**A Lesson in Understanding and Compassion to Combat Extreme Radicalism and Terrorism**

**Karen Alexander**

Time: Four to Five 40 minute classes. The last class will be the Majlis (role play and discussion)

The lesson can be broken up into shorter lessons (researching Social Progress Index and Ted Talk: <http://www.ted.com/talks/michael_green_what_the_social_progress_index_can_reveal_about_your_country#t-488173> )

Grade/Class: 9th Grade World Geography, Pre-AP World Geography and AP Human Geography

Materials:

Internet Access for research and TED talk video

Students will use the Social Progress Imperative to research the social, political and human motives that promote extreme radicalism and terrorist violence.

Power Point should be used to guide the class through the introduction and the resources. Following are links to resources used to create the lesson and links for the students to use to complete their character biographies.

Personal Profile Cards (cut up) and copies of Character Profile Research included.

Lesson Warm-up

Use power point or write the following question on the board asking student to complete a quick write and discuss with neighbor. What makes a person a terrorist?

Lesson Intro

Have student watch the following TED talk

[Mohamed Ali](http://www.ted.com/speakers/mohamed_ali) [The link between unemployment and terrorism](http://www.ted.com/talks/mohamed_ali_the_link_between_unemployment_and_terrorism)

For the young and unemployed in the world's big cities, dreams of opportunity and wealth do come true — but too often because they're heavily recruited by terrorist groups and other violent organizations. Human rights advocate Mohamed Ali draws on stories from his native Mogadishu to make a powerful case for innovation incubators for our cities' young and ambitious.

Key Terms:

Students will use the definitions page on the social progress imperative website to find definitions of indicators used to measure social progress. These definitions will be included in their Character Profile Research.

Teacher will use the power point to facilitate a guided discussion. Student should look up definitions to terms highlighted in the power point.

Students will receive a personal profile card that will identify some basics for their character’s identity. Student will create a character profile after completing the Character Profile Research graphic organizers using the information from <http://www.socialprogressimperative.org/data/spi>

Students will create brief bios (stories) of individuals using background information about their country of origin and their given situation. Students need to be able to answer selected questions while role playing these characters at the “Majlis” meeting at the end of the lesson.

Teacher should spend time looking through the information on the Social Progress website with the students. I suggest starting with the definitions page. Students can use this information to better understand the indicators being measured. The findings page has details by region that will help explain specifics for their country. Make sure to ask why some countries do not have available data. This comes up a lot in regional comparisons.

To check for understanding use the 3-2-1 questions from the power point. This would also be a good stopping point if you are short on class time.

The Character Profile Research

Teacher should choose a model country and begin searching for data on the website and completing the Character Profile Research while students follow along. Teacher should ask students to determine the significance of the score (what is good and what is bad) and the idea of rank.

When filling out the Character Profile Research students need to include the score and rank along with explanation of indicator being measured. The indicator should be underlined or highlighted with an explanation of the term in their own words. This research should take two to three days in class depending on how much detail you require. If it is taking longer than expected I suggest dividing up the work among group members to speed up the process.

The last class preparation day should be dedicated to creating the character profile for the delegate. Students should focus on the questions that will be asked of them during the Majlis. They should have detailed answers using data from their research and should feel free to elaborate on their story. Encourage students to use their imaginations and be creative. They can choose one group member/partner to role play the delegate and choose a member to be part of the family. (This is recommended if the delegate is female). They can come in dressed as their character. Encourage them to have fun. Make sure they are being true to their situation and the research they have completed over the past few days.

The Majlis

Classroom should be set up in a Majlis style (see PowerPoint). Majlis are a public audience held by a chieftain, monarch, or other ruler to listen to the requests of petitioners. If possible students should be seated on the floor (or on cushions) facing each other in a u shape). At the very least the desks/chairs need to be set in an open U shape. Students roll play using their created character bios during the Majlis. To really get in the spirit you could serve tea and dates.

The teacher will lead the discussion first explaining the purpose of the meeting:

“You have been chosen as part of a special delegation from selected countries to share your story with a group of regional leaders that are coming together to discuss options to counter extreme radicalism and terrorist violence in all of its forms and manifestations, in support of long-term, global efforts to prevent and counter terrorism.

After realizing that military force and security alone cannot combat terrorism. This delegation is looking to combat the problem of violent extremism with a more human approach.

The goal is to respond to the needs of all people to prevent individuals from starting down the path toward radicalization, as well as to divert those already on that path before they become fully committed and mobilized. This delegation will be dedicated to addressing these challenges by hearing from citizens of selected countries.”

The teacher should embrace the role of a leader in this region. The best scenario for a successful Majlis would be to have two or three teacher leaders with different philosophies and ideals. At the very least, the teacher can play opposing roles (moving from one seat to another to emphasize the change in character or placing on and removing a hat or glasses) One role should be a very conservative leader with strict cultural beliefs. This character might not want to listen to a female and request that her father/brother/husband/son speak on her behalf. This strict conservative ideology should guide the questions from this leader throughout the Majlis. The other teacher leader character should be open to less conservative ideas and willing to hear from everyone and be willing to hear all ideas. This philosophy should lead this leaders questions through the Majlis. Play with the idea that the character might be corrupt or that the country has little to no funding to help their people. They could possibly be in a civil war or other crisis.

Students should come to the center of the Majlis and introduce themselves. They should tell their story in as much detail as possible using data and evidence collected in their research to make their point. If they are struggling begin with the basics; What do you need? What can we do for you? How will doing this help combat possible extremism? Remind students part of their grade will be for creativity, details and accuracy. The questions from the leaders should stem from the questions answered on the character profile sheets. Always try to probe deeper and ask why questions.

You can open the floor to questions from other characters if wanted.

Debrief

What is the most important indicator measured? Why?

Can you think of a situation similar to these that created similar outcomes? Explain

What did you learn from this lesson?

TEKS

**(5) Geography**. The student understands how political, economic, and social processes shape cultural patterns and characteristics in various places and regions. The student is expected to:

(A) analyze how the character of a place is related to its political, economic, social, and cultural elements; and

(B) interpret political, economic, social, and demographic indicators (gross domestic product per capita, life expectancy, literacy, and infant mortality) to determine the level of development and standard of living in nations using the terms Human Development Index, less developed, newly industrialized, and more developed.

**(16) Culture**. The student understands how the components of culture affect the way people live and shape the characteristics of regions. The student is expected to:

(A) describe distinctive cultural patterns and landscapes associated with different places in Texas, the United States, and other regions of the world, and how these patterns influenced the processes of innovation and diffusion;

(B) describe elements of culture, including language, religion, beliefs and customs, institutions, and technologies ;

(B)(C) explain ways various groups of people perceive the characteristics of their own and other cultures, places, and regions differently; and

(C)(D) compare life in a variety of urban and rural areas in the world to evaluate political, economic, social, and environmental changes.

**(23) Social studies skills**. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to:

(A) plan, organize, and complete a research project that involves asking geographic questions; acquiring, organizing, and analyzing information; answering questions; and communicating results;

(B) use case studies and GIS geographic information systems to identify contemporary challenges geographic problems and issues and to apply geographic knowledge and skills and to answer real-world questions; and

(C) use a problem-solving and decision-making processes to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution



**United Nations**

**Special Delegation to Counter Extreme Radicalism and Terrorist Violence**

To: Selected Delegates

From: United Nations Special Delegation to Counter Extreme Radicalism and Terrorist Violence

Re: Requested Attendance to Meeting on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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You have been chosen as part of a special delegation from selected countries to share your story with a group of regional leaders that are coming together to discuss options to counter extreme radicalism and terrorist violence in all of its forms and manifestations, in support of long-term, global efforts to prevent and counter terrorism.

After realizing that military force and security alone cannot combat terrorism. This delegation is looking to combat the problem of violent extremism with a more human approach.

The goal is to respond to the needs of all people to prevent individuals from starting down the path toward radicalization, as well as to divert those already on that path before they become fully committed and mobilized. This delegation will be dedicated to addressing these challenges by hearing from citizens of selected countries. You must come prepared with the requested information and any suggestions you have to address important issues in your country. You will be required to present your story and answer any questions the leaders might have of you.

Thank you in advance for participating in this very important dialogue.

Special Delegation to Counter Violent Extremism

Character Profile Research: Basic Human Needs

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Nutrition and Basic Medical Care | Shelter |
| Water and Sanitation | Personal Safety |

Character Profile Research: Foundations of Wellbeing

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Access to Basic Knowledge | Health and Wellness |
| Access to Information and Communications | Ecosystem Sustainability |

Character Profile Research: Opportunity

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Personal Rights | Tolerance and Inclusion |
| Personal Freedom and Choice | Access to Advanced Education |

**Questions to Help You Create Your Delegates Character**

Create a realistic story with as many details as possible. You must have answers for each of these questions. Use these questions to tell your story during the Majlis. Use data from your research to back up your answers. Any information not received on your card should be created using the information from your research. You will be graded on creativity and detail.

Are you Male or Female? Are you single or married or widowed? How old were you when you got married? Did you chose your spouse?

Do you have children? How many? Do you want more? Can you make the choice to stop having children?

How old are you? Are you free to practice your religion?

Can you read? What is you highest year of education? Do you have plans for more education?

Where do you live? Where do you call home? Do you feel welcome? What is your house like? What is your neighborhood like? Is it clean? Is it environmentally safe? Is it easy to live there? Do you have access to food and water?

Are you personally safe from immediate harm? If no please explain

Are you healthy? Can you see a doctor if you are or get sick can?

Are you hungry?

Is there anything else we should know about you?

Do you own anything of value? Do you own a home?

Are you free to discuss your concerns with the government? Can you meet with others who may share the same concerns? Are you able to move somewhere else if you are not satisfied with your current place?

How do you feel about your life? Would you say you are happy? What is most important to you? Do you have any goals? What do you see in your future?

What can your leaders do to help you?

Be prepared to discuss these questions during the Majlis.

Personal Profile Cards (cut and distribute to students)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Afghanistan | Country | Syria |
| Gender | Female | Gender | Male |
| Age | 14 | Age | 25 |
| Married | Yes | Married | Yes |
| Family | One male child | Family | Two female children |
| School | Primary | School | Graduated secondary |
| Residence | Kabul | Residence | Refugee Camp Jordan |
| Occupation | Mother | Occupation | Teacher |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Somalia | Country | Iraq |
| Gender | Male | Gender | Male |
| Age | 18 | Age | 20 |
| Married | yes | Married | Yes |
| Family | One son/one daughter | Family | One son |
| School | elementary | School | Elementary |
| Residence | Mogadishu | Residence | Kirkuk |
| Occupation | fishing | Occupation | Oil worker |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Pakistan | Country | Nigeria |
| Gender | Male | Gender | Female |
| Age | 30 | Age | 25 |
| Married | Yes | Married | Yes |
| Family | Three sons | Family | Two sons |
| School | Secondary | School | Elementary |
| Residence | Karachi | Residence | Lagos |
| Occupation | Shia Muslim Cleric | Occupation | Fish Merchant at Market |

Personal Profile Cards (cut and distribute to students)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Yemen | Country | Kenya |
| Gender | Male | Gender | Female |
| Age | 21 | Age | 25 |
| Married | Yes | Married | Widowed |
| Family | Two sons | Family | Two girls |
| School | Elementary | School | Elementary |
| Residence | Shibam | Residence | Lake Nakuru |
| Occupation | Farmer | Occupation | Safari Employee |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Egypt | Country | Lebanon |
| Gender | Male | Gender | Male |
| Age | 35 | Age | 35 |
| Married | Yes | Married | Yes |
| Family | Two daughters one son | Family | Two daughters |
| School | Secondary | School | Some College |
| Residence | Cairo | Residence | Beirut |
| Occupation | grocer | Occupation | Shop Owner |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Libya | Country | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| Gender | Female | Gender | Female |
| Age | 18 | Age | 20 |
| Married | No | Married | Widowed |
| Family |  | Family | One son |
| School | Secondary graduate | School | Elementary |
| Residence | Banghazi | Residence | Refugee Camp Uganda |
| Occupation | Student | Occupation | none |

Personal Profile Cards (cut and distribute to students)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Sudan | Country | South Sudan |
| Gender | Female | Gender | Male |
| Age | 28 | Age | 26 |
| Married | Yes | Married | Yes |
| Family | Two sons one daughter | Family | Three children |
| School | None | School | None |
| Residence | Abyei | Residence | Southern South Sudan |
| Occupation | Farming | Occupation | Cattle |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Iran | Country | Saudi Arabia |
| Gender | Male | Gender | Female |
| Age | 20 | Age | 20 |
| Married | No | Married | widowed |
| Family | None | Family | Two sons |
| School | Secondary | School | Secondary |
| Residence | Tehran | Residence | Riyadh |
| Occupation | Unemployed  | Occupation | Mother |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | United Arab Emirates | Country | Chad |
| Gender | female | Gender | Male |
| Age | 25 | Age | 14 |
| Married | Single | Married | Single |
| Family |  | Family | None |
| School | Masters | School | Elementary |
| Residence | Abu Dhabi  | Residence | Camp |
| Occupation | Nurse | Occupation | Gold minor |

Personal Profile Cards (cut and distribute to students)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Oman | Country | Israel |
| Gender | Female | Gender | Male |
| Age | 35 | Age | 18 |
| Married | widowed | Married | no |
| Family | Two sons | Family | none |
| School | Elementary | School | Bachelors Science |
| Residence | Muscat | Residence |  |
| Occupation | Fish Sales | Occupation | Soldier |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country |  | Country |  |
| Gender |  | Gender |  |
| Age |  | Age |  |
| Married |  | Married |  |
| Family |  | Family |  |
| School |  | School |  |
| Residence |  | Residence |  |
| Occupation |  | Occupation |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country |  | Country |  |
| Gender |  | Gender |  |
| Age |  | Age |  |
| Married |  | Married |  |
| Family |  | Family |  |
| School |  | School |  |
| Residence |  | Residence |  |
| Occupation |  | Occupation |  |