

Are We Born Hardwired For War?



**A Mini-Curriculum for Instructors
To Help Students Understand
What Creates Conflict**

Ages 8 – 12

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LESSON 1

Do We Need to Fight to Survive?

1. Ask students:

- ☐ Do you sometimes feel a fight going on inside you?
- ☐ How does it make you feel? Sad? Angry? Scared?
- ☐ Is that fight inside you triggered by a fear? Of someone? Something?
- ☐ Do you think our brains are “conditioned” to think that fighting is good for us – that war protects us – when we feel afraid?

2. Tell students:

- We have grown up with war, and we’ve become “conditioned” to its existence.
- Many of us have been taught that war is good for us, that it saves and protects us.
- Since we are often told that war is necessary, we have become “hardwired” for war – in other words, we believe that we need it, in order to survive.

3. Ask students:

- ☐ Do you think this may be a sign that we shouldn’t always believe everything we’re told?
- ☐ Do you listen to people’s opinions, but like to check on facts yourself?
- ☐ Do you think it’s possible that our brain, like a machine, can malfunction – and is it a brain malfunction every time we want to fight, or go to war?
- ☐ Why else would people and nations want to spend billions of dollars on weapons and ammunition in order to kill other people in other nations?

4. Tell students:

- When humans were cave creatures, our primary instinct was to survive. Life was full of physical threats – finding enough food to eat, water to drink, and living in shelters that would protect them.
- Today, we have fewer physical threats, but we often respond to a threat as if it were physical.
- We believe that if we don't fight when we feel threatened, we may be attacked.
- In a way, we are hypnotized into believing that fighting and war are the right thing to do.
- The truth is that war is a nightmarish trance we are in – and it's time for us to wake up!

**It's time to think, remember, observe and talk!
And ask questions!**

- ☐ **Think:** If there's a fight inside me, what are the symptoms?
- ☐ **Remember:** There are causes of any conflict. It helps to look at possible causes of any conflict or fight we feel inside us.
- ☐ **Observe:** By asking who, what, where, when, how and why – we develop more of an understanding about any conflict.
- ☐ **Talk:** We can talk with friends or family about any fight we feel and discuss ways we can prevent it from going on!

4. Activities and Talks

On the next page is "My Conflict Examination Tree"! Ask for a volunteer to suggest a symptom of a fight going on inside her or him. Then ask for possible causes, what he or she understands about the conflict, and finally his or her plan for preventing it. Allow as many volunteers as possible to do this. Have an open discussion with students on what they find.

ACTIVITY 1:



POSSIBLE CAUSE(S):



LESSON 2

How Can I Be A Sleuth for the Truth?

1. Ask students:

- ☐ Do you sometimes sense that something someone is telling you isn't true?
- ☐ Have you ever been in a situation where you feel something isn't quite right and you get suspicious?
- ☐ Have you ever met someone new who seems different from anyone you've met before – and your “inner computer” compares this person with everyone you know?
- ☐ Do you think our “hardwired” brains are “conditioned” to be suspicious of unfamiliar places and people?

2. Tell students:

- Our five senses give us messages about the world around us. By seeing, smelling, tasting, hearing and touching, we learn about people, places and things. Our five senses are our body's Input Center.
- We human beings have a sixth sense! It's associated with how we see, and it's called **insight**.
- With insight, we have the ability to stop a war in our brain. All we need to do is learn how to let ourselves be aware of when a conflict arises in our brain.
- Using our insight, we can understand any conflict or war in our head and figure out why they are there.

3. Ask students:

- ☐ Think about a conflict you have – with a member of your family or a friend. Why do you think you have this conflict?
- ☐ Do you think your insight can help you figure out a way to prevent this conflict – maybe take personal responsibility for it – and resolve it?

- ☐ Do you belong to a group of any kind? At school, at home or in your community?
- ☐ What's the purpose of this group?
- ☐ Do you personally identify with this group? If so, in what way?
- ☐ Do you think this group is better than other groups?
- ☐ Do you think this group protects you in some way?
- ☐ Can you see how thinking one group is better than another group can cause conflict?

**The most intelligent group in the world
is the one we all belong to:
The human race on Planet Earth.**

- **Think:** We need to be aware that sometimes our brain malfunctions.
- **Remember:** Our survival does not require that we belong to any group.
- **Observe:** We can see that people can stop the conflict or war in their brains if they become aware of their conditioned thinking!
- **Talk:** Have a discussion on who or what students feel the most fearful about.

4. Activities and Talks

Tell students: U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "The only thing to fear is fear itself." Ask: What do you think he meant by that? What does this quotation mean to you?

Talk with students about things that scare them – and how they can help each other not be afraid.

ACTIVITY 2:

People and Things That Scare Me!

Do any of these feelings happen to you? If so, why?

- ☐ My stomach starts to churn.
- ☐ I get angry and want to fight.
- ☐ There's a person who always scares me.
- ☐ Something I saw on the Internet scares me.
- ☐ Someone I saw on television scared me.
- ☐ What scares me most is:
- ☐ When I get scared, what I do is:
- ☐ The reason I think I feel afraid is:
- ☐ I would like to think that my fear can teach me something.
- ☐ What we can learn from being afraid is:
- ☐ I can handle my fear by looking at it and taking this action:
- ☐ Fear makes me feel apart. I can't do anything when I'm scared.
- ☐ When I'm scared, I start asking questions so I can think things through.
- ☐ When I see two people in conflict, I feel sure that they are both scared of something.
- ☐ I get scared thinking about any of these things!
- ☐ I get scared when I look dumb or weak.
- ☐ I'm afraid when I think I'm going to lose something, or not survive.

LESSON 3

Is “The Enemy” An Illusion?

1. Ask students:

- ☐ What is an enemy?
- ☐ Is it a person, creature or group that you see as threatening in some way?
- ☐ Is it a person who makes you angry, afraid, frustrated, envious, distrustful?
- ☐ Is “the enemy” whoever is on “the other side” of a disagreement?

2. Tell students:

- We sometimes think of people as “an enemy” when they are rooted in thoughts and actions that are different from ours. For example, a country that treats its people in ways unlike ours.
- Sometimes we can even become our own enemy when we are torn between two different thoughts. For instance, when we know we have homework but would rather watch TV.
- In fact, the concept “enemy” is a complete falsehood! The only enemies that exist are the ones we humans create – in our minds and in the world!

3. Ask students:

- ☐ What enemy did you create today – at home, in school or in your community?
- ☐ Is there a way you could change your thinking so that you do not see that person as an enemy?
- ☐ How could you turn an “enemy” into a friend?

4. Tell students:

There are three kinds of conditioning:

Biological. We're biologically conditioned to need food, water and sleep. We definitely need these things in order to survive. This is positive conditioning we don't have to think about. We are born with it.

Physical. Getting our bodies in shape takes work. We have to condition our bodies by exercising. Once our muscles are conditioned, exercises get easier, sometimes even effortless.

Psychological. This is conditioning of the mind – behavior taught to us over and over until it becomes a habit. We think about it when we first learn it, then hardly at all—like stopping for a red light.

**In my Nightmare Zone, I think:
“You sure are different! I don't like you!”**

**In my Enlightened Zone, I think:
“You sure are different! I can't wait to hear where you're from!”**

- **Think:** We are all “conditioned” to think and act in certain ways.
- **Remember:** When we are conditioned to stop for a red traffic light, or to brush our teeth after eating, that's positive conditioning.
- **Observe:** When we are conditioned to dislike people who are different from us, or to believe that some people are better than others, that is dangerous conditioning.
- **Talk:** Sometimes when we are concerned with surviving a difficult situation we're in, it's as if we go into a trance and aren't awake. We sometimes drive to survive without really thinking. Talk about this!

5. Activities and Talks

Talk with students about ETHNOCENTRISM – the belief that one ethnic group is superior to any other ethnic group.

ACTIVITY 3:
Ethnocentrism! What Is It?

■ **Ask students:**

- ☐ What is an ethnic group?
- ☐ Is it a community made up of people who share a common cultural background or descent – who have a common language, ancestry or national involvement?
- ☐ What ethnic groups have you seen represented here in school, in your community, or via social media?
- ☐ Do you think all the ethnic people on Planet Earth are having trouble these days accepting and relating to one another? Why do you think so?

■ **Tell students:**

- ☐ Ethnocentrism is making false assumptions and statements about other people's ways, based on our own limited experience.
- ☐ When we make "assumptions" – rather than get facts – we are likely not even aware that we are being ethnocentric!
- ☐ When we make "assumptions," we don't understand that we don't understand!
- ☐ Since we have not experienced everything there is to experience in the world, we are ALL ethnocentric in one way or another! We have our group preferences, without the knowledge of knowing ALL groups!
- ☐ Do you think this might be the reason for our lack of understanding cultures different from our own?

Ask students:

**What's something we can do today – right now—
to show that we are growing LESS ethnocentric?**

LESSON 4

My Drive To Survive!

1. Ask students:

- ☐ Was there a fight you had to handle this week? What was it?
- ☐ What do you think caused this fight?
- ☐ Was it based on negative conditioning of some kind?
- ☐ Do you think your negative conditioning was based on some fear?

2. Tell students:

- Conflict is a struggle that grows out of “opposing forces.”
- Such forces can be inside you – you want to spend time with a friend from school, but you have homework to do.
- Such forces can be outside you. Maybe you and your parent disagree about how to spend your weekend.
- Such forces can be between a group you are in and another group. Maybe the two groups disagree about how a game should be played.

**To prevent war in the world,
we need to learn how to resolve
the little wars that start in our brain.**

3. Ask students:

- ☐ Do you know what it means to be “in the moment”?
- ☐ Do you think that not worrying about the past or the future – and just being in the present moment – is a positive thing?
- ☐ When was the last time you had an “in the moment” experience? Did you feel good about it?

4. Tell students:

- Experience is based on what's happening to you right here, right now, in the moment!
- It can be an exciting moment, or a scary one.
- When something happens in the moment, we gain insight by looking inside our selves! Here's an example.

**"I see! I see what my brain is doing! It's making me want to fight.
I can stop it by not acting on it.
I now know that the highest form of action is inaction!"**

- In the moment, when we need to act, instead of re-act, insight is what helps us survive.

**Insight is immediate!
It can help us handle any conflict-ridden situation
that comes from a negatively conditioned reaction!**

- **Think:** Understanding yourself and other people requires awareness.
- **Remember:** To be aware, we need to be "in the moment"!
- **Observe:** We need to look at and understand another person – and that person's culture, background and interests.
- **Talk:** Have a discussion about the importance of being sensitive to other people's thoughts and feelings. What are some situations you have seen where people were not sensitive?

5. Activities and Talks

Practice some awareness activities in Activity 4, next page.

ACTIVITY 4:

Ways to Be Aware!

- **Ask students which of these they plan to get active in doing. And then how they plan to do this, and how often?**

- ☐ I will keep my eyes open and see what kinds of conflict seem to be happening in school.
- ☐ I will listen to arguments among my family members and friends, and pay attention to what seems to set them off.
- ☐ At events in my community, I will take note of differences people have and help the community talk about possible ways to resolve them.
- ☐ I will keep asking questions about people, places and things rather than assume that I know everything about them.
- ☐ There is a group I belong to. There has been conflict in my group, and I plan to tune in to what the reasons might be.

- **Ask students their favorite ways to practice AWARENESS.**

- **Create a chart to hang in your classroom with the title: HOW I WAS AWARE TODAY! Students can add to this chart anytime!**

LESSON 5

Do I Live Too Much in the Past?

1. Ask students:

- ☐ Do you sometimes think about happier times in the past?
- ☐ What causes you to think this way?
- ☐ Do you think about painful things from the past?
- ☐ What kinds of things from the past cause you pain?

2. Tell students:

- Sometimes people, communities and nations continue to fight – some of them, for years – over something that happened in the past.
- It is possible to live in a war-free zone – that place exists inside your mind.
- When we continue to carry grudges and negative thoughts about people, the fight goes on and never stops.
- People in conflict often believe that they need to keep the fight going in order to survive.
- What these people are not AWARE of is that this way of thinking is what's keeping them from surviving!

3. Ask students:

- ☐ Do you believe nations fighting each other will bring about peace?
- ☐ Do you believe that looking at conflict – right when arises – might have a better chance of leading to peace?
- ☐ Do you think that when we can SEE through differences that separate us, we can instantly become free of them?

4. **Tell students:**

- Some people believe that, due to evolutionary factors, we are limited in our ability to decide things for ourselves.
- Some believe that there's a part of us that still acts and reacts as early cavemen did.
- Some people believe that fighting is in our human DNA, and it gets control of us sometimes.

5. **Ask students:**

- ☐ Do you think we are instinctively and biologically programmed to survive?
- ☐ Do you think we belong to groups because we believe being part of a group will protect us and ensure our survival?
- ☐ Do you think that we create enemies because we think that doing so protects us?

**Our brain is hardwired for survival!
Creating an “enemy” is a malfunction
in the way our brain works.**

- **Think:** Understand and SEE in your mind what it means to pay attention to conflict in the moment.
- **Remember:** What we may perceive as “wrong” in our culture may be perceived as “right” in another culture.
- **Observe:** When we look at people through eyes that are free of conditioning, we all look the same.
- **Talk:** Have a discussion about things you and your students have been trained to believe. You can include social, political, psychological beliefs.

5. **Activities and Talks**

Discuss activities with students on how to create bridges instead of enemies.

ACTIVITY 5:

Creating Bridges Instead of Gaps!

- **Ask students one way each of them could create a bridge – in the classroom, at home, in their community and even in the world. For example:**

- ☐ I'm going to talk to the new kid who just started school here. Everyone seems to be avoiding her.
- ☐ My usual pattern is to avoid this bully who walks to school the same way I do. I might ask to walk with him.
- ☐ I know I can't change anyone but me, so I'm going to start by changing how I look at people who seem different.
- ☐ I know there's combat in my genetic makeup. I can tell it's there when I get upset or angry. But I'm going to work on becoming aware of how to not get upset – to stop the fight inside me before it grows.

- **Add some of your own:**

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

LESSON 6

Am I Changing My Genes?

1. Tell students:

- Genes – not the kind you wear – are units of heredity in our bodies that exist on our DNA. They create a code of who and what we are.
- EPIGENETICS is the study of changes in our gene activity that are usually passed from one generation to the next.
- What this means is that what's encoded in our genes can change due to certain things that go on in our life.
- Every organism, including humans, has a GENOME that contains all the biological information needed to maintain a living example of that organism.
- The biological information contained in a genome is encoded in its DNA and divided into units called GENES.
- An EPIGENOME sits on top of each genome in our body. These marks tell our genes to switch on or off.

2. Ask students:

- That said, do you think it's possible that an epigenetic mark can switch off the "combat/fight/battle" gene?
- If diet and stress leave marks on our genes that are passed from one generation to the next, why not our "fight" gene?
- Do you think its possible that learning how to be AWARE, and to be IN THE MOMENT can genetically change our deeply held pattern for violence and war – and turn us into peaceful beings?
- Can our brain heal itself by being AWARE of its deepest fears?
- Is it possible for our DNA to change? Can we get unstuck from old patterns?

3. Tell students:

- We are all born with genetic programming that encourages us to fight.
- Understanding of other people's thoughts, feelings and beliefs can put an end to conflict – before it ever begins.
- Once we become aware, we can SEE what creates wars. If we're interested in stopping them, we need to transform our selves, since we are the causes of war.

Ask students:

- ☐ What kind of conditioning do you think creates conflict between groups?
- ☐ What are factors that keep conflict going – year after year, decade after decade?
- ☐ Do you think that television, movies and social media prime our brains for violence? How so?

Can we end war in ourselves or will it go on forever?

- **Think:** Without knowing your self, there can be no peace.
- **Remember:** To put an end to outward war, we must end war in our selves.
- **Observe:** War stops when we recognize our personal responsibility.
- **Talk:** Have a discussion about how peace can come about ONLY when we understand what prevents it!

5. Activities and Talks

Show students the meaning of “Proprioceptive Learning” – a fun concept to enjoy!

ACTIVITY 6:

Proprioceptive Learning!

■ Tell students:

- ☐ Proprioceptive learning is a new concept for us, but an exciting one!
- ☐ It has nothing to do with knowledge or positive affirmations! It cannot start in our brain, because our brain is already wired!
- ☐ Here is an example. Think about the first time anyone on Earth saw Planet Earth from outer space – as did the first astronauts. Can you imagine that moment?
- ☐ They saw a planet from outer space! They saw land and oceans with no boundaries, no fighting, no wars.
- ☐ Any preconceived notions they had about Earth must have disappeared in that “in the moment” experience!
- ☐ Seeing Earth that way gave them an AWARENESS nobody else had ever experienced.
- ☐ In one moment, they all saw one view – the same thing, at the same time – a peaceful and quiet place – our one and only home, on which we must all live together.

■ Ask students:

- ☐ Have you ever had a proprioceptive moment? What was it?
- ☐ Do you think that proprioceptive moments are capable of changing our DNA?

**Proprioception is like a sixth sense.
We use it when learning any new skill, like a new sport or art –
or learning what creates conflict.
It's an acquired skill that requires attention!**

LESSON 7

A New Creative Understanding!

1. Tell students:

- What you see depends on who you are. Two people may look at the same person, or same situation, and see them entirely differently.
- This is true of conflict situations. But when we look at them with a new eye, we often find similarities that go beyond differences.
- Most of us look at conflict as a problem that needs a solution.
- Looking for a solution requires us to rely on knowledge we have.
- But any knowledge we have postpones immediate awareness!
- Therefore, we have to de-activate our programmed knowledge pattern, so we can open our brain to IMMEDIATE AWARENESS!

**We need to pay attention to in-the-moment proprioceptive instincts –
and not react to ancient ones.
This is what survival today is all about!**

2. Ask students:

- Do you think that when we talk with each other and create a dialogue from AWARENESS of our conditioned thinking, a new creative understanding emerges?
- Do you think that in dialogue, there's no competition – and that everyone wins?
- Why do you think it's difficult these days to keep worldwide communities understanding each other?
- Even though we have the Internet and can reach anyone around the world in seconds, we seem to have lost the ability to maintain a common consciousness. Why do you think this is?

3. Tell students:

- We can email someone thousands of miles away and get an instant response.
- We can post a notice on social network sites and reach thousands of people at once, inside of a few seconds.
- So, shouldn't we also be able to reach a level of mutual understanding between people – in just a few seconds?

4. Ask students:

- What gets in the way of “real” communication between us?
- What gets in the way of understanding among different organizations?
- Why is it so difficult for the nations of the world to understand and communicate with each other?

**When fear arises in us,
it's our brain attempting to deliver a message to us
that we need to be aware of.**

- **Think:** Conflict is a struggle that grows out of opposing forces.
- **Remember:** Conflict is also a symptom of fear.
- **Observe:** Some scientists say that what we do every day – the ways we think and respond – what we learn and what we pay attention to – all of this shapes our brains.
- **Talk:** Have a discussion about how seeing something, talking, or solving problems can create change in our brains!

5. Activities and Talks

Lead students in a dialogue about how the media affect us. Help them become aware of how TV, Internet and all social media affect how we think and therefore how we act.

ACTIVITY 7:

How Do Media Affect Us?

■ **Tell students:**

- ☐ The media are about information – how it's provided, controlled and sold.
- ☐ We are the recipients of media messages many times every day, but we aren't always AWARE of how they affect us.
- ☐ The first systems of information transmission were smoke signals, beacons and reflected light signals.
- ☐ The first media miracle was the invention of the printing press. Before then, there was no way to print books, magazines, printed communication of any kind – except for handwriting. The famous playwright William Shakespeare wrote all his plays by hand.
- ☐ From the printing press, to the telegraph, to television, to the Internet – we have always relied on media to inform us.

■ **Lead a dialogue:**

Talk with students about how the Internet has changed everything. There are no national boundaries. We have become a global village. Today, you and I are the information providers and information receivers.

Is this a good thing? Is it a dangerous thing? How can today's media be helpful to us and to others around the world? How can it be dangerous?

LESSON 8

Why Do We Need Heroes?

1. Ask students:

- ☐ What is a hero?
- ☐ Is a hero real? A made-up character?
- ☐ Why do we need heroes?
- ☐ Can you name someone you know you consider a hero?

2. Tell students:

- A hero is someone who acts beyond the call of duty. People who save other people's lives are heroes.
- Police officers and fire fighters are often thought of as heroes. Even though they are basically doing their jobs, we admire them.
- Because a "hero" usually arises from a conflict situation where there's some kind of "enemy," we humans tend to create warriors, tribes, battalions and armies – to protect ourselves.
- Sometimes it looks as if we'd rather fight than work out our differences.
- If we could free ourselves of conditioned thinking, we would never have enemies.
- And if few don't have enemies, maybe we also don't need heroes. What do you think?

3. Ask students:

- ☐ Do you think that when we name a person or group of people as "enemy" that we believe they can, in some way, harm us?
- ☐ Do you think that's why we then create a hero – someone who can save us? Do we create "Freedom Fighters" to fight "the enemy" and protect us?

- ❑ Is a hero a fantasy we've dreamed up to protect us, in a make-believe world we've invented to feel safe – from our so-called "enemy"?

4. Tell students:

- When any group of people raise a national flag, they instantly separate themselves from the rest of the world.
- Separation causes conflict, so there is no peace.

**Every nation claims that it wants peace –
but they all seem to feel
that they have to fight a war to get it !**

- **Think:** Conflict is a struggle that grows out of opposing forces.
- **Remember:** Conflict is also a symptom of fear.
- **Observe:** Some scientists say that what we do every day – the ways we think and respond – what we learn and what we pay attention to – all of this shapes our brains.
- **Talk:** Have a discussion about how seeing something, talking, or solving problems can create change in our brains!

5. Activities and Talks

In the following activity, show students the "Pattern of Conflict" and the "Pattern of War." Talk about how one leads to the other, and how these patterns begin.

ACTIVITY 8:
Patterns of Conflict and War

PATTERN OF CONFLICT

- Something scares me.
- I want to survive!
- To survive, I must join a group – physically or psychologically.
- The group is my hero, and will protect me from harm.
- All people outside this group are a threat – an enemy.
- Result: Conflict!

PATTERN OF WAR

- People of one country feel threatened by those from another country.
- They are afraid of that country – and want to survive!
- They think “the other” country is “bad” or “wrong.”
- The “other” country becomes an enemy in their minds.
- They feel they must defend/protect themselves against this enemy.
- They decide they need warriors.
- Result: Conflict! No choice but to go to war!

Ask students:

- ☐ How do these patterns get started? They begin with FEAR.
- ☐ FEAR triggers our survival instinct!
- ☐ Our survival instinct inspires us to join a group!
- ☐ The group, physical or psychological, becomes our hero!
- ☐ Anyone not in our group becomes the enemy!
- ☐ Result: Conflict!

**Our hero has been created by us!
Our hero is our own illusion!**

**Said theoretical physicist Albert Einstein:
“Peace cannot be kept by force.
It can only be achieved by understanding.”**

LESSON 9

Is War A Dream, Or A Reality?

1. Ask students:

- ☐ When our country goes to war, do we dream of glory. Does anyone even think about the reality of war?
- ☐ When confronted by a potential conflict, does our primitive brain wake up – ready for combat, ready to get in gear to fight our perceived “enemy”?
- ☐ Is our brain unable to tell the difference between a REAL threat and an IMAGINARY threat?
- ☐ Although there are certainly times when a threat is real, do you think we sometimes mistake an imaginary one for a real one?

2. Tell students:

- AWARENESS helps us to not be controlled by imaginary, false images.
- When we are AWARE of our conditioned reactions to a supposed “enemy,” instead of getting into conflict, we can talk things out.
- A way to begin is to see everyone as “us” rather than as “them” vs. “us.”
- We wind up falling into the trap of ethnocentrism – judging other cultures by the standards of our own culture.
- Apart from the outcome of separation and bad relations, war has substantial costs – tanks, fuel, trucks, clothing, bullets, guns, parachutes, helicopters, airplanes, drones and technology. Also, soldiers are paid to fight and fill.

**What creates peace is understanding.
What prevents peace is hardwired conditioning.**

3. Ask students:

- ☐ What do you think prevents peace in our minds?
- ☐ Seeing differences? Seeing people as “the enemy”? Anytime we allow robotic thinking rule our brain?
- ☐ Do you think peace is also prevented whenever we allow people we know to think ethnocentrically and do not challenge their thinking?
- ☐ Do you think we never get to peace because traditional ways of thinking of trying to bring about peace are based on the same kind of thinking that created conflict in the first place?

2. Tell students:

- In the world today, there are many people out there attempting to get us to do what they want us to do.
- It’s our job to be AWARE of them and see what they’re doing.

“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.”

— UNESCO Constitution

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

- **Think:** We humans are creatures of habit. We do what we have been conditioned to do.
- **Remember:** Sometimes, doing something new is more helpful than doing what we’ve always done.
- **Observe:** Think of a new path you might want to take in your life – in the way you look at people, talk with people and act with others.
- **Talk:** Have a discussion about how seeing something, talking, or solving problems can create change in our brains!

5. Activities and Talks

In the activity that follows, go through the Six Steps with students to demonstrate a PATTERN OF PEACE.

ACTIVITY 9:

Six Steps in My Pattern of Peace!

STEP 1: I SEE SOMEONE WITH WHOM I'M IN CONFLICT!

- I usually freeze.
- Sometimes I fight.
- Sometimes I run away from this person.

STEP 2: I FEEL THREATENED!

- A voice in my head says, "Go away! Don't do this!"
- Protect yourself from being hurt!
- Whenever I talk to this person, I am criticized, upset and angry.

STEP 3: STOP!

- I ask that voice, "Why do I feel threatened?"
- Am I afraid? What am I afraid of?
- Is the threat real, or have I imagined it?
- Should I do what I've always done, even though it never helps?

STEP 4: I WANT PEACE!

- I tell that voice, "I have to go outside my old conditioned thinking."
- I want peace, but I can never get it.
- This primitive way of reasoning isn't making sense.
- Isn't peace the same for everyone?
- What if it isn't?

STEP 5: I DO NOT ACT ON MY FEAR!

- I let go of my drive to survive.
- I let go of ethnocentrism and do not judge.
- I have insight!

STEP 6: I TRY SOMETHING NEW!

- I take the road not taken!
- My thinking changes.
- My behavior changes!

LESSON 10

Peace Can Happen In An Instant!

1. Ask students:

- ☐ What's the best way to get yourself to that "Stop! Think" moment where you can prevent conflict right before it's about to happen?
- ☐ The next time you get ready to act on a thought you have, are you going to act based on a desire to create war, or to create peace?
- ☐ Do you think it's true that when we feel no fear, we have no enemies?
- ☐ Do you think that "the enemy" is a dream we've created in our brain?
- ☐ How are you going to wake yourself up from the dream – on an ongoing basis?

2. Tell students:

- All people and things are understandable. If we just look, this is there for us to see.
- Because of its built-in self-defense mechanism, our biological brain tries to prevent us from reaching this understanding!
- It does this because it thinks it's protecting us!
- When it sees anything that looks like it may be getting in the way of our survival, it makes us see it as a threat – an "enemy" to our welfare.

**"What is absurd and monstrous about war
is that men who have no personal quarrel
should be trained to murder one another in cold blood."**

— Aldous Huxley
Author of the book *Brave New World*

3. Ask students:

- ☐ What do you think about this quotation? How does it affect how you feel?

Read students another quote:

**“Most honest combat vets will tell you,
perhaps not eloquently but in their own way, the same thing:
essentially that combat is in our human DNA
and demands to be exercised....**

**The question is, can we humans evolve peacefully,
or will we succumb to instincts we can’t transcend?”**

— *Former Marine Corp Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam*

- ☐ What do you think about this quotation? How does it make you think and feel?
- ☐ Does this Marine seem to defend the idea that we humans are hardwired for war?

4. Tell students:

- **Think:** Asking the right questions are like virus protectors. They keep us from continually breaking down and repeating actions we’ve learned – but actions that do nothing to help us.
- **Remember:** When the right questions are asked, there’s an opportunity for AWARENESS and INSIGHT!
- **Observe:** Our “Stop! Think!” moment keeps us from automatically reacting from an unsafe kind of conditioning.
- **Talk:** There are 196 countries in the world today. Each one has a flag. There are more than 6,000 different languages in the world. What’s the best way to get all of these people to understand each other?

5. Activities and Talk:

Talk about how each of us can become a GLOBAL citizen, living under a one-world flag.

ACTIVITY 10:

The Only War There Is!

Suggest to students that you have a Global Citizen Day at school! Divide your students into thinking groups. Each group will come up with a way to stop conflict and war in our heads!

You can give each group a topic. Here are some suggestions:

- ☐ The only war is the war in my head!
- ☐ Here's how to stop the fight inside me!
- ☐ Here's how I create an enemy!
- ☐ Here's how I create a hero!
- ☐ We have met the enemy – and he is us!
- ☐ People different from me are not my enemy!
- ☐ I think we can live under a one-world flag!
- ☐ We're creating an Earth Day, where there are no borders on Earth!
- ☐ Here's what we astronauts saw in outer space!
- ☐ Here's why different cultures are fascinating!

. Congratulate students on their excellent work! Inspire them to never stop taking “Stop! Think” moments!

ATRIUM SOCIETY BOOKS

