

Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

Violence Reignites in Darfur, 03/31/08

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/jan-june08/darfur_3-31.html

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

[Student Worksheet](#) (reading comprehension and discussion questions without answers)

PROCEDURE

1. WARM UP

Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

2. MAIN ACTIVITY

Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

3. DISCUSSION

Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. Where is Darfur? What country is it a part of and what countries border it? Locate Darfur on a map.

2. What is going on in Darfur?

3. Explain what genocide means.

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – [Student Worksheet](#)

1. How did the conflict in Darfur begin?

ANSWER

The fighting started in early 2003 when black Africans from Darfur rebelled against the country's Arab Muslim leadership, seeking infrastructure improvements, oil revenues and a standing in the government. The government responded by sending in forces to quell the rebellion and reportedly financing efforts by the Janjaweed militia to fight the rebels. The roving bands of militia fighters burned villages, and raped and killed people in Darfur.

2. How many people have had to leave their homes in Darfur to escape violence? Where did they go?

ANSWER

The conflict, according to the BBC, has led to more than 2 million people fleeing their homes in Darfur to live in refugee camps along the border with Chad, in a dry, isolated part of Africa where it is difficult for aid workers to reach them.

3. What has the Sudanese government's response to the crisis been?

ANSWER

The Sudanese government denies the claims that it uses its military to target its own people.

Efforts to stabilize the country have been met with roadblocks from the Sudanese government, which until last year resisted calls to replace an overburdened African Union security force with an international peacekeeping force in Darfur.

4. How many peacekeeping troops are in Sudan? Is that going to change?

ANSWER

As violence continued and international pressure increased, a new peacekeeping force of 26,000 African Union and United Nations troops is set to move into the country to replace the existing AU contingent of 7,000 people, according to The New York Times.

5. What has happened to the two main rebel groups in the conflict?

ANSWER

The rebel groups themselves have splintered into smaller groups with different demands, making it difficult to reach peace agreements.

6. What connection does China have to Sudan?

ANSWER

China has been accused of helping the Sudanese campaign by engaging in economic trade with the country -- a link that led American filmmaker Steven Spielberg to withdraw from his advisory role to this year's Beijing Olympics. However, the Times reported that pressure put on China to change its stance toward Sudan has succeeded in convincing China to push for the peacekeeping force.

7. What are some of the incentives the United States is offering Sudan's president to encourage him to end the conflict?

ANSWER

U.S. diplomat to Sudan Richard Williamson discussed lifting sanctions, removing Sudan from the list of countries that sponsor terrorism, and renewing diplomatic relations with the country if it cooperates, according to the Los Angeles Times.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Evaluate the peace efforts by the international community. Is enough being done? Why or why not?

2. Look up the term genocide. Do you think the situation in Darfur qualifies as genocide? Why or why not? What is the significance of President Bush calling the conflict genocide?

3. Pick one of the following characters:

Sudanese government official

U.S. diplomat

Humanitarian worker in Sudan

United Nations peace keeper

Sudanese refugee in Chad

Research your role, then write 3 paragraphs explaining your character's view on the conflict, what you think should happen next, and who you think is responsible for creating the conditions for peace.

Extension Activity

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.