

Overview

In this lesson we will collaboratively overview chapter 13, and then continue the group reading activity with the [CNN article](#) on Child Soldiers. After more time to work on the reading guide, we will discuss their responses and talk about using current events to inform literature and vice versa.

Enduring Understandings

Literature can strengthen our understanding of history and current events.

Goals

- Students will identify common themes across types of media.
- Students will critically examine a news article.
- Students will apply their literary analysis to real-world events.
- Students will use this application to explore complex moral issues.

Standards

Materials

Slides for the Do Now and with instructions for the article analysis.

Procedures

Opener:

(10 minutes) For a Do Now, I assigned each group a passage and question to read and answer as a table group:

1. Pg. 238 Why does Ender say he hates himself?
2. Pg. 238 What ability makes Ender such an effective commander?
3. Pg. 241. How does Valentine convince Ender to return to the IF?
4. Pgs. 248-249 What do the Buggers look like? How do they communicate?
5. Pg. 249 What is the ansible and what does it do? How will it help the humans defeat the Buggers?
6. Pgs. 250-251 What is different about the third invasion? When are the human fleets expected to arrive?
7. Pg. 253 What does Ender say the whole war is about? Do you agree with Graff that the humans had no choice?

(10 minutes) Groups shared back in a round. After each group summarizes their passage and answers their question, other groups will have an opportunity to ask clarifying questions to the group that shared.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:30 AM

Comment: I like to incorporate a variety of fiction/nonfiction texts—this not only gives students practice reading news articles and improves understanding of current events, but builds the critical thinking skills of putting these texts in concert with one another.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:07 AM

Comment: This is still perhaps too subject-area specific, but I think the skill of using complementary texts to mutually improve understanding is a broadly applicable skill.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:10 AM

Comment: This method proved to be a really efficient way to recap a chapter (which can often take the better part of a class period in a less structured discussion). This put a greater cognitive load on the students—rather than me leading discussion on each of the key points, I just needed to point students in the right direction and let them teach each other.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:08 AM

Comment: I hoped that this would be a reciprocal teaching activity, but I didn't sufficiently emphasize that each group was essentially teaching the class their section, and consequently students were more reporting their answers back to me and for 7 groups we only had a small handful of questions from the rest of the class.

Body:

(15 minutes) Time to complete article/reading guide.

(10 minutes) Discuss the article and its application to *Ender's Game* with the following questions

- How does this article and other real-world accounts of child soldiers change our understanding of *Ender's Game*?
- How does *Ender's Game* improve our understanding of the real-world issue of child soldiers?

Closure:

(2 minutes before end) We will come together to assign homework.

Homework Read pgs 254-273 of ch. 14 w/ 3-5 QCPR notes.

Accommodations:

The lesson makes complimentary use of reading, writing, and discussing. Students may demonstrate understanding through effective use of any of these skills. Students took turns reading the article aloud to accommodate for various reading levels and incorporate auditory learning.

Assessment/Evaluation

Students can demonstrate competency by actively participating in class, fostering active table group discussion, and completing the accompanying reading guide.

Notes (11/4)

This was the best lesson ever.

Students settled quickly and got right into discussing their questions. Going around the horn was a really effective way to overview the whole chapter and structure connections and clarifications. eg. question 2 had to do with Ender's empathy making him a great leader, I could facilitate the connection to the fight with Bonzo. Hit all major plot points and key passages of a pretty dense chapter, would definitely use this Do Now structure again.

The amount of time to work on the article felt a little long, because most groups had a few minutes extra at the end, but one group didn't finish and one group clearly rushed through the last few (both got off task/had to be redirected a few times yesterday/today), so I think it took an appropriate amount of time. We didn't discuss the questions directly, but the two application/wrap up questions were amazing. Best full class discussion all year. Responses were thoughtful and lively, but then AG compared child soldiers to child labor, which I loved. JE disagreed and brought up the fact that Ender chose to go to the fleet, whereas child labor is coerced. Lots of people, esp AH, GH,

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 10:56 AM

Comment: This activity was begun in the previous class—students received the CNN article on child soldiers. Within table groups, students took turns reading aloud and collaboratively answered questions on the reading guide (included below).

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:26 AM

Comment: These questions led to the liveliest full-class discussion of the year so far. Students were taking strong stances on either side of the issue and responding directly to one another with minimum facilitation from me. This was really exciting and successful! I think students really benefitted from first formulating thought in small group discussion, then writing out responses. This made sure they had a strong understanding informing the whole class discussion.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 10:59 AM

Comment: The reading guide questions scaffolded comparison between the novel and real-world parallels, but these broad discussion questions promoted deeper thinking and engagement with the texts—reevaluating judgments of the novel through alternative perspectives and empathy.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:27 AM

Comment: Question/Connection/Prediction/Reflection—This is our standard format for active reading notes.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:02 AM

Comment: I was able to evaluate the student understanding by circulating the room and monitoring group conversations during both the Do Now review and the article discussion. Students have varying degrees of comfort with small group discussion, large group discussion, and written response, but between the three I was able to assess the understanding of a majority of my students.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:28 AM

Comment: Notes on how the lesson went taken after class was finished.

and JT *really* disagreed with that, and we had a really lively student led discussion on free choice, coercion, manipulation, etc. It was awesome.

WOO

ISIS Child Soldiers, CNN Article Reading Guide

Discuss each question and respond on a separate sheet of paper. Each table group should return ONE set of responses.

- 1) Name a few of the places around the world where child soldiers are being used.
- 2) What tactics does the Battle School use to transform young children into soldiers?
- 3) What tactics are used by ISIS and other groups to create child soldiers?
- 4) How do ISIS and other groups recruit children to their cause? Did the IF use any of these tactics? Did any of our propaganda posters use these tactics?
- 5) Ender has spent his whole life in the Battle School. What do you think his life will be like when his time as a soldier ends? What difficulties will he face?
- 6) The article mentions some of the struggles faced by child soldiers after their conflict ends. What are some examples? How do these experience change these children?
- 7) Could there be a conflict in which the use of child soldiers is justified?

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:23 AM
Comment: This is a more formal assessment—handing in written responses. I ultimately gave this assignment a relatively small numerical grade, but between the responses and the discussions I got a pretty clear picture of how this lesson improved student understanding.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:11 AM
Comment: Students come with a broad range of familiarity with current events. I intentionally selected an article that gives background on this as a global issue.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:22 AM
Comment: This draws from a project from earlier in the week in which students created propaganda posters inspired by Ender's game—informed by notes on examples and techniques of propaganda.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:18 AM
Comment: These questions structure 3 parallel comparisons between the article and the novel. 5 and 6 especially draw on empathetic responses that might challenge their understanding of Ender as a hero.

Louis Fantini 11/14/15 11:13 AM
Comment: I had hoped this could be a broad, interpretive moral question, where the responses would be informed by their discussion. Most groups did alright with it, but others were confused, needed more structure.