

Teaching About Human Rights in Africa



BY

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Human Rights



“Human rights are what reason requires and conscience demands. They are us and we are them. Human rights are the rights that any person has as a human being. We are all human beings; we are all deserving of human rights. One cannot be true without the other.”

Kofi Annan, Former Secretary-General United Nations



Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Lists articles on Human Rights

Approaching Human Rights Issues



- **Providing historical context**
- **Encouraging students to deconstruct their analysis and perceptions of complex issues**
- **Encouraging students to differentiate between cause and effect**
- **Listening to the African-country specific perspectives**
- **Supporting social justice missions to civically engage students in their local and global communities.**

Risk of Promoting/Accepting Stereotype



- **Violent crises are part of the African condition**
- **Africa is all the same**
- **Africa and Africans have little capacity to solve problems (see the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in South Africa)**

Suggestions when analyzing news items

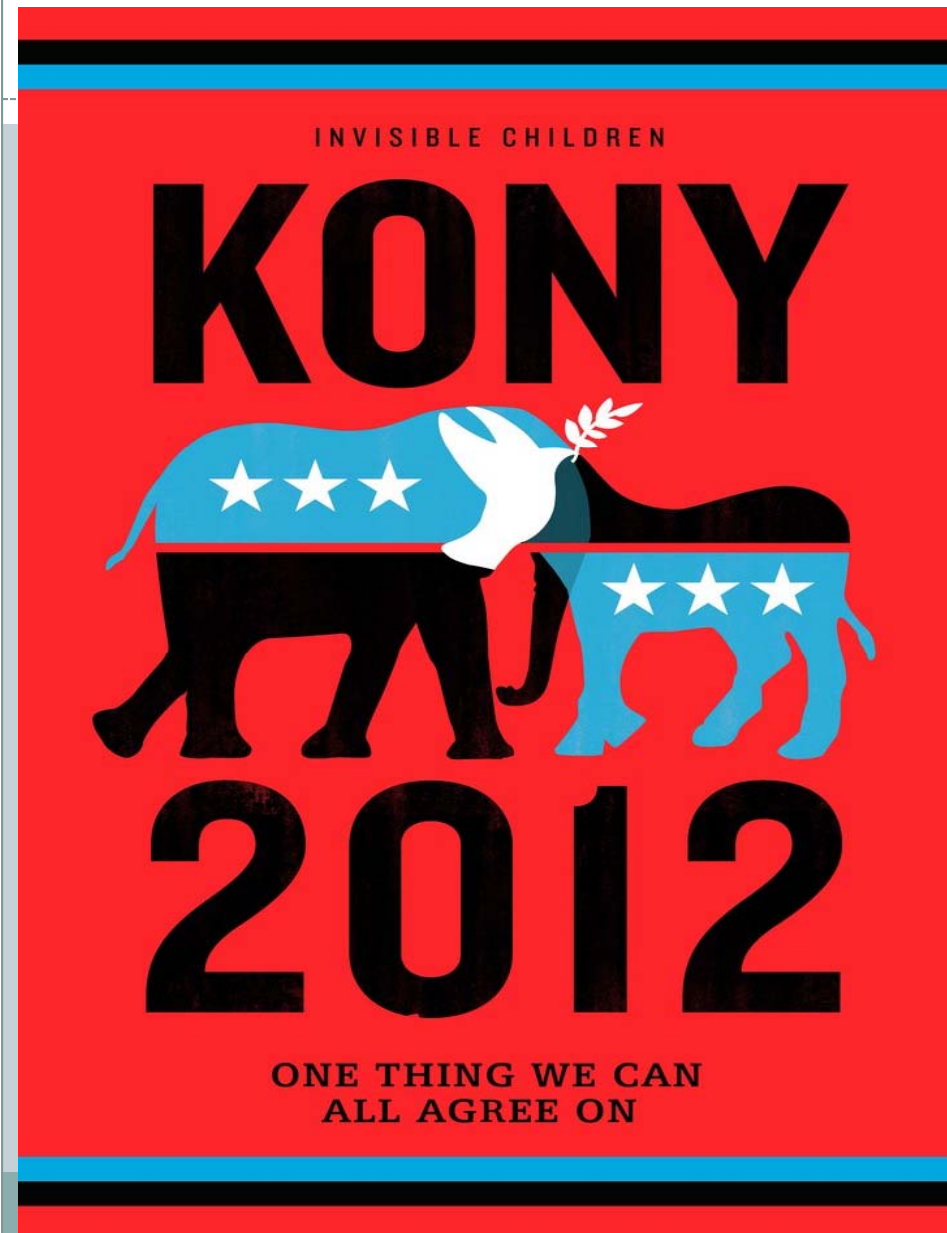
- **What image of Africa does the news item portray?**
- **What do students think about the news?**
- **What myths and stereotypes are imbedded in the news item?**
- **What counter narratives are available about the news item?**
- **What action can the students take to change the make a difference?**

Examples of Human Rights Issues and Resources



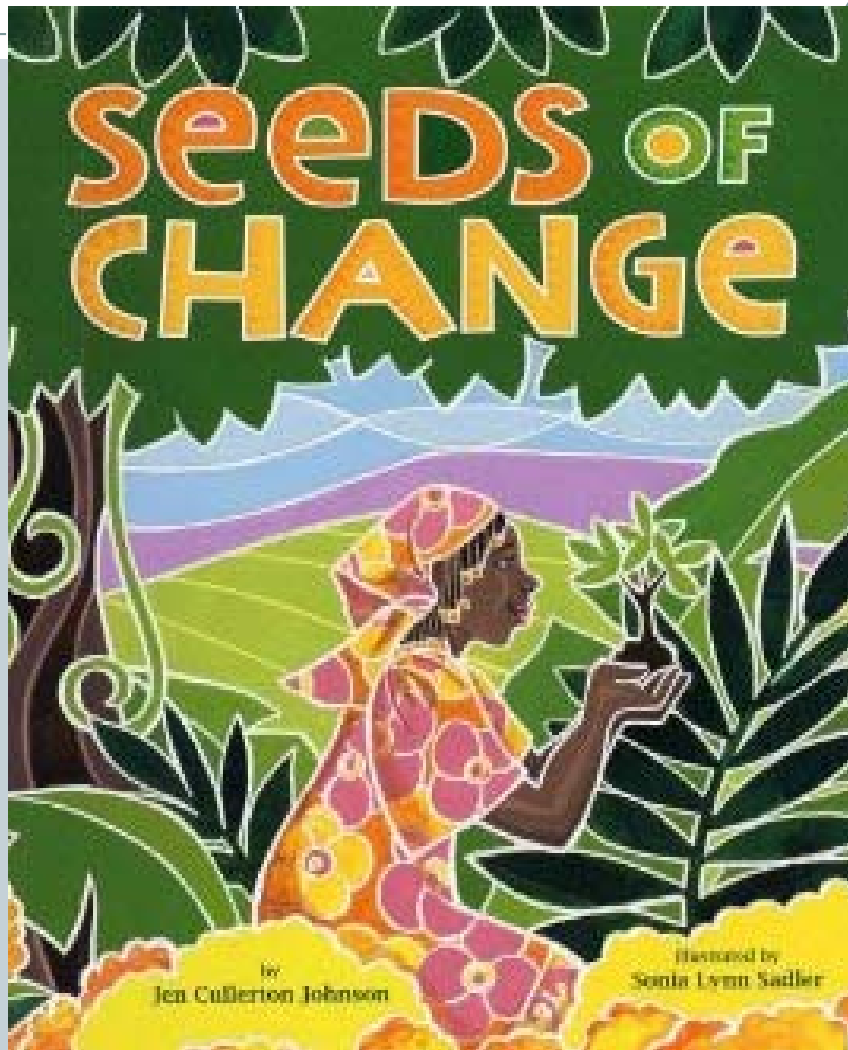
- 1. Ethnic Conflict/War**
- 2. Women's Rights**
- 3. Human Trafficking/Colonialism**

Example 1: Ethnic Conflict/War



Recently there has been a lot of talk about *Kony 2012* video by Invisible Children Inc. The Outreach Council of the African Studies Association in conjunction with the Association of Concerned African Scholars are sharing suggestions on how educators (and concerned citizens) can effectively engage and address the issues raised by *Kony 2012* by providing an African perspective on the controversy.

Example 2: Women's Rights



TAKING ROOT

The Vision of Wangari Maathai

"It will inspire people and be a source of courage."
— President Barack Obama

A film by
Lisa Murray and Alan Stone
Original Score by: Savitri



Video Panel: Peta Lorenz



How the simple act of women
planting trees changed a nation...



www.takingrootfilm.com

Example 3: Human trafficking, Colonialism (*Abina and the Important Men* by Getz Trevor)



Online Resources Available in discussing Human Rights Issues



- **The Greenbelt Movement**
- **The South African Human Rights Commission**
- **Baobab for women's human rights**
- **Child Rights International Network (CRIN)**
- **Darfur**

Resource for teaching about Kony 2012



- React and Respond: Teaching guide to *Kony 2012* Video-React and Respond: The Phenomenon of *Kony 2011*. In the guide : Guidelines to teaching about issues raised by *Kony 2012 and* Resources about Uganda, the LRA, and the *Kony 2012* video

<http://www.africafocus.org/docs12/kon1203a.php>

Other links:



- [Amnesty International](#)
- [Citizens for global Solutions](#)
- [Human Rights Watch](#)
- [The University of Minnesota's Center for Human Rights](#)
- [The United Nations CyberschoolBus](#)
- [Children's World](#)
- [Open Democracy: Free Thinking for the world](#)
- [International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights](#)
- [Understanding Sudan](#)
- [Africa Access](#)
- [African Studies program at UW-Madison](#)

Articles on Online Resources Available



- **Waliaula, A.J. (co-author) (2012). Web resources for teaching about human rights. . *Social Education*, 76(5), pp. 266-268.**
- **Waliaula, A.J. (2012). Africa in the social studies classrooms: Using literary texts, film, and online resources. *Ohio Social Studies Review*, Vol. 49 (2) pp. 43-53.**



Thank you!
Please contact Anne Waliaula at
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for more information about resources for
teaching human rights issues in Africa