



Lost Childhoods:

Exploring the Consequences of Collective Violence

Subjects: world history, language arts, sociology, psychology

Grade Level: 9-12



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Credits, Acknowledgements

Writers

Facing History and Ourselves
www.facinghistory.org

Producers

Cara Mertes
Executive Director, P.O.V.

Theresa Riley
Director of P.O.V. Interactive

Eliza Licht
Community Engagement Manager, P.O.V.

Design: Rafael Jiménez

Thanks to those who reviewed this guide:

Pennee Bender,
*Associate Director of curriculum development,
CUNY's American Social History Project*

Janet Brinkop
*ESL teacher for adult students in Redwood City,
California*

Sara Cohan
*research fellow at Teaching Tolerance in Montgomery,
AL, former junior high and high school history teacher*

Tammy Filardo
*social studies high school teacher,
Dodgeville High School, Dodgeville, WI*

Amy Fowler
*8th grade teacher at John Adams Middle School in
Santa Monica, CA*

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Overview

Three films that are part of the P.O.V. series on PBS are featured in this resource. All three document childhoods lost as a result of war, collective violence, or oppression. Through these stories, we encounter disturbing and painful histories that are too often overlooked in history textbooks. These are not stories about people in distant places but about individuals who are a part of our own country. They live in our neighborhoods and contribute to our communities in large ways and small.

For over 25 years, Facing History and Ourselves has been bringing the stories of survivors of the Holocaust and other genocides to classrooms across the nation and around the world. Although we know from experience that those stories are difficult to hear, they can literally change the way students and teachers view history and themselves. The stories told in **Lost Boys of Sudan**, **Discovering Dominga**, and **The Flute Player** reveal that the devastating events we read about in the newspaper or watch on TV did not happen to faceless numbers. They happened to real people, people with names and faces and families and dreams. They happened to people just like us.

These thought-provoking films teach empathy and compassion. They help us understand the difference between coping with memories of a painful history and actually confronting the past. Each also offers valuable insights into the meaning of such terms as resilience and courage. And each reveals, in the words of a refugee from Sierra Leone, “the world is a spider web. A break in the web affects the whole.” Mending the web—preventing future genocides and acts of collective violence—is central not only for the survivors but also for the world as a whole.

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The Documentaries

All three documentaries focus on individuals who were orphaned as a result of a war in their homeland. Each came to the United States as a refugee. Refugees are persons who flee to a different country because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on their race, religion, social group, or political views.

Lost Boys of Sudan

For the last twenty years, a civil war has raged in the East African nation of Sudan, killing an estimated two million people and displacing more than four million. The Dinka tribe has been the hardest hit. *Lost Boys of Sudan* follows two young Dinka refugees, Peter Nyarol Dut and Santino Majok Chuor, through their first year in the United States. As small boys, Peter and Santino lost their families in the war and were forced to flee their

homes. Along with 20,000 other orphans, they wandered across the desert seeking safety. After a decade in a Kenyan refugee camp, nearly 4,000 came to the United States as part of a resettlement effort. The documentary follows Peter and Santino as they, along with a few other boys, set out to make new lives for themselves in Houston, Texas.



Discovering Dominga

A young Iowa mother discovers she is a survivor of one of the most horrific episodes in Guatemala's 36-year civil war. In 1982, Denese Becker was a nine-year-old Mayan Indian girl named Dominga Sic Ruiz. That year, soldiers killed her parents and more than 200 other residents of Rio Negro, who resisted relocation to make way for a dam. A United Nations-sponsored Truth Commission later termed the massacres at Rio Negro and about 440 other villages "genocide." Genocide is an attempt to murder an entire people and remove all traces of their culture. Dominga escaped to the mountains. Months later, surviving relatives brought her to safety in a nearby town, and at the age of eleven, she was adopted by a couple from Iowa. Years later, haunted by nightmares and scattered memories, she returned to Guatemala with her husband and a cousin. Their journey to uncover the truth about her past changed her life. She has become a witness in a landmark human rights case, which seeks to prosecute the military commanders responsible for the genocide.



The Flute Player

In 1975, when Arn Chorn-Pond was just nine years old, the Khmer Rouge, a Communist guerrilla army, took over Cambodia and began to reconstruct Cambodian society by "cleansing" the population of ethnic Vietnamese and other minorities. The Khmer Rouge, under the leadership of Pol Pot, also targeted people who were educated, lived in cities, or belonged to the middle class. In all, nearly two million people—one fifth of the nation—were slaughtered. Among them were members of Arn Chorn-Pond's family. He survived in a forced labor camp. Later, he was forced to serve as a child-soldier in a war with Vietnam. In 1979, he managed to escape to Thailand, where he met the American minister who adopted him. After twenty years of living in the United States, he returned to Cambodia to revive its musical heritage.

Organization of Teacher's Resources

This resource is divided into four lessons. The first uses a poem to introduce an idea central to all three documentaries. Each of the remaining lessons highlights a single film. The four lessons can be used individually or in any combination depending on course objectives and student interest. Suggestions are provided for adapting the three film-based lessons to the needs of classes unable to view the documentaries in their entirety. Suggestions for evaluation and a correlation to curriculum standards follow the lessons.

- 1.** Past and Present
- 2.** Lost Boys of Sudan
- 3.** Discovering Dominga
- 4.** The Flute Player

Acknowledgments

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Lesson One: Past and Present

Objectives:

- **To explore the relationship between history and identity;**
- **To analyze a poem;**
- **To relate the ideas in a poem to personal experiences.**

Duration: 1 class period or less

Correlations to Standards: See Appendix.

Introducing the Poem

What is the relationship between our past and the way we live our lives today? How does our history shape our identity—our sense of who we are and what we may become?

Xuefei Jin was born in 1956 in a part of China then known as Manchuria. He came to the United States in 1985 as a student and remained as a refugee from the oppressive government of the People's Republic of China. Although English is his second language, he is an award-winning novelist and poet who writes only in English under the pen name Ha Jin. In a poem entitled "The Past," Ha Jin reflects on the relationship between past and present, history and identity.

Teaching Strategies

1. Give students a copy of the poem (Reproducible 1). Ask volunteers to read aloud the poem stanza by stanza and then discuss the meaning of each. What does it mean to view the past "as a shadow"? How does one "wall" the past "into a garden"? How does one set up the past as a "harbor"? What might prompt someone to "drop the past like trash"? To regard it as a "shroud" or burial garment?
2. After students have analyzed each stanza, discuss the poem as a whole. How does the poet view his own relationship with the past? What does he mean when he writes, "the past cannot be thrown off and its weight must be borne, or I will become another man"? How does he seem to challenge that idea in his poem? Why do you think he decides to "stitch" his past into "good shoes," "shoes that fit my feet"? Invite students to describe their relationship with their past in a journal or notebook. Encourage them to edit, revise, or expand that description as they learn about the relationships other individuals have had with their past.

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Lesson One: Past and Present – Reproducible

The Past

I have supposed my past is a part of myself.
As my shadow appears whenever I'm in the sun
the past cannot be thrown off and its weight
must be borne, or I will become another man.

But I saw someone wall his past into a garden
whose produce is always in fashion.
If you enter his property without permission
he will welcome you with a watchdog or a gun.

I saw someone set up his past as a harbor.
Wherever it sails, his boat is safe—
if a storm comes, he can always head for home.
His voyage is the adventure of a kite.

I saw someone drop his past like trash.
He buried it and shed it altogether.
He has shown me that without the past
one can also move ahead and get somewhere.

Like a shroud my past surrounds me,
but I will cut it and stitch it,
to make good shoes with it,
shoes that fit my feet.

By Ha Jin

"*The Past*" in *Facing Shadows* by Ha Jin. Hanging Loose Press, 1996, 63.



Lesson Two: Lost Boys of Sudan

Objectives:

- **To analyze the connection between history and identity;**
- **To explore what is gained and what is lost in learning a new culture;**
- **To develop a working definition of the word *refugee*.**

Duration: 3 class periods
(includes time to watch the entire film in class)

Correlations to Standards: See Appendix.

Options: For classes unable to view the entire film, the lesson may be adapted by sharing a brief synopsis of the documentary with students and its key concepts (see “Introducing the Film”) and then show the part of the film that focuses on the boys’ first weeks in Houston (1:18:31-1:33:11). The third Teaching Strategy can provide a basis for a discussion of the clip and ideas for using it to deepen an understanding of what it means to be a refugee.

Introducing the Film

Lost Boys of Sudan follows Peter Nyarol Dut and Santino Majok Chuor, two boys from the East African nation of Sudan, during their first year in the United States. When the film opens, the boys have been living in a refugee camp in Kenya for ten years. As young children, they fled the country after losing their families in a long, bitter civil war. Before their departure for the U.S., the elders in the camp try to instill in them the importance of returning to Sudan one day to help their people. Immediately after their arrival in Houston, Texas on September 1, 2001, the boys begin to face the challenges of life in a place very different from any they have known.

The “lost boys” are refugees. Dictionaries usually define a refugee as someone who flees his or her homeland in fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, ethnicity, membership in a particular social group, or political opinions. How is a refugee like an immigrant? What difference seems most striking? Ask

students to list some of the challenges a young refugee might face in the United States, particularly in a large city like Houston.

To develop geographic understandings and deepen an appreciation of the distances the “lost boys” have traveled, locate Sudan on a map of the world. Then ask students to trace the boys’ journey step-by-step as they watch each part of the film.

Reflections

After watching *Lost Boys of Sudan*, allow time and space for students to react personally to the film. For some, it may raise painful memories. Invite students to use their journals or notebooks to answer one or more of the following questions:

- What do you remember best about the film? What individuals, images, or events stand out?
- What details or incidents in the film helped you understand the boys’ identity, history, and experience?
- Before you saw the film, what challenges did you think the boys might face? What challenges did they actually encounter? Which proved to be the most difficult to overcome?
- What values, character traits, and attitudes seemed to help the boys succeed in their new lives? What seemed to hinder their efforts to succeed?

Encourage students to share their observations with a partner. Was everyone struck by the same images and events? The same stories? How do you account for differences?

How do we learn about another culture? How do we learn to see the world through someone else’s eyes? According to many psychologists, it is natural to view others as representatives of groups even though we see ourselves as unique individuals. Throughout the film, the boys make judgments about life in the United States and Americans based on limited knowledge. The Americans who have dealings with the boys make similar judgments. To what extent are those judgments stereotypes? A



Lesson Two: Lost Boys of Sudan

stereotype is a label or judgment about an individual based on the characteristics of a group. Stereotypes tend to divide a society into us and them. Ask students to identify at least two stereotypes in the film. What does the film suggest about what prompts someone to alter a stereotype? What helps someone see others as individuals rather than as members of a group?

Teaching Strategies

1. “Who am I?” is a question that each of us asks. In answering, we define our identity. Divide the class into small groups and ask each to create two identity charts for Peter or Santino—one before he arrived in the U.S. and one a year later. on page 11 is an example of an identity chart. Individuals fill it in with the words they call themselves as well as the labels society gives them. Have students list both sets of words. Then ask them to circle the words the boys use to describe themselves and underline the labels others attach to each boy.

Most people define their identity by using categories important to their culture. They include not only “race,” gender, age, and physical characteristics but also ties to a particular religion, group, and nation. How do the labels others attach to Peter or Santino influence the way he sees himself? The choices he makes? How do past experiences shape his identity?

Have students compare and contrast their two identity charts. How do students account for the changes in each boy’s identity? Invite groups to use their identity charts to decide which stanzas in Ha Jin’s poem (Reproducible 1) best describes the way Peter and Santino have defined their identity at various times over the year of filming.

2. Replay the first few minutes of the film (1:01:13-1:02:49) and discuss the paintings featured in this part of the film. The narrator is Santino. What do the drawings add to our understanding of the story he tells? How did the artist use color to underscore the mood at various points in that story? Invite students to use art—music, poetry, storytelling or drawings—to tell one boy’s story from his arrival in the United States to the end of the film. Divide the class into small groups. Ask half of the groups to focus on Santino’s story and the other half on Peter’s story. Remind each group to give its story an appropriate title. Encourage each group to share its work with the class in much the way Santino shares the drawings in the film. To what extent are the two stories similar? How do students account for differences?

Ask students to imagine a meeting between Peter and Santino ten years from today—perhaps at a reunion like the one shown in the film. Have each group use art to describe the meeting and then share its work with the class.

3. Discussions about the status of refugees today may be a sensitive topic in some schools. If appropriate, ask students what challenges young refugees face in the world today. Encourage students to draw not only on the film but also on their own experiences or those of people they know or have read about. To gain further insights into the difficulties refugees face, share with the class two stanzas from an anonymous poem. The author was one of 10,000 children sent to England as part of an effort to save young Jews from Nazi-controlled nations just before World War II began in 1939.

Write the two stanzas on the chalkboard and then invite a volunteer to read them aloud. Ask students to identify the key word or words in each stanza. What does it mean to “survive alone”? To see oneself as “a ghost adrift without a country”? Use the key words to discuss the title of the poem. What does it mean to be “cast out”? In what sense is the author “lost”? Have students compare and contrast the poet’s experiences with those of Peter and Santino. What similarities do you notice? How do you account for differences?

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Lesson Two: Lost Boys of Sudan

Cast Out

Sometimes I think it would have been
easier for me to die
together with my parents than
to have been surrendered by
them to survive alone. ...

Sometimes I feel I am a ghost
adrift without identity
what as a child I valued most
forever has escaped from me
I have been cast out and am lost.

"Cast Out," from *We Came As Children:
A Collective Autobiography.*
Edited by Karen Gershon. Harcourt Brace, 1966.



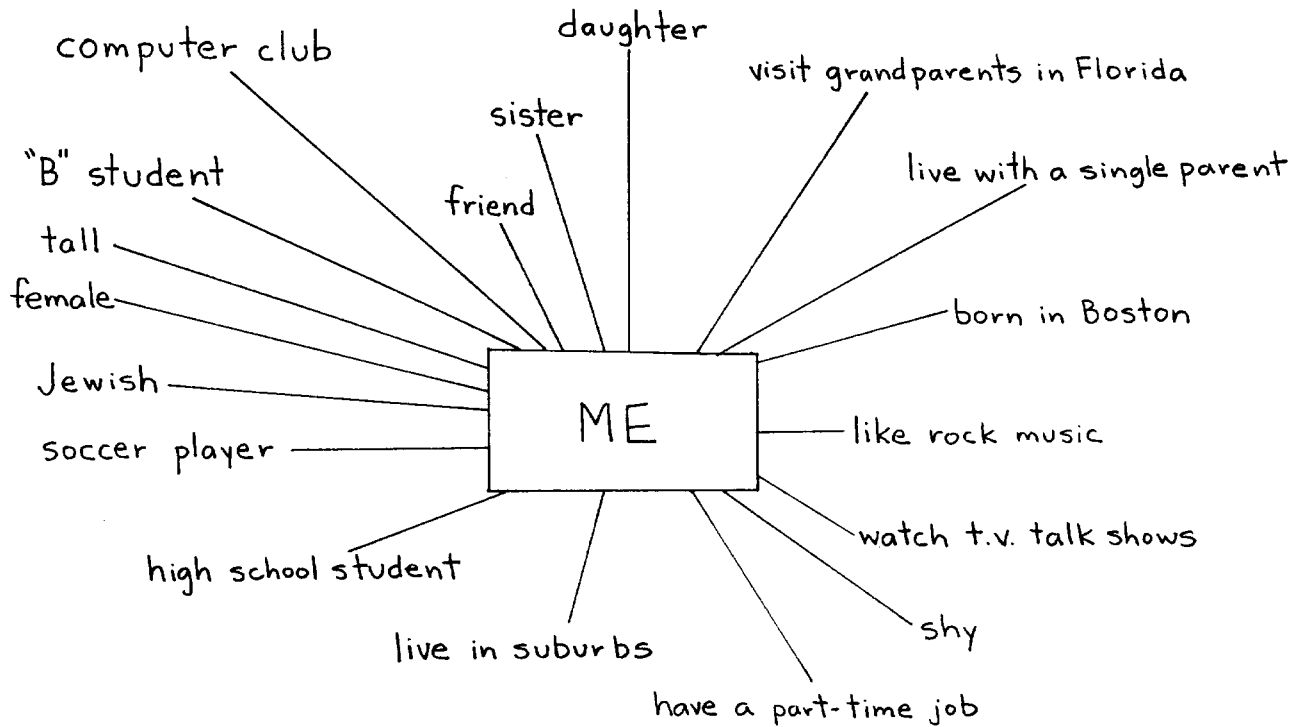
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Lesson Two: Lost Boys of Sudan – Reproducible

Sample identity chart



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Lesson Three: Discovering Dominga

Objectives:

- **To learn about history and memory through the experiences of one woman;**
- **To trace the impact of one woman's experiences on her identity;**
- **To trace a journey of self-discovery to gain insights into decisions about judgment;**
- **To explore what it means to recover a lost identity.**

Duration: 3 class periods

(includes time to watch the entire film in class)

Correlations to Standards: See Appendix.

Options: For classes unable to view the entire film, the lesson may be adapted by sharing a brief synopsis of the documentary with students and its key concepts (see “Introducing the Film”) and then show the part of the first part of film (1:00:00-1:24:43). It describes Denese Becker's early life and her first trip to Guatemala since her adoption by an Iowa family. The third Teaching Strategy can provide a basis for a discussion of the clip and ideas for using it to deepen an understanding of what it means to witness a crime.

Introducing the Film

Discovering Dominga describes Denese Becker's efforts to recover her lost identity. It is a journey that leads to the exposure of a genocidal crime and a new quest—this time for justice for her parents and other victims of government-sponsored massacres. In 1982, Denese Becker was a nine-year-old Mayan Indian girl named Dominga Sic Ruiz. She lived with her parents and baby sister in Rio Negro, a remote village in the mountains of Guatemala, a country in Central America. That year, soldiers and paramilitary patrollers murdered her parents and 200 other villagers for resisting relocation. The government wanted to tear down the village to make room for a new dam. Similar massacres took place in 440 villages nationwide. A United

Nations' Truth Commission later labeled the killings a “genocide.” According to a 1948 convention on genocide, a genocide is an act committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. In this case, the army wanted to destroy the Maya people.

Young Dominga managed to escape into the mountains. Months later, her surviving relatives brought her to safety in a nearby town. At the age of eleven, Dominga became Denese, after a couple from Iowa adopted her. She had not only a new name but also a new identity and a new life. Yet her nightmares and scattered memories of violence suggest that the past continued to haunt her despite her efforts to focus on the present.

Before showing the film, orient students by helping them locate both Guatemala and Iowa on a map of the Americas. As students watch *Discovering Dominga*, ask them to pay attention to the details of each step of Denese's journey of discovery: (1) her first trip to Guatemala as an adult; (2) her return to Rio Negro for the commemoration of the massacre during which her mother was killed; (3) Denese's decision to testify in the genocide case; (4) Denese's return to Guatemala for the exhumation of the bodies of her father and two other men in the village; (5) Denese's return to Iowa. Encourage students to jot down their impressions as they watch her journey unfold.

Reflections

Discovering Dominga is a powerful film that raises troubling and often painful questions about memory and identity. Allow time and space for students to react personally to the film by discussing it with a partner or writing in journals or notebooks. When students are ready, have them use their journals or notebooks to answer one or more of the following questions:

- What do you remember best about the film? What individuals, images, or events stand out?
- What details or incidents in the film helped you understand Denese's experiences?
- What did Denese, her husband Blane, and her cousin Mary learn on their journeys to Guatemala? How did their new knowledge affect their lives?



Lesson Three: Discovering Dominga

Ask students to share their observations with a partner. Was everyone struck by the same images and events? The same stories? How do you account for differences?

Teaching Strategies

1. Since she was eleven years old, Denese Becker has coped with a painful past by trying to ignore her history. Over the years, she has forgotten her native language, Mayan customs, even the details of her parents' death. Yet she is haunted by nightmares that seem too terrible to have really happened. As an adult, she sets out to confront her history. It is a difficult, often frightening, journey. Working in small groups, students might be asked to trace Denese's journey by creating a chart. For each part of her journey, have students identify the people who helped her; what she learned; her responses to the information she gathered; and the choices she made.

Ask students to reread "The Past" by Ha Jin (Reproducible 1). Then have them use their charts to decide which stanzas best describes Denese's relationship to the past at the beginning of the film, after her first trip to Guatemala, and at the end of the film.

2. Four months after Denese and her husband Blane returned from Guatemala, they spoke at a church in Algona, Iowa. Ask students what Blane shared at that meeting. How do they account for his anger? What does the audience seem to learn from his talk? How important is that learning? Is it enough to know that a wrong has been done?

3. Share with students the following lines from a poem by Tich Nhat Hanh, a Buddhist monk who was born in Vietnam. He now lives in exile in a small community in France where he teaches, writes, and works to help refugees.

Flarebombs bloom on the dark sky.
A child clasps his hands and laughs.
I hear the sound of guns,
and the laughter dies.

But the witness
Remains.

Copy the poem onto large sheets of paper. Divide the class into small groups and give each one large sheet. Ask groups to engage in a silent conversation by writing their explanation of how the poet defines the word witness. How do students define the word? Is a "witness" someone who knows what happened? Or is a witness someone who not only knows what happened but also testifies to what happened? What is the difference between the two definitions? How important is that difference? In what sense was Denese's husband a witness? To what extent was Denese's cousin Mary a witness? How does the term apply to Denese? Give students 10 minutes to complete their work and encourage them to respond in writing to one another's comments. Then invite students to walk around the classroom silently reading the comments of other groups.

When students have completed their rounds, discuss as a class what the poet means when he writes that "the witness remains." In what sense does a witness remain? For what purpose? To what extent are those who tell Denese's story witnesses?

From *The Witness Remains, Call Me by My True Names: The Collected Poems of Thich Nhat Hanh*. Parallax Press, 1999, 26.

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Lesson Four: The Flute Player

Objectives:

- **To understand how one individual has struggled to come to terms with his history;**
- **To explore the relationship between a nation's cultural heritage and its identity;**
- **To consider how one can learn from the past to build a safer future.**

Duration: 3 class periods

(includes time to watch the entire film in class)

Correlations to Standards: See Appendix.

Options: For classes unable to view the entire film, the lesson may be adapted by sharing a brief synopsis of the documentary with students and its key concepts (see “Introducing the Film”) and then show the part of the film that focuses on a meeting between Arn Chorn-Pond and a former child soldier in the Khmer Rouge (1:38:53-1:44.21). The first Teaching Strategy can provide a basis for a discussion of the clip and ideas for using it to deepen an understanding of what it takes to rebuild one’s life after a tragedy.

Introducing the Film

Explain to students that Arn Chorn-Pond is a survivor of the Cambodian Genocide. In 1975, a Communist named Pol Pot and his guerilla army, the Khmer Rouge, overthrew the government of Cambodia and systematically killed about two million people as part of their efforts to rebuild the nation as a Communist state. They targeted artists, minorities, urban dwellers, people with some education, and the middle class. As the terror spread, towns were emptied, schools closed, and temples destroyed. At the age of nine, young Arn became one of thousands of orphans held in forced labor camps.

In 1979, Vietnam invaded Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge responded to the attack by arming orphans like Arn and sending them into battle. Most of the children did not survive. Arn not only survived but also found a way to escape in the confusion of battle. He eventually reached a refugee camp in Thailand. There,

Peter Pond, a Lutheran minister and an American aid worker, befriended and later adopted him along with several other orphans. Help students place the story in a geographical perspective, by asking them to locate Cambodia on a world map and then trace Chorn-Pond’s journey from Cambodia to Thailand to the United States on a world map.

As the film opens, Chorn-Pond is seen playing the flute. In a voice-over, he recalls how important the flute was to his survival. Invite students to use their journals to record how they view the role of music in a society. How important is it to personal identity? How important is it to national identity?

Reflections

After watching *The Flute Player*, invite students to use their journals or notebooks to answer one or more of the following questions:

- What incidents in the film helped you understand what motivates Arn Chorn-Pond’s work?
- What do you remember best about the film? What individuals, images, or events stand out?
- What role does music play in Arn’s journey?

Ask students to share their observations with a partner. Was everyone struck by the same images and events? The same stories? How do you account for differences?

Teaching Strategies

1. There are scenes in every film that offer viewers insights into a character or an event. Ask students to read aloud one such scene from *The Flute Player* (Reproducible 2). Have partners take turns reading Arn’s words and those of the former child soldier. What does the meeting seem to mean to Chorn-Pond? To the former soldier? How does the scene help us understand what Chorn-Pond means when he tells people, “Somehow sharing the pain has been the way in which I could find myself again and commit myself to the world”?

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Lesson Four: The Flute Player

If time permits, invite students to work in small groups to identify other scenes that offer insights into Chorn-Pond, the various people he encounters, or the music. Ask each group to explain the significance of the scene they chose to the class as a whole.

- Judith Thompson is an activist who with Arn Chorn-Pond founded Children of War, a group that helped young refugees heal by confronting their past. She believes that one path to healing after the kind of pain and terror Chorn-Pond experienced is by telling the story. In the film, he is shown doing so in a variety of settings. What does he learn from these experiences? Thompson also believes that it is important to find an ally on the path of healing. She told an interviewer, "It really doesn't matter who it is, as long as there is sense of connectedness to a person or people over time who are walking that path with you." Who are the people who have helped Arn Chorn-Pond "walk the path"? Thompson believes that for some people there is another element in healing that she calls the "survivor mission." These people use the experience of pain and suffering to reach and teach others. She describes Arn Chorn-Pond as such a person. Ask students to find examples of that mission in the film. How does Chorn-Pond describe that mission? How does it shape his identity? How does it help him deal with his pain?



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Lesson Four: The Flute Player – Reproducible

Arn visits a former Khmer Rouge child soldier (KR).

Arn on boat – Walking down dirt road.

Arn (voice over): I want to talk to someone who understands what I went through.

So I am going to talk to a guy I know who was forced to do a lot of killing when he was a child, just like me.

Arn on Camera:

(Men watch Arn as he walks toward hut, (see man with arms off and one eye out, girls with lice in hair)

Arn: No matter where I go, I still remember...
That the Khmer Rouge forced me to kill people.

I remember removing the victims' clothing.

If I didn't do that...

I didn't know what would happen to me.

I don't want to know **(talk about)** if you killed or not,
What I want to know is how you deal with your anger, your
guilt..

Millions of people died and yet we escaped death.

We are lucky.

We have a chance to live in our own houses.

We are lucky to be alive,

But I still have a lot of pain and anger inside of me.

I want to ask you about your feelings.

How do you deal with this?

(long silence)

I want you to know, I feel uneasy too.

Whatever you can remember, just let me know.

KR: It was hard to know right and wrong.

I tried to avoid it, but I had no choice.

I didn't want to be involved.

But in the end, I couldn't escape. I was thrown into it.

Arn: We were told to do these things when we were young.
So the guilt is still with us.

KR: Yeah, there's definitely guilt.

I feel ashamed and disappointed.

I feel remorse.

I should not have been trapped in that situation.

And I really did try hard to escape from it.

Life...when I think about these things that happened to us
I feel like it's not over...

It just keeps going,

Because it still lingers on.

Why do I have to endure all this suffering?

Arn hugs KR soldier good-bye.

(Arn on voice over, crying as he departs house)

This particular former Khmer Rouge... I don't know whether
anybody...will tell him before he die that he is a good
person...or hug him.

I, I, I did.

I do it...(Arn on camera) because I want him to die and
knowing that one person understands you.

And be able to hug give you a hug.

That's why I did it.

(Arn on voice over with incense/praying at Buddha)

People forgive me you know, people in the world now forgive
me.

But saying to that boy, hugging that boy...I forgive myself.

(Arn on cam) I'm hugging myself.

From the transcript of "The Flute Player," by Jocelyn Glatzer.



Evaluation Suggestions

The following suggestions may be used to evaluate understanding of a single lesson or two or more of the lessons provided.

1. A theme is the main idea of a work—it is often repeated in different forms throughout a poem, a book, a piece of music, or a film. In each of the three documentaries, it is reflected in the title of the work. Write a paragraph explaining the title of the documentary you watched.

Students should answer the following questions in their paragraphs:

- *The Lost Boys of Sudan*: In what sense are the boys “lost”? What have they lost?
- *Discovering Dominga*: In what sense does Denese “discover Dominga”? How does her discovery change the course of her life?
- *The Flute Player*: How has being a flute player shaped Arn Chorn-Pond’s identity? How does it connect him to the family he lost in the Cambodian Genocide? How does it connect him to the years he spent in forced camps and the army? How does it connect him to the next generation of Cambodians?

1. Reread “The Past” by Ha Jin (Reproducible 1). Write a three-paragraph essay that compares and contrasts the relationships that the “lost boys,” Denese Becker, and Arn Chorn-Pond have with their past.

The essays should:

- Identify how each of the three views the past;
- Identify similarities among the three views;
- Identify differences among the three views;
- Relate the three views to the poet’s view and their own.

Lost Childhoods:

Exploring the Consequences
of Collective Violence



Correlation to MCREL's Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks

Code

1 refers to Lesson One: Past and Present

2 refers to Lesson Two: Lost Boys of Sudan

3 refers to Lesson Three: Discovering Dominga

4 refers to Lesson Four: The Flute Player

Historical Understanding Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Standard 1: Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns

1. Knows how to identify the temporal structure and connections disclosed in historical narratives. 2, 3, 4
1. Understands historical continuity and change related to a particular development or theme. 2, 3, 4

Standard 2: Understands the historical perspective

1. Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history 2, 3, 4
1. Analyzes the effects that specific "chance events" had on history 2, 3, 4
1. Analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history 3, 4
1. Understands that the consequences of human intentions are influenced by the means of carrying them out 3, 4
10. Understands how the past affects our private lives and society in general 1, 2, 3, 4
11. Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy 1, 2, 3, 4

Behavioral Studies Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Standard 1: Understands that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior

1. Understands that cultural beliefs strongly influence the values and behavior of the people who grow up in the culture, often without their being fully aware of it, and that people have different responses to these influences 2, 3, 4
1. Understands that heredity, culture, and personal experience interact in shaping human behavior, and that the relative importance of these influences is not clear in most circumstances 2, 3, 4
1. Understands that family, gender, ethnicity, nationality, institutional affiliations, socioeconomic status, and other group and cultural influences contribute to the shaping of a person's identity 2, 3, 4

Standard 4: Understands conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and institutions

1. Understands that conflict between people or groups may arise from competition over resources, power, and/or status 2, 3, 4
3. Understands that intergroup conflict does not necessarily end when one segment of society gets a decision in its favor because the "losers" then may work even harder to reverse, modify, or circumvent the change 3, 4
10. Understands that the decisions of one generation both provide and limit the range of possibilities open to the next generation 2, 3, 4
10. Understands that mass media, migrations, and conquest affect social change by exposing one culture to another, and that extensive borrowing among cultures has led to the virtual disappearance of some cultures but only modest changes in others 2, 3, 4



Correlation to MCREL's Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks

Language Arts Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Writing

Standard 1: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process

11. Writes reflective composition 1, 2, 3, 4
12. Writes in response to literature 1, 2, 3, 4

Reading

Standard 6: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts.

1. Understands how themes are used across literary works and genres 1, 2, 3, 4
9. Makes connections between his or her own life and the characters, events, motives, causes of conflict in text 1
9. Relates personal response or interpretation of the text with that seemingly intended by the author. 1
9. Uses language and perspectives of literary criticism to evaluate literary works 1

Listening and Speaking

Standard 8: Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes

1. Uses criteria to evaluate own and others' effectiveness in group discussions and formal presentations 1, 2, 3, 4
2. Ask questions as a way to broaden and enrich classroom discussions 1, 2, 3, 4
3. Uses a variety of strategies to enhance listening comprehension 2, 3, 4
5. Makes formal presentations to the class 2, 3, 4
2. Uses a variety of verbal and nonverbal techniques for presentations 2, 3, 4
9. Understands influences on language use 1, 2, 3, 4

10. Understands how style and content of spoken language varies in different contexts 1, 2, 3, 4

11. Understands reasons for own reactions to spoken texts 1, 2, 3, 4

Viewing

Standard 9: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

1. Uses a range of strategies to interpret visual media 2, 3, 4
2. Uses a variety of criteria to evaluate informational media 2, 3, 4
4. Uses strategies to analyze stereotypes in visual media 2
3. Understands how images and sound convey messages in visual media 2, 3, 4
12. Understands the effects of visual media on audiences 2, 3, 4

Source: *Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*