

2004 World Affairs Challenge

Collaborative Question

Total Time: 1 Hour

Instructions

For the first 40 minutes you should:

1. Introduce yourselves to the group
2. Read the information in this packet
3. Make sure everyone in your group understands the two tasks:
 - a. Finding how each topic is related to the others
 - b. Choosing the topic which will most improve children's rights in Pakistan
4. Agree upon what you will tell the judges

For the last 20 minutes, the judges will be in the room. Make a brief presentation on what you agree upon. The judges will follow up with questions.

Children's Rights: Pakistan

You are members of Human Rights Watch (HRW), an organization that works to protect human rights worldwide. You will give a presentation to fellow members of HRW about how to protect the rights of children in Pakistan. Your group has chosen to target the following three areas: Child Labor, Education, and Juvenile Justice.

These three areas each have a big impact on the lives/rights of children in Pakistan. But the areas are not independent of each other. Each one relates to the others. For example, dangerous working conditions may create health problems for child laborers.

At the meeting, you must:

Part 1: EXPLAIN how each topic is related to the others. On the "Relationships" sheet, fill in one or two key aspects of how each topic impacts the others. EXAMPLE:

<p>Relationship: Labor & Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dangerous working conditions increase negative health consequences for children

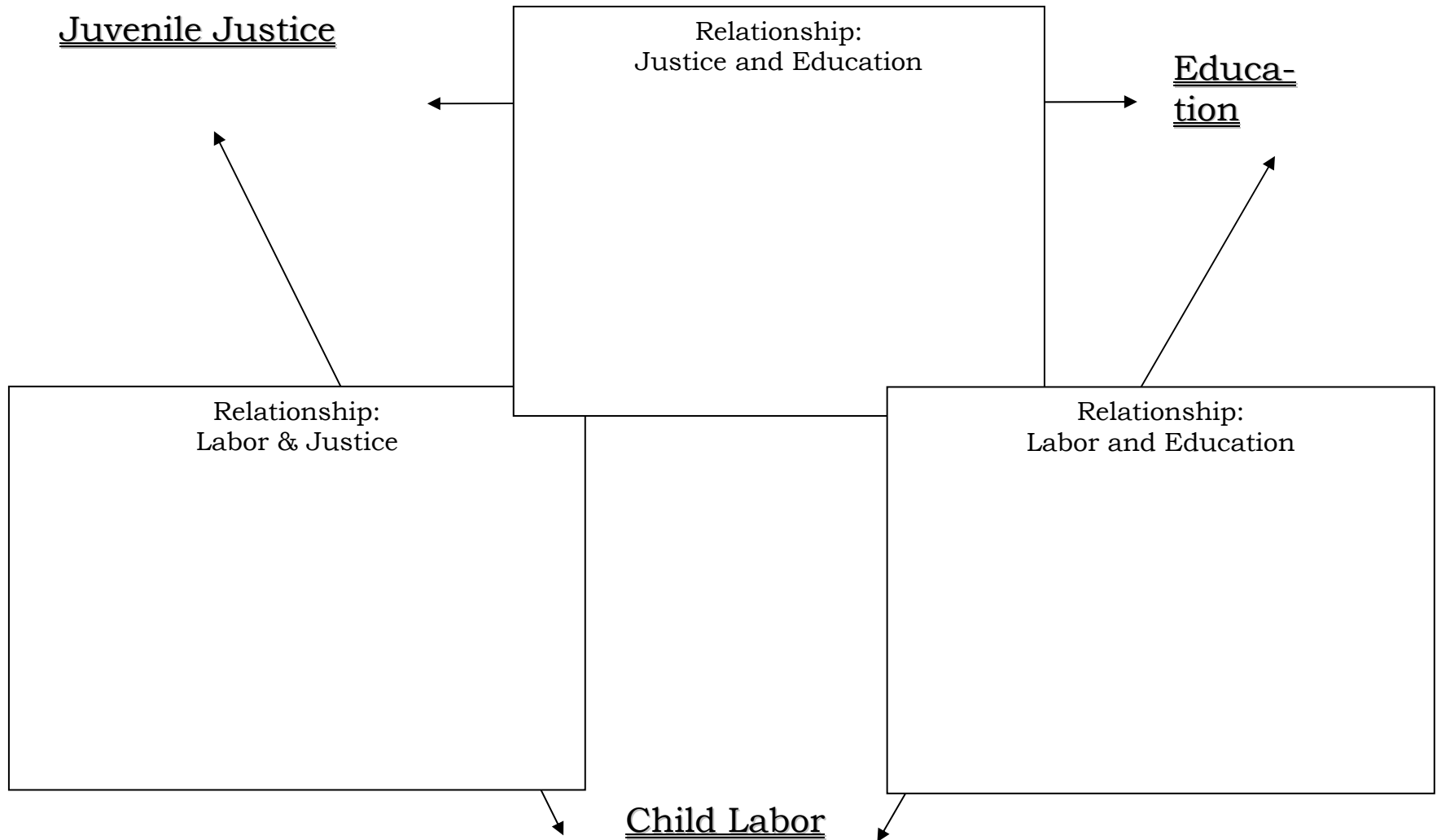
Part 2: CHOOSE which topic HRW should focus on to most improve the rights of children in Pakistan. You will also be asked to rank your second and third choice of topics. Be prepared to explain why. You may want to consider:

- The relationships you found in PART 1 .
- How many children are affected by each topic?
- How bad are effects on the children in each category?

Ranking of Topics

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Relationships



Child Labor in Pakistan

The Convention on the Rights of the Child says...

The Child has the right to be protected from work that threatens his or her health, education and development. The state shall set minimum ages for employment and regulate work conditions. The child has the right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

- 11-12 million children are working in Pakistan, half of whom are under the age of 10

"Children are economical...For what I'd pay one second-class adult weaver I can get three boys, sometimes four, who can produce first-class rugs in no time" - Factory Owner

- Children make up $\frac{1}{4}$ of Pakistan's unskilled work force
- Children often earn only 1/3 of what adults earn for the same work
- The high amount of labor decreases already low wages for both adults and other children
- The average age of children first entering the Pakistani work force is seven
- Bonded children (children working to pay off family debt or obligation) sometimes are bought, sold, or used as possessions
- By using child labor, factories can sell products cheaper and attract more consumers
- The further one goes from the major cities, the less likely authorities are to pursue child labor violators
- Trade union activities are restricted, making it difficult for workers to

collectively fight against exploitation

- Activists say the government of Pakistan does not protect the rights of bonded laborers guaranteed under national and international law"

"Boys age 7-10 make ideal workers...boys at this age are at the peak of their dexterity and endurance, and they are wonderfully obedient - they'd work around the clock if I asked them" - Factory Owner

One Child's Story...

Two years ago at the age of seven, Anwar started weaving carpets...He was given some food, little free time, and no medical assistance. He was told repeatedly that he could not stop working until he earned enough money to pay an alleged family debt. He was never told who in his family had borrowed money nor how much he had borrowed. Any time he made an error with his work, he was fined and the debt increased. Once when his work was considered to be too slow, he was beaten with a stick. Once after a particularly painful beating, he tried to run away, only to be apprehended by the local police who forcibly returned him to the carpet looms. - Human Rights Watch Report

Children's Education in Pakistan

*The Convention on the Rights of the Child says...
The Child has the right to education, and the State's duty is to ensure that primary education is free and required for all children.*

- Education in Pakistan is free but not required for all children

"Well, I have one small room only 8'x 8' and 140 students, and I am the only teacher. I teach classes for grades 1 to 5, but still I am blessed as I have a roof on my head; many teachers don't."
- Teacher in Pakistan

- There are only enough schools for 1/3 of the country's school aged children
- Only 37% complete primary school (compare this to the world average of 79%)
- Some parents feel that if kids can't go to school then they might as well work
- Pakistan has a literacy rater of 45.7% which ranks them 142 among 167 states in regards to literacy
- Three out of 10 children aged 5-9 do not go to school
- More boys than girls attend school
- Uneducated, poor children often grow up to be adults with limited work prospects
- Education projects are thought to be the most effective way to remove children from hazardous work
- Many schools have untrained or poorly trained teachers and lack of classroom materials such as textbooks
- In towns farther from the cities, finding good teachers can be difficult

- The government provides a very low level of political and financial support for education
- Only 2% of Pakistan's GDP is for education - the United Nations set the minimum at 4.5%

"Education is the best way to a better life...helping children get out of slave-like labor conditions and keeping them out of trouble with the law." - Aid Worker

One Child's Story...

"Going to school is not an option for me. How can I spend my days learning when I know my family is hungry? I may not make much when I work, but what I contribute helps the family. They say education will help me when I grow older, but I need what can help me now." - Child in Pakistan

Juvenile Justice in Pakistan

The Convention on the Rights of the Child says...

A child in conflict with the law has the right to treatment which promotes the child's sense of dignity and worth, take the child's age into account and aims at his or her return to society.

- Children may spend as long as three months in detention before seeing a judge
- Children often share overcrowded cells with adults
- If a child is ill-treated, there is no fair authority to which he or she can report the incident
- 4,500 children were in Pakistani prisons at the end of 2003. 90% were waiting for the conclusion of their trials

"Doesn't the low conviction rate despite the high number of arrests lead you to believe that something is out of place?"

Arrests sometimes seem like police harassment." - Human Rights Watch Report

- Children may spend months and even years in detention because the family is unable to pay the regular fees to get them out while they await trial
- Only 13 to 17 percent of children on trial are actually convicted
- The few children who are actually convicted of crimes often receive harsh and severe punishments
- In 1998, 55 children were on death row
- Pakistan is 1 of only 6 countries known to have executed juvenile offenders during the 1990s
- Most prisons offer few educational or job training opportunities
- Some prison hospitals lack necessary equipment and medicines

"Being confined to prison, with no educational or social outlet, only limits future educational and employment possibilities." - Human Rights Watch Report

- The disciplinary measure most frequently used is solitary confinement for up to three weeks
- Torture is sometimes used to obtain confessions or as a means to scare and punish

One Child's Story...

"They kept us for one month in the police station. There were about twenty-five to thirty people in the lock-up. When there were more, we couldn't lie down. When it rained, water used to seep in from the roof. There were no windows. I was beaten all over my body, and the investigating officer demanded \$980 to release me." - Child in Pakistan