come up in the discussion that describe the barriers that these children are facing... e.g. 'I have to work, if I don't work we can't afford to eat.'

## Learning Activity

25  
mins

Use the real story slides in appendix 2 and talk about each one in detail. Use the 5 Ws and 1 H question starters.

Paired talking activity: What would it be like to be this child? How different is their life to your life? Write three questions that you would like to ask this child about their life. Develop your questions so you are asking a range of things. Use open questioning techniques to ensure that possible answers give you a range of information.

Review: Describe the learning in the lesson so far. Are the pupils able to elucidate more information in their answers? Have they understood the issues more thoroughly?

## Learning Activity

10  
mins

Personal reflection and short talking recap: If you had one wish for one of the children you have heard about today. What would it be? Ask students to write a paragraph explaining their wish.

## Differentiation and Alternatives

Research Challenge: Think about one of the barriers that we have talked about today and learn more about the one that interested you. Research and discover how many countries are affected. Build a list of websites that the class might be interested in and bring this list to the next lesson.

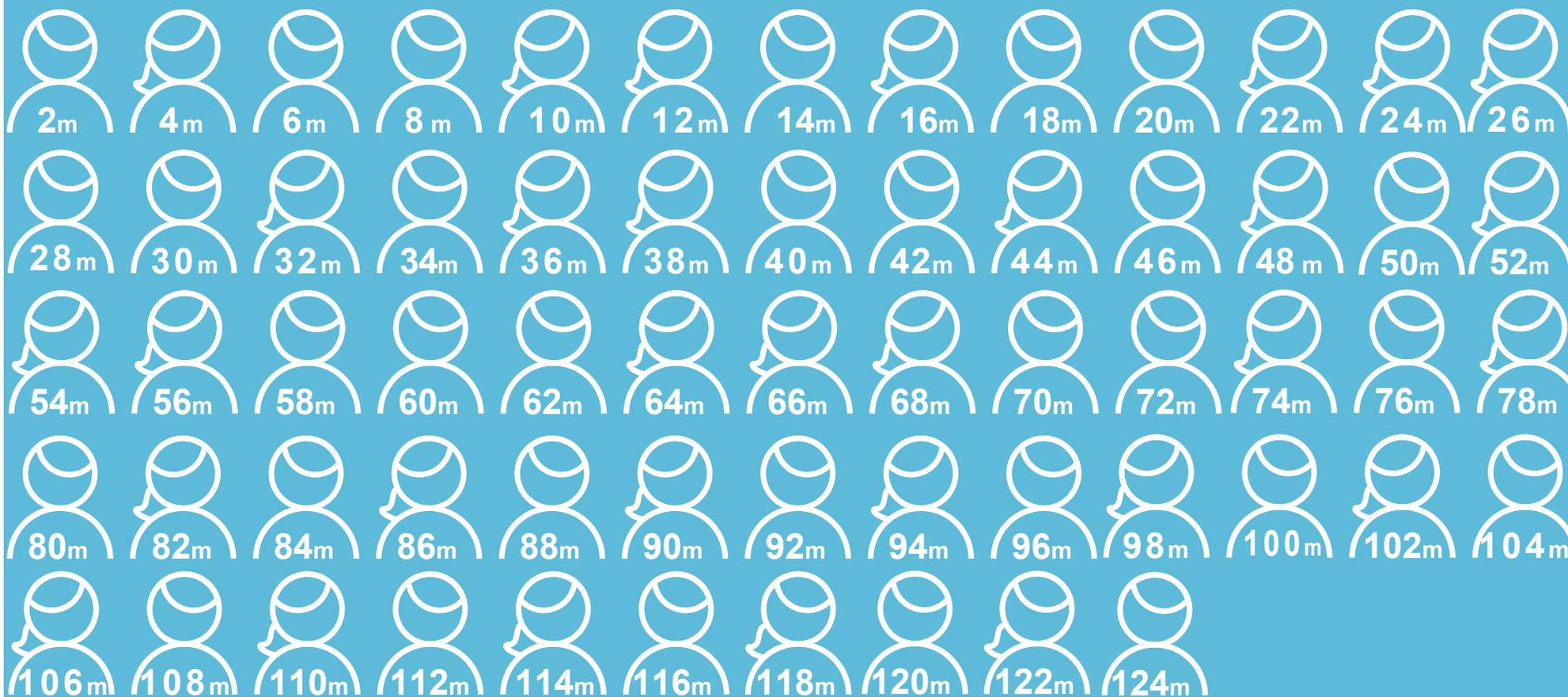


This lesson plan can be used alone or more ideally as part of a sequence of 5 lesson plans culminating in a school or group developing an in school campaign to support the ambition of enabling all children to go to school.

To review the full sequence of lesson plans please visit:  
<http://www.aworldatschool.org/resources/teachers-pack>

To take action in support of A World At School and the millions of children out of school go to [www.globalgoals.org/worldslargestlesson](http://www.globalgoals.org/worldslargestlesson) and review the lesson plan entitled 58 Million Children Are Not In School - What Can We Do To Help?

# There are 124 million children around the world who are not able to go to school



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2013. This is made up of 59m children of primary school age and 65m young adolescents.





**Why can't they  
go to school?**

## REAL STORIES CHILD LABOUR

Name *Gudiya*  
Country *India*

Age *9*

**Gudiya is 9 years old. She used to love school. She was a very good student who worked hard and wanted to be a doctor when she grew up.**

However, when Gudiya's father died she had no other option but to drop out of school and earn money to help her family put food on the table.

She now works as a servant, cleaning dishes and doing chores in a rich man's house so she can help provide for her family who are so poor that they have no choice.

This homework note came from her notebook 2 days after she was forced to leave school:

### *Today's Home Work*

- 1. Beg and collect 20 rupees from Mehrauli-Badarpur crossing*
- 2. Clean and wash the dishes at Mrs. Sharma's house*
- 3. Knead the dough for the evening meal*

# REAL STORIES CHILD MARRIAGE

Name *Myness*

Age *15*

Country

*Malawi*

**Myness lived with her grandmother in such extreme poverty that they couldn't even afford to buy soap to wash. When Myness was 13, her friend convinced her to marry a man much older than her who could afford to take care of her.**

Myness believed this was the only option, swapping her school life so not to burden her grandmother with taking care of them both when they had such little money.

But after she married, life became even worse as her husband spent all the money he had on himself, and left her without food.

Luckily her Grandmother sought help and Myness is now back at school learning to build herself a better future now free from her husband.



## REAL STORIES DISCRIMINATION

Name *Malala*

Age *17*

Country *Pakistan*

**In 2009 a Pakistani school girl called Malala Yousafzai wrote a diary for the BBC after she was forced out of school by the Taliban.**

The Taliban are a group of people with extreme views and believe that women should not be educated after the age of eight. Malala was 11 years old when the Taliban took over her home town of Mingora, in Pakistan, and she and her friends were forced to leave school.

She decided to share her feelings and the injustice she felt in a diary.

**From her diary – I am afraid – 3 January 2009**

**I had a terrible dream yesterday with military helicopters and the Taliban. I have had such dreams since the launch of the military operation in Swat. I was afraid going to school because the Taliban had issued an edict banning all girls from attending schools. Only 11 students attended the class out of 27. The number decreased because of Taliban's edict."**

Malala found a way to go to school against the Taliban's wishes, but they found out and when she was just 15 Taliban boarded her school bus and shot her in the head. She was badly injured but she survived.

Malala is now in school protected from any harm. Outside of school she is an activist for female education and the youngest-ever Nobel Prize winner.



## REAL STORIES CONFLICT

Name *Mohammed* Age *15*

Country *Iraq*

**When Mohammed was 15 years old, he and his four brothers, and two sisters were caught in the middle of a horrible conflict in their hometown.**

Bombs and rockets went off without warning, shattering their town. Their father was injured when an explosion went off right next to their own home, smashing windows and the family car.

Mohammed's school was closed despite important exams coming up. The family were trapped at home for weeks, unable to leave and see their friends.

When the violence calmed down, schools reopened but Mohammed's school was very affected. The windows were shattered, desks and chairs destroyed, broken toilets and nervous, distressed students. Even when peace was declared, parents were too scared to send their children back to school for fear of them being unsafe.

Mohammed explains his dreams for the future:

**"I want to learn how to become a mechanical engineer and need teachers to do their best to help me. I dream that when the war ends, we will be able to go to school and play freely like other children."**

