

# Andy Blair

**St. Mary's Academy, Englewood, CO**

**Subjects: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade World History**

- **Andy Blair**
  - **Lesson: Connecting Class Cultures Through Active Listening**
  - **Project: Memorial for Peace**
  - **Lesson: Write a Letter to a U.S. Senator**
  - **Module: Briefing a Conflict**

## Connecting Class Cultures through Active Listening

**Rationale:** To develop empathy in the classroom and help them understand how to practice active listening.

**Objectives:** This lesson will break down social walls constructed between students and provide a safe place for them to be honest. This assignment will show the value of listening and asking meaningful questions.

**Materials:**

- Series of questions printed out
- Chairs with tables moved out of the way.

**Time:** One 45-minute class

**Assessment:**

- **Informal:** Have a class discussion, ask them something they learned about a classmate? What were some similarities or differences?
- **Formal:** Have students write a reflection and mention what was something a classmate said that stood out to them.

**Procedures:**

**Pre-Reading for Teachers - [Dialogue Versus Debate](#)**

**Step 1: Show a Hook**

There are two options to select from:

[What is Culture?](#) - "I understand culture as a treasure that is a part of our collective memory, of our perception of ourselves." - Lidija N., Macedonia. This video illustrates an international conversation that took place on the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' social media sites.

[How to Dialogue and Why](#) - Dialogue is one of the peacebuilding tools used by the United States Institute of Peace to build mutual understanding and trust among individuals and groups. This video provides a basic introduction to dialogue from one scholar's point-of-view.

**Step 1:** Set up the room for the dialogue. Have an inner circle with chairs facing out and outer chairs facing in. Each chair should be facing another chair. With an even number of students, everyone should be able to sit and face one person. Set the chairs far enough from each other so they can't be distracted by another group.

**Step 2:** Explain the directions

**Directions:**

To practice active listening you are going to either listen to the person sitting across from you or speak from the heart. When it is your turn to listen, do not say anything. Just listen. Be present. When it is your time to speak, be honest and focus on telling your story.

If you finish early, just sit in silence. Wait for the teacher to tell them to stop. Do not speak to those around you, you are only speaking to the person in front of you.

You may be asked to move to the left or right or switch with the person sitting across from you.

If there are no questions, now is the time to offer the first questions.

**Step 3:** Give them a question to answer and have either people on the inside or outside start (always alternate who starts first). After 30-60 seconds, tell them to switch the storyteller.

**Step 4:** Have the outside rotate to their left or inside rotate to their right. Repeat step 3. Every 4-5 questions have every other person on the inside flip chairs with their outside partner and then rotate to the left or right.

**Step 5:** Towards the end of class stop and have a conversation. Ask them something they learned about a classmate? What were some similarities or differences?

If needed, have students write a reflection and mention what was something a classmate said that stood out to them.

## Questions

*Feel free to pick and choose and add your own questions. The questions become more serious as they continue to become more comfortable with sharing. Be sure to have a good sense of the room and know when it is appropriate to go deeper.*

### Level 1

- How have you helped someone?
- If you could change something about your school, what would it be and why?
- What is your favorite family tradition?
- What do you enjoy most about 'people watching'?
- Do you cry easily? Why or why not?

### Level 2

- Describe a time you have struggled to do something, and how you overcame the challenge.
- What do you think about this quote: "It is better to offer no excuse than a bad one." - George Washington?
- If you had the chance, what would you spend a year learning?
- When have you been treated unfairly, and did anyone ever stand up for you?
- Have you ever stood up for someone being treated unfairly? Why or why not?

### Level 3

- What do you think about this quote: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." - Martin Luther King Jr.
- Have you ever avoided an issue, what was the issue, and why did you avoid it?
- When did you have to make a serious decision, and are you still satisfied with the decision?
- What makes you different from your family?

### Level 4

- When were you innocent and accused of something you didn't do? How did you respond?
- When have you felt different?
- What do you think about this quote: "Sharpen your anger at injustice." - Father Drinan
- Describe a time that you felt special. It could be in the classroom or outside the classroom.
- What do you need to tell someone, and why haven't you done it yet?

## Memorial for Peace

**Rationale:** To explore how the arts can help in the Post-Conflict Reconstruction phase of peacebuilding.

**Objectives:** Students will take on the role of a citizen in a community that is in the post-conflict reconstruction phase. Leaders from both sides of the conflict have voiced their desire to create a memorial. To select a memorial, they are accepting proposals from the public. Students will research a conflict and create a memorial to remember those lost and to support the peace process.

### Standards:

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1**

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2**

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.3**

Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

### Materials:

- Poster board 22" x 28"
- White paper for sketching
- Pencils and colored pencils

**Time:** Ten days without the USIP Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators Lessons, and five days for the USIP Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators Lessons.

### Assessment:

- **Proposal Presentation**

### [The Urge to Remember - Must Read](#)

### Procedures:

#### Step 1: [Corresponding USIP Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators Lessons](#)

**Step 2:** Introduce students to the process of memorialization. You can view an example of how to do so [here](#) or at the end of this lesson.

- **Lesson 2.1** Observing a Conflict

- **Lesson 2.3** Practicing Conflict Analysis
- **Lesson 3.1** Characteristics of Peacebuilders
- **Lesson 3.2** Peacebuilders in Action
  - Focus on the following people:
    - 2015: National Dialogue Quartet
    - 1998: John Hume and David Trimble
    - 1996: Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo and Jose Ramos-Horta
    - 1994: Yasser Arafat, Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin
    - 1993: Nelson Mandela and Frederik Willem de Klerk
    - 1987: Oscar Arias Sanchez
    - 1978: Mohamed Anwar al-Sadat and Menachem Begin
    - 1976: Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan
    - 1973: Henry A. Kissinger and Le Duc Tho
    - 1957: Lester Bowles Pearson
    - 1950: Ralph Bunche
    - 1936: Carlos Saavedra Lamas
    - 1926: Aristide Briand and Gustav Stresemann
    - 1906: Theodore Roosevelt

### **Step 3: Choose a comprehensive peace agreement**

This project is best completed individually. Have each student select a peace agreement for which they will build a memorial. You could also have the class focus on one conflict on which to go more in-depth.

#### **Chapultepec Peace Agreement**

**Country:** El Salvador

**Date Signed:** 16 January 1992

#### **Interim Constitution Accord**

**Country:** South Africa

**Date Signed:** 17 November 1993

#### **General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Country:** Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Date Signed:** 21 November 1995

#### **Northern Ireland Good Friday Agreement**

**Country:** United Kingdom

**Date Signed:** 10 April 1998

#### **Agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and the Portuguese Republic on the question of East Timor**

**Country:** Timor-Leste (East Timor)

**Date Signed:** 05 May 1999

#### **Step 4: Research the conflict**

Once every student has a peace agreement, it is important for them to read the agreement and research the conflict itself using the U.S. Institute of Peace as the primary resource.

In addition to the overall conflict, students need to identify individual actors to either include or omit from the memorial and the culture or cultures involved in the conflict to understand how to best memorialize death and conflict resolution.

#### **Research the actors**

- Local players relevant to memorialization (e.g., government officials/ministries, security authorities, victim/survivor groups, local NGOs, educators, mental health professionals, historians).
- Main international players/interveners (e.g., peacekeeping troops, humanitarian aid workers, other foreign NGOs, international organizations such as UNESCO heritage staff, historians, academics).
- Identify local “spoilers” determined to undermine positive memorialization initiatives or attack important cultural sites to destabilize or undermine peacebuilding.

#### **Research the culture**

Local practices, beliefs, and rituals related to conflict resolution, death and dying, burial, and similar matters to understand the underlying social and psychological dynamics of grieving and commemoration.

Be sure that they turn in notes to keep them on track.

#### **Step 5: Design a memorial**

Students will then be tasked with the challenge of designing a memorial.

Memorialization occurs throughout the conflict life cycle: before conflict begins, during conflict, and after conflict ends.

Memorialization takes different forms depending on the nature, duration, and stage of the conflict. At certain stages of the conflict, memorialization initiatives may be ill-advised, such as when violence continues, highly contested versions of the past exist, or intergroup tensions are extremely high.

#### **Final Display**

- Poster board 22” x 28”
- Title

- One page written summary
  - Conflict
  - Peace process
  - How the art installation remembers the peace process
- 3 drawings

### **Step 6: Construct the proposal**

Once the design for a memorial is complete, students must put together the final display.

### **Step 7: Presentation**

Students will give a short presentation explaining their memorial design.

**Rubric for Peace Memorial**

	<b>Does Not Meet Objective</b>	<b>Partially Meets Objective</b>	<b>Meets Objective</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
<b>Presentation</b>	Student delivers a pitch that is not respectful or clearly explains their plan.	Student delivers a respectful pitch for their memorial that doesn't clearly explain their plan.	Student delivers a respectful pitch for their memorial that clearly explains their plan.	Student delivers a respectful pitch for their memorial that clearly explains their plan and draws an emotional response.
<b>Memorial Design</b>	Student designs a memorial that inaccurately remembers the conflict and peace process. The memorial is poorly designed.	Student designs a memorial that remembers the conflict and peace process.	Student designs a memorial that remembers the conflict and peace process. The memorial is well designed.	Student designs a memorial that accurately remembers the conflict and peace process. The memorial is exceptionally designed.
<b>Content</b>	The final poster is not organized or missing many components. The summary on the conflict and explanation for the memorial is not well done..	The final poster follows the directions or may be missing a component. The summary on the conflict and explanation for the memorial is sufficient.	The final poster follows the directions. The summary on the conflict and explanation for the memorial is well done.	The final poster is well organized and clean. The summary on the conflict and explanation for the memorial is compelling.
<b>Points</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Grade Equivalent</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>

## Presentation Example

### Slide 1

# The Urge to Remember

How memorials can help or hurt  
the peacebuilding process



*Adapted from the work of:  
Judy Barsalou and Victoria Baxter*

### Slide 2

## Warm up

Have you ever visited a memorial?

What was the memorial for?

What did it mean to you or someone you visited with? (example: a grandparent)

Why did you visit the memorial?

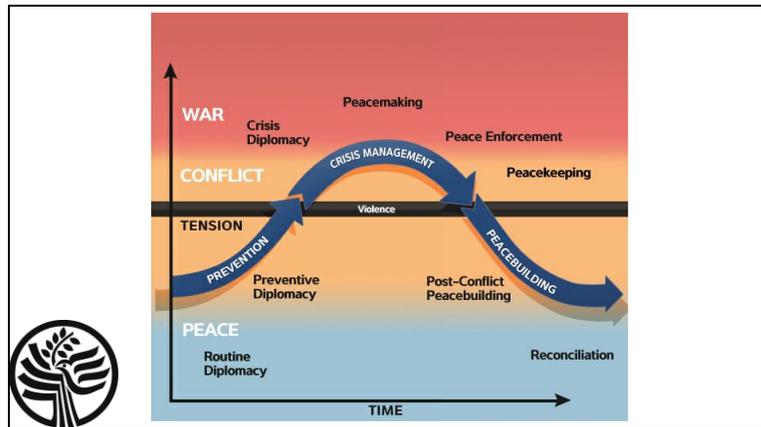
Did you bring flowers to the memorial?

Describe the atmosphere surrounding the memorial.



Use the warm up to get students thinking about memorials.

Slide 3



This is the Curve of Conflict. We can use this model to analyze any conflict. For instance, currently we can see that the Syrian Civil War is in the crisis management stage, and in the midst of war. Whereas the Vietnam War is well past the apex and deep into reconciliation as seen with the recent visit from President Obama.

Question: Along this graph, where do you think memorials will be planned and implemented?  
 Answer: We will see memorial planning in the reconciliation phase. Long-established memorials take on new meaning or lose meaning for subsequent generations. For instance, the losses from World War II mean less to those born in the 21st century than they did from those born in the early and mid-20th century. We are also likely to see negative, one sided memorials to proliferate at the apex of the curve. Part of any transitional justice will involve the collection of materials that could be used for a memorial.

Slide 4

### Functions of Memorialization

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Truth-telling or documenting specific human rights violations</li> <li>Creating a specific place for the immediate family and/or the larger society to mourn victims</li> <li>Offering symbolic reparations to honor the victims of violence and reinstate their reputations</li> <li>Symbolizing a community's or nation's commitment to values such as democracy and human rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting reconciliation by recasting the national identity or repairing damaged relations among groups</li> <li>Encouraging civic engagement and education programs to engage the wider community in a dialogue about the past and promote discussions of a peaceful future based on coexistence</li> <li>Advancing educational purposes, including the retelling of history for future generations</li> <li>Facilitating historic preservation of a specific era in a country's or community's history</li> </ul>
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The purpose of a memorial is complex. Most of these functions are straightforward. If you need further information, see pages 4-8 of "The Urge to Remember" by Judy Barsalou and Victoria Baxter.

### Slide 5

### Major Forms of Memorial Initiatives

<b>Constructed sites:</b>  Museums and commemorative libraries  Monuments  Walls of names of victims  Virtual memorials on the internet	<b>Activities:</b>  Anniversaries of coups, battles, or other actions related to the conflict  Temporary exhibits  Renaming or rededicating streets, buildings, or infrastructure  Walking tours or parades  Demonstrations and vigils  Public apologies
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<b>Found sites:</b>  Graves  Locations of mass killings or genocide	
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This would be a good time to ask students when they have seen one of these forms in a memorial. Perhaps a student has been to Germany and visited Auschwitz. Think of examples of memorials in your community.

### Slide 6

### Memorialization and Types of Conflict

**Genocide and Mass Killings** - 1994 Rwandan Genocide, "killing fields" memorials in Cambodia, and the Garden of the Righteous memorial (Sarajevo)

**Disappearances** - Argentina, Chile, and India

**Ethnic Conflict** - Northern Ireland, Robben Island Museum



Memorials for Genocide and Mass Killings tend to revolve around human remains. Displaying or preserving human remains is used to educate people about the sheer scope of death. The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC does this with shoes. In Rwanda, some victims' bodies have been preserved in schools and churches where they were found. When the violence occurred fairly recently, these memorials often do not offer visitors an analysis of the conflict or any sort of educational background.

Memorials to disappearances generally reflect the absence of bodies. For instance, internet-based "virtual" memorials will list the names of those missing. This is a difficult issue in some

places where a large number of the population denies any wrongdoing. For instance, after Pinochet the first few democratic governments did little to promote the torture site officially because Pinochet continued to enjoy substantial support throughout Chile. In 2001, a coalition of survivors and NGOs attempted to create a monument to the disappeared in Kashmir. A day after the group laid the foundation stone for the monument, the Indian government razed the site.

Ethnic divided societies usually produce memorials that honor a narrowly defined ethnic group and its “martyrs”. However, memorials can be used to celebrate the multicultural national identity. For instance, Robben Island tells the story of the “Rainbow Nation”.

### Slide 7

#### Timing and Sequencing

Grieving relatives sometimes create impromptu memorials where their loved ones died.

Larger, formal memorials undertaken by states generally do not appear until at least five to ten years have passed.



Memorials can be impromptu or part of the transitional justice program. Throughout the process it is important to consider the purpose of the memorial. Is it for the victims, is it for the survivors or future generations?

### Slide 8

#### Truth Commissions

Some truth commissions have included recommendations for memorialization: Chile, Guatemala, South Africa, Ghana, and Sierra Leone

“Restore human and civil dignity” - South Africa commission on memorialization

These memorials can be a symbolic reparation. Few truth commissions have articulated in much detail what memorialization means, how it should be connected to other transitional justice processes, who should take charge, and other specific considerations.



Memorialization is a tool for unity and reparation, but it isn't a tool that is often used. This is a missed opportunity in the reconciliation process.

**Slide 9**

Overlapping Paradigms for Confronting the Past	
Transitional Justice Paradigm	Memory Paradigm
Legal responsibilities of the state and international community to promote the rule of law	Seeks to promote a culture of democratization in part by creating a "never again" mentality
Four responsibilities; truth-telling, prosecution, reparations, and institutional reforms	Depending heavily on cultural and other methods of educating and reminding people about the past
Documentation is essential for each of these postwar processes	Documentation is equally important in museums and memorials



All transitional justice interventions share a dependence on documentation. Louis Bickford describes two overlapping paradigms for confronting the past, “transitional justice paradigm” and “memory paradigm”. TJP focuses on the legal responsibility of the state to move beyond the violence. The memory paradigm, however, seeks to create a cultural or societal change in which people have the mentality of “never again” will the event be allowed to happen. An example would be in Germany after WWII and the holocaust, a new constitution was created. This was part of the TJP. The creation of holocaust memorials throughout the world was part of the Memory Paradigm in which a culture of the “never again” mentality is encouraged.

**Slide 10**

**Insiders versus Outsiders**

Why would it be important for survivors of conflict, rather than the outsiders who come to help them, initiate memorial projects?

What defines an “outsider”?

Do you think there is a difference between a fellow national from outside the immediate survivor community and international actors?



An outsider is all about context. For example, members of the community in Kliptown, just outside the Soweto Township in which a memorial was being built, considered a South African NGO based 40 kilometers away that was consulting on the project to be an outsider. Ultimately, the question comes down to who makes the important decisions.

A fellow national can sometimes provide cultural and linguistic advantages.

Slide 11

**Process**

**Define the objectives:** understand the needs of the community and share information.

**Define the community:** Who are the different stakeholders and how do their views differ?

**Promote transparency:** Create a process that makes information about the memorial project available through public meetings and other means.

**Research the options:** Conduct focus groups and interviews with experts, local politicians, and other key stakeholders; conduct tours of the prospective site to stimulate debate about community needs and desires in relation to the site; collect stories and memories associated with the site.

**Present findings to the community.**

**Conducts ongoing publicity campaigns.**  
The feasibility study is an initial phase from which the project needs to build further momentum.



Effective transitional justice interventions must pass three tests. First, the wider population must see the intervention as legitimate and impartial. Second, any policy decisions or outcomes must be subject to a genuine consultation with those most affected by violence. For memory projects, this means that survivors must be directly involved in the discussion of what should be remembered and how. Third, effective transitional justice interventions have to be accompanied by a range of other initiatives aimed at promoting the rule of law.

“Symbolic reparations such as monuments and museums are important but should ideally be linked with endeavors that improve the everyday lives of victims and their communities. One way of combining the two aims is to involve victims prominently in the design and/or manufacture of monuments.” Page 13

Slide 12

**Cautions**

Memorialization is a politically charged process that can stir up the worst in a community

Memorials initiated, controlled, or dominated by outsiders are doomed to failure

Memorial sites highly meaningful to a community may be largely invisible to outsiders

A memorial that helps individual survivors feel more at peace may promote future conflict

“Static” memorials that do not promote active learning or interaction among survivors lose their meaning for future generations

Impact assessment is time-consuming and expensive, and it needs to be repeated to capture changes in attitude over time



These are things that must be considered when designing a memorial.

**Slide 13**

Examples of public  
memorials. Guess the  
following memorials.



**Slide 14**



Jatyo Smriti Soudho or National Martyr's Memorial in Bangladesh to remember those who died in the Liberation War of 1971. This iconic image is a source of national pride. You can find its image used throughout the country, including its currency. They also have a museum in Dhaka that tells the story of the war.

**Slide 15**



Vietnam War Memorial. The “outsider” issue came to play when a Yale student, Maya Lin, won the design contest. Maya Lin is of Asian descent which angered some Veterans and members of the public and public officials. The focus on this memorial is the names of soldiers lost. Today it is one of the most iconic memorials in the United States, but at the time of its creation it was heavily controversial.

**Slide 16**



District Six Museum in Cape Town, South Africa. At this memorial stories are shared.

**Slide 17**



Hiroshima Peace Memorial. This building was preserved after the Hiroshima attack to help visitors remember what happened by having a visual aid.

## Write a Letter to a U.S. Senator

**Rationale:** The right to petition the government is guaranteed by the first amendment and plays a critical role in the function of government. Students will be using The Olive Branch as a springboard to research and advocate for an issue to their U.S. Senator.

**Objectives:** This lesson will teach students how to advocate in a representative government and speak up for those with no voice. Students will also learn how the internet could be used as a source for learning about the world.

**Standards:**

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1**

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2**

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.3**

Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5**

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

**Materials:**

- Copies of USIP blog posts (*If you don't have access to the internet in the classroom*)
- Lined paper or computers
- Envelopes with stamps

**Time:** Two 45-minute classes

**Assessment:**

- Final letter to the Senator.

**Procedures:**

**Step 1:** Read [The Olive Branch](#), a blog from the U.S. Institute of Peace.

**Step 2: Research**

It is important to develop a greater understanding of the issue raised by The Olive Branch article. Have students use some of the following sources to develop a deeper understanding of the issue and collect evidence to use in their letter.

Students should then use [congress.gov](#) to see if they can find a bill regarding their topic. If a bill does exist, students are encouraged to cite it to advocate for or against the bill. This can be done with a simple key-word search.

[U.S. Bilateral Relations Factsheet](#)

[Congress.gov](#)

**Step 3: Craft a letter**

- Have students follow the format found in the Sample Letter to Your Senator.
- **Paragraph 1:** Who you are
- **Paragraph 2:** Why you are writing. What you read on The Olive Branch from the U.S. Institute of Peace. Be sure to cite where information comes from because it supports your argument and shows with whom you stand on the issue.
- **Paragraph 3:** Be sure to thank them for their time and request a response.

**Step 4: Edit**

Once the first draft is complete, allow students to edit a letter from a peer. This will allow them to learn about a different issue or a different perspective of their issue while also practicing how to edit.

**Step 5: Revise**

Allow students to revise their letter and be sure to read it (and grade using the rubric) and turn it back.

**Step 6: Send**

Provide the opportunity to put the letter in the envelope and be sure to send the letters as soon as possible. It takes time for congressional offices to go through the mail and you want to minimize the time between this assignment and an official response.

## SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR SENATOR

### U.S. Senate Mailing List

The sample letter below is provided to show the correct format for addressing your U.S. Senator. Please use the left-hand column as a guide for the format, but make the letter unique to *The Olive Branch* post your student is addressing.

<b>Return Address</b>	Your Name Address City, State. Zip Code
<b>Date</b>	[Insert Date]
<b>Senator's Address</b>	The Honorable [Insert Senator's Name] [### Dirksen, Russell, or Hart Senate Office Building] Washington, DC 20510
<b>Salutation</b>	Dear Senator [Insert Last Name]:
<b>Introduce yourself: your name, address and school to identify that you are a constituent</b>	My name is [Insert Your Name] and I reside at [Insert Your Address] in [Insert Your City], [Insert Your State]. I am in the [Your Current Grade] at [Insert Your School].
<b>Why are you writing your Senator?</b>	I am writing to you in regards to an issue that came to my attention through <i>The Olive Branch</i> , a blog from the U.S. Institute of Peace. <b>[Be specific with your suggestion, idea or request. If you are writing about a specific Bill, include the Bill Number - for example, H.R. 1797: End Neglected Tropical Diseases Act or. S. 2946: Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2014]</b>
<b>Ask for a response</b>	I appreciate your help and ask that you please send me a response letting me know what you intended to do on the issue at hand.
<b>Thank your Senator for his/her time</b>	Thank you for your time and considering my request.
<b>Closing with your name</b>	Sincerely, [Insert Your Name]

**Rubric**

	<b>Does Not Meet Objective</b>	<b>Partially Meets Objective</b>	<b>Meets Objective</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
<b>Formatting</b>	Student made no attempt at following the proper formatting.	Student failed to follow the formatting by missing a section.	Student followed the formatting.	Student gave attention to detail and structured the entire letter to have a nice appearance.
<b>Content</b>	Student had misinformation and did not provide a strong argument.	Student included research and an appeal. Did not make it personal or push themselves.	Student included quality research and compelling appeal.	Student included a substantial amount of quality research to support their argument. They also gave a compelling appeal.
<b>Editing and Revision Process</b>	Student made a minimal effort to edit the work of their peers. Did not revise their own letter.	Student edited their peers work and did not revise their own letter.	Student edited their peers work and accepted the edits made by peers.	Student provided good edits for their peers and revised their work to make it better.
<b>Points</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Grade Equivalent</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>

### Sample Letter

Clara Schroepfer  
3901 S. Quebec St.  
Denver, CO 80237

26 May 2016

The Honorable Cory Gardner  
354 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gardner,

My name is Clara Schroepfer and I reside at 3901 South Quebec Street in Denver, Colorado. I am in the eighth grade at St. Mary's Academy.

I am writing to you in regards to an issue that came to my attention through *The Olive Branch*, a blog from the U.S. Institute of Peace. After reading about the recent issues in Ukraine, I researched the bills drafted that are related to the current situation. Joining the EU will greatly improve Ukraine's economic standpoint, as well as deter Russia from launching another attack on Ukraine. Therefore, I confidently believe that the bill H. Res. 122, or "STAND for Ukraine," is worthy of endorsement.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian people have had an extreme lack of voice in their government. Joining the EU will give the Ukrainian people the opportunity to be heard over the Russian government. Our American Constitution gives us the freedom to speak our minds. Should it not be this way for all the people in the world who wish to be heard?

I appreciate your help and ask that you please send me a response letting me know what you intended to do on the issue at hand.

Thank you for your time and considering my request.

Sincerely,  
Clara M. Schroepfer

## Briefing a Conflict

*This resource is best utilized after completing the corresponding USIP Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators.*

**Rationale:** The purpose behind the competition was to produce cases of international conflict that illuminate current problems and challenges for practitioners engaged in conflict prevention and management, conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation.

**Objective:** To practice the skills required to mediate an international conflict. Once completed, students will be able to use the conflict map to recognize the stage of a conflict and how to mediate a conflict to a peaceful resolution.

### Standards:

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.3](#)

Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4](#)

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5](#)

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, and causally).

### Materials:

- [USIP Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators](#)
- Copies of the [USIP Case Studies](#)
- Highlighters and pens for close reading
- Computers for Google Slides

### Expected Time:

Between nine and twenty 45-minute classes.

### Part 1: Corresponding USIP Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators Lessons (Optional) -

Nine 45-minute classes

**Part 2: Deep Reading and Discussion on a Conflict** - Four 45-minute classes

**Part 3: Briefing the Conflict** - Four 45-minute classes

**Part 4: Practice Mediation (Optional)** - Two 45-minute classes

**Part 5: Debriefing** - One 45-minute class

### Assessments:

- Group Discussion on a Conflict

- Briefing the Conflict Presentation

**Student Role:** Students will take on the role of a mediator and learn about a conflict, brief the class on their conflict and then practice mediating a conflict.

**Part 1 (Optional, but recommended):** [Corresponding USIP Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators Lessons](#)

- Lesson 1.1 Defining Conflict
- Lesson 1.2 Perspectives on Peace
- Lesson 2.1 Observing Conflict
- Lesson 2.3 Practicing Conflict Analysis
- Lesson 2.4E Responding to Conflict: Mediation

**Part 2: Deep Reading and Discussion on a Conflict**

Divide students into groups of at least 3. Students will select a case study from the [USIP Case Study Competition](#).

- Burundi
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Kenya
- Peru
- Sierra Leone
- South Africa
- Sudan

Each group will [close read](#) their case study and prepare discussion questions.

Once groups are ready to have a discussion, have an inner circle (facing in) for the group discussing their case study and an outer circle (facing in) for the rest of the class to observe and reflect on the discussion. Students on the outer circle should be taking notes both on the case study and discussion.

Students from the outside will turn in questions they have that could be covered when the group presents a brief on the conflict.

About ten minutes per group should be enough. You can cut the time short if you see them struggling, or extend it if the conversation is going well. Feel free to sit inside the circle and join the conversation.

### **Step 3: Briefing the Conflict**

After reading and discussing their case study, students will prepare a group presentation briefing the class on their conflict. Students will follow the [Curve of Conflict](#) from the USIP to explain the conflict.

Students should focus on creating one slide for each section and keep the presentation under ten minutes.

Slides should be used to assist the presentation flow, they shouldn't be the focal point of the presentation. Encourage fewer slides and keep text to a minimum.

Use Google Slides or another preferred form of slides.

### **Sections to Cover**

Slide 1: About the Conflict (General Overview)

Use the Curve Conflict to explain the process.

Breakdown the conflict into the following parts:

- Slide 2: Prevention
  - Routine Diplomacy
  - Preventative Diplomacy
- Slide 3: Crisis Management
  - Crisis Diplomacy
  - Peacemaking
  - Peace Enforcement
  - Peacekeeping
- Slide 4: Peacebuilding
  - Post-Conflict Peacebuilding
  - Reconciliation

### **Step 4 (Optional): Practice Mediation**

As a class, students should be prepared to act out a simulation. Simulations can be found on the [USIP website here](#). Two recommended simulations are *The Case of "Palmyra"* and *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*.

### **Step 5: Debriefing**

After briefing a conflict and practicing mediation, it is important to dedicate a 45-minute class period to discuss everything. Alternatively, this could be completed as a writing assignment. Here are some discussion questions to help guide conversation.

- In what ways do you believe that your case study (research and briefing) was unique?

- What attributes from your case study applied to others?
- What three big ideas are you taking away about peacebuilding?
- How can we use the Curve of Conflict to prevent or mitigate future conflicts?
- Should more be invested in routine diplomacy to prevent conflict?

**Rubric(s)**

**Deep Reading Discussion Rubric**

	<b>Does Not Meet Objective</b>	<b>Partially Meets Objective</b>	<b>Meets Objective</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
<b>Preparedness</b>	Student did not demonstrate any preparation prior to the conversation.	Student came to the conversation unprepared for a discussion.	Student came to the conversation prepared for a discussion.	Student came to the conversation with notes and prepared for a challenging discussion.
<b>Contribution</b>	Student did not contribute to the conversation.	Student offered an idea to the conversation, but did not challenge the conversation.	Student offered questions and would attempt to answer questions raised by others.	Student challenged himself/herself by posing challenging questions and answering those raised by others.
<b>Engagement</b>	Student did not engage in the conversation and ignored contributions made by others.	Student would recognize contributions made by others, but did not respond.	Student demonstrated an interest in ideas proposed by others and struggled to add to the dialogue.	Student showed an active interest in the contributions made by others and would challenge ideas.
<b>Points</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Grade Equivalent</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>

### Briefing a Conflict Rubric

	<b>Does Not Meet Objective</b>	<b>Partially Meets Objective</b>	<b>Meets Objective</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
<b>Preparedness</b>	Student did not make use of time provided to prepare and used the slide as notes.	Student did the bare minimum in preparing for the presentation. Relied upon notes.	Student practiced for the presentation. Did not need to look at notes.	Student practiced the presentation multiple times and gave a strong presentation.
<b>Quality of Slides</b>	Slides distract from the presentation. Providing either too much or too little information and serve as notes.	Slides have either too much or too little information and are relied upon as notes.	Slides do not include too much information, but do serve as a tool for the presentation.	Slides exceed expectations and strike a balance of capturing the attention of the audience without being overwhelming.
<b>Verbal Presentation</b>	Student was unable to present a clear message. Used multiple filler words that distracted from the presentation.	Student relied heavily upon notes and/or the slides.	Student gave a clear and concise presentation.	Student gave an engaging presentation that was clear and concise.
<b>Q&amp;A Engagement</b>	Student didn't answer questions either due to an inability to or unwillingness.	Student struggled to answer questions, but gave a strong attempt.	Student provided good information and responded well to questions.	Student provides insightful answers with ease and comfort.
<b>Points</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Grade Equivalent</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>