

Teacher's notes: Lucy's story

Objective

Students learn about the life of a girl living in rural Uganda. They consider the differences and similarities between their own lives and Lucy's, and between living conditions in Australia compared with Uganda. Students develop their listening, recall, and storytelling skills by recreating "Lucy's Story" as a picture book.

Resources

- Film clip: A Day in the Life of Lucy (available at www.worldvision.com.au/schoolresources)
- Laptop with an internet connection, and a data projector
- Colour pencils
- Optional 1 x copy Student Handout – My life and Lucy's per student
- Optional 1 x copy Student Handout – Compare your life story with Lucy's per student
- Optional Storybook Pages – "A day in the life of Lucy"
- Optional blank A3 size paper

Note: Recommend print out the Storybook Pages on A3 paper.

Activity

Show students the film clip "A Day in the Life of Lucy". Have a class discussion about the story they have just seen. What surprised them about Lucy's story? What questions do they have? Any questions could be written on the board, and either explored during the day or as part of a short research project.

For younger students, draw a Venn diagram on the board, and as a class discussion, ask students to identify what things are different between their lives and Lucy's, and what things are similar.

Option: For older students, give them either a copy of "My life and Lucy's" handout or "Compare your life story to Lucy's" to complete. The handout My Life and Lucy's provides a blank Venn diagram for students to fill in similarities and differences. The handout "Compare your life story to Lucy's" supports students by asking students to respond to a series of questions from both Lucy's perspective (based on what they've seen in the film clip) and their own personal response. Students then work with a partner to make a list of similarities and differences.

Encourage students to think not only about differences and similarities between their personal lives and Lucy's, but also about the general differences between living conditions in Australia compared with rural Uganda.

As a class, retell Lucy's story as a storybook. The Storybook Pages "A day in the life of Lucy" can be used, or the class may wish to tell Lucy's story in their own words. In pairs or threes, students are each given one page of the storybook to write and/or draw an appropriate picture on (including the cover and final page). The class book can then be compiled.

Option: The class could be split in half, with each half creating their own version of a storybook about Lucy's life. In this activity it is likely students would each work on one page of the book on their own. The two class books could then be compared with each other, to see what are the similarities and differences between how the groups have told Lucy's story, and what they might imagine about her life.

Notes

Information on Uganda is available in the Teacher's Notes for the activities "Where is Uganda?" and "What is poverty?"

Additional information is also included below, which may address some of the students' questions, and help students complete the handout "Compare your life story with Lucy's".

In the film clip it mentions that Doreen's husband dies from tuberculosis. Tuberculosis, or TB, is an infection of the lungs caused by a specific germ. It is a very serious, but treatable illness, and a vaccine does exist. If the tuberculosis infection becomes 'active', treatment takes between 6 months to 2 years, and relies on taking prescribed medicine regularly.

TB causes a very bad cough, including coughing up blood, also fever and chest pain. It is rare in countries like Australia, where good food and clean water are readily available and people have an easily accessible health care system, including a reliable supply of medicines.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that one-third of the world's population is currently infected with the TB bacillus, and that about five to 10 percent of these people will become sick. In 2009, an estimated 1.7 million people died from TB. Most of these people lived in Africa.

Millennium Development Goal 6, Target 6c includes halting and beginning to reverse the incidence of TB by 2015. There has been some progress against this target, with WHO estimating that the global incidence rate of TB peaked in 2004.

Source: <http://who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs104/en/>, <http://www.kidspot.com.au/familyhealth/Infections-&Diseases-Lung-&-Respiratory-Tuberculosis+2407+200+article.htm?gclid=ClzqsLPC-aUCFQHbywodHD-CA> [accessed 20 Dec 2010]

Some common foods in Uganda, that Lucy and her family are likely to eat, include:

- ugali, a porridge-like dish made from either maize (corn) or millet;
- matoke, a special type of green banana that is boiled and mashed;
- stews are common, often made from either groundnuts (peanuts), beans or other greens (occasionally a little meat is used); and
- simsim paste, made out of roasted sesame, it can also be mixed in to stews or with groundnuts.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ugandan_cuisine [accessed 20 and 22 Dec 2010]

Some additional information about Lucy and Doreen:

Lucy was adopted by her aunt, Doreen, when both of Lucy's parents died. Doreen started looking after Lucy when Doreen's sister first became unwell. Lucy was a small child at the time, and considers Doreen to be her mother.

They live in a refugee camp for Internally Displaced People. The family left their village due to armed conflict in the region. They have been in the camp village for four years.

When Doreen's husband also died, she was left as the single parent to 10 children. Two of her biggest challenges are earning an income to support her family, and obtaining enough food for everyone to eat. Typically the family only has two meals per day. The most important thing for Doreen is to stay healthy herself so she can take care of her children, as she says "when you are healthy you are able to work".

Source: transcript of an interview between Lucy, Doreen and World Vision staff.

A story about Doreen, Lucy's aunt and adoptive mother, from World Vision News Online, October 2010.

A mother's love knows no bounds

Doreen has lost her husband, home and income but has enough love to welcome Lucy.

When World Vision met Doreen in Uganda earlier this year, she had already faced enormous upheaval and many challenges in her life. Doreen has eight children but extends her love to two additional children, including nine-year-old Lucy, who was orphaned when both her parents died from HIV and AIDS.

"I call Doreen mother because she is the one taking care of me and she is the one who has adopted me, I think of her as my own mother," says Lucy.

Doreen has witnessed many problems in her community. Malaria and tuberculosis are constant threats and there is limited access to health services, education and reliable food supplies. A prolonged rebel war has kept thousands of people in fear of returning to their homes.

"We've lived in the (refugee) camp for four years," Doreen says. "We came to the camp because of the insurgency, the rebel activities, you couldn't stay in the village because they could abduct you and even kill you."

Unfortunately this move has left her without access to her land and a steady income. It's difficult for her to support her family. She cuts bamboo in the bush and fetches water for people to make bricks. Through this, she earns some money to take care of her children, but there are times when there is very little food.

"When I think about how we used to live in the family with my husband because he used to provide for us, now all the burden is on me," she says. "The children are still young and there is still a long way to bring them up."

It has been very difficult for Doreen to support her family of ten alone.

Doreen's husband used to do some contract work and earn some money to look after the family. "My husband fell sick and was taken to the hospital and it was found he had tuberculosis. He was in hospital for six months then died." He was 37 years old.

Doreen is naturally worried that, as a single mother, if anything happened to her it could mean her children are left alone. But she laughs when asked how she stays positive amid all the challenges:

"You have to be because you need to have a strong heart and be happy so when they look at you and they see a happy face then they also be happy. If you are sad and moody all the time then the children will feel sad," says Doreen.

We asked Doreen about her hopes for the future. "I want to educate my children, support them through, that when they grow up they can get a job and a way of earning a living and then they can even support me."

Doreen has shown us the strength of a mother's love, while retaining her sense of humour and a fierce determination to care for all her children equally.

Source: http://trans.worldvision.com.au/news/newsonline/viewArticle_enh.asp?aID=3&eID=88&environmentID=3 [accessed 15 Dec 2010]