

GlobalTribe

Curriculum



Teacher's Guide

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In Association With...



www.afxb.org

In commemoration of
World AIDS Orphans Day

May 7, 2005

Purpose: To inspire youth from diverse walks of life to
take action and show **solidarity** with AIDS orphans.

www.GlobalTribeNet.org

 **2005**

GlobalTribe is an international service-learning program that develops young global citizens by offering them high-impact multimedia, innovative tools, and exciting opportunities to make a difference in local and global communities. It provides secondary schools with media-rich curricula and a strong framework to engage today's youth in experiential learning of world affairs.

I. Overview & Film Synopsis

A. Overview

We suggest the following order for events in your classroom:

1. Introduce the film and the upcoming videoconference.
2. Have students take the Pre-Test to get a sense of what they'll be learning about and to ascertain their current level of knowledge.
3. Learn about HIV/AIDS, especially as it pertains to sub-Saharan Africa, through the information provided in the Student Guide, including background, statistics, and personal stories.
4. View *Beat the Drum*.
5. Have a group discussion about the film.
6. Have students write reflective essays or journal entries regarding the film.
7. Participate in videoconference.
8. Discuss what was learned during the videoconference.
9. Have students answer the same questions that they did at the beginning of the unit.
10. Consider extending your study of HIV/AIDS in Africa via one of the suggested activities.

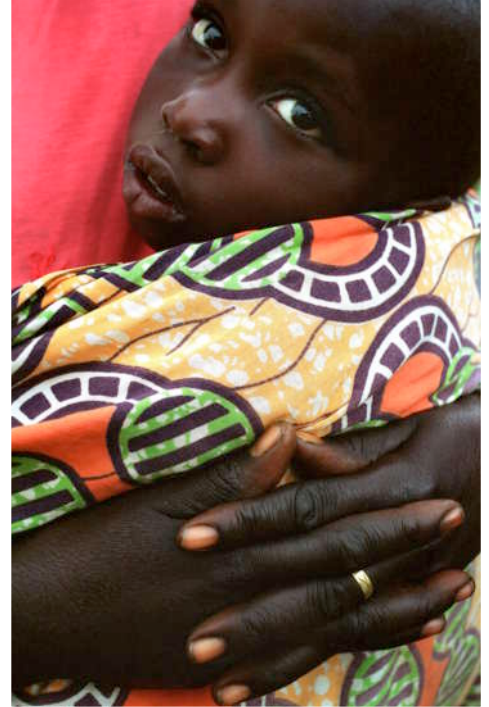


Photo: AFXB

www.beatthedrum.com

B. Film Synopsis

This feature length film is a drama set against the devastating background of the African AIDS epidemic. Nine-year-old Musa is a Zulu boy whose mother and father become victims of “the curse” which is destroying his remote African village. After his father’s death, Musa sets out to find his long-lost uncle and earn enough money to help his grandmother—who is responsible both for Musa and several cousins whose parents have also died—buy a cow. He walks across the African wilderness toward the far away concrete jungle of Johannesburg, his only possession a small drum, a gift from his dying father.

Through his wit and determination, he gets a ride with a transcontinental trucker, Nobe, who regularly drives the 350-mile highway that hauls goods from South Africa to markets



in the continent's center. This road, an important economic lifeline, is also a conduit for the transmission of AIDS, as women, desperate for money to feed their families, have sex with truckers at rest stops along the way in return for the agreement to transport goods they need to sell up the road. Nobe takes young Musa all the way to Johannesburg and befriends him along the way.

Nobe tries to get Musa a job at the company that employs him, but the wealthy white owner mistakes the boy for a street child and wants nothing to do with him. Ironically, the man's grown son, Stefan, works with a charity that helps street children. Musa runs away and lives on the street where he finds himself surrounded by violent gangs and the indifference that keeps thousands of children orphaned and homeless. His friendships with Nobe and a street-wise young girl help him survive and confront the realities of the new plague.



Nobe must deal with his own feelings about AIDS and his infidelities while traveling. He has a wife and three daughters and considers adopting Nobe when the boy's grandmother says she cannot care for him. But Nobe's sister dies from AIDS and his house is full. He becomes an activist, however, helping to alert friends and neighbors to the reality of the disease. Other's have their eyes opened as well. When Stefan gets sick and admits to his father that he is HIV-positive, his father's hard veneer begins to crumble.

Beautifully filmed on location in the KwaZulu Natal and Johannesburg, South Africa, *Beat the Drum* shows us that one small voice can be the brave start of colossal change—uniting a village, a city and even a nation.

South African Director David Hickson and American Writer/Producer W. David McBrayer, both first-time feature filmmakers, assembled an experienced South African crew and a talented South African cast, led by Junior Singo in his acting debut as the nine-year-old Musa. *Beat the Drum* was shot entirely on location in KwaZulu-Natal, Soweto Township, and Johannesburg, South Africa.



II. Before Viewing *Beat the Drum*



sitting (i.e., school population x 14)? Your city or town?

Now consider the ramifications of such a rapid moving phenomenon on children and society. Discuss what a child needs to grow into a confident, contributing member of society. *Food and shelter? Love and emotional support?* As a group or individually, brainstorm a list of a child's needs. As does UNICEF,

students will want to consider the needs of different aged children, infants through 18 years old.

Review the Statistics in the Student Handbook. The students may be overwhelmed by the numbers or unable to relate to the figures. Discuss their reactions briefly and then lead them into the first exercise that will make the statistics more accessible.



a) The numbers are staggering, but what do they mean? How can we begin to comprehend their significance? Think of that first statistic:

An estimated 40 million children will be orphaned by 2010, one every 14 seconds.



Ask everyone in your class or group to stand up. Watch the second-hand on a clock and have a person sit down every 14 seconds to represent a new orphan. How long did it take for everyone to be sitting? How long would it take for everyone in your school to be

Review your list and in a column next to each item consider who might provide these things in the absence of parents; e.g., grandparents, older siblings, neighbors and friends, the government, non-profit aid organizations, other. In a third column, consider why certain groups may not be able to serve as providers. For example, given the sheer number of orphans, neighbors may already be struggling with their own orphan issues.

Finally, discuss how this would affect individual children, individual families, communities, and countries. What resources would be stretched thin at every level? How might certain things we take for granted at each level fall apart?



b) What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of Africa? Go around the room and share these initial impression words.

Ask the students to examine the list for myths and generalizations. For example, if they said “poor,” ask if all Africans are poor. If they mentioned wild animals, ask how common lions and wildebeest are.

Do the same thing with “AIDS.” Use this as a way to quickly ascertain the students’ knowledge of Africa and AIDS: what gaps exist in their knowledge, what they want to know more about.

c) To better understand how quickly and easily HIV can spread, give one student a glove to wear. Then have the students shake hands with three people. Have everyone return to their seats and ask them whether they shook hands with the gloved person. When everyone except for three people says no, ask if they’re certain. Then tell those initial three people who shook hands with the gloved person to move to the side of the room. Next, everyone who shook hands with the people who just got up should also move to the side of the room. And so on. In effect, students will be simulating how multiple partners can spread HIV.

Before viewing the film it’s also recommended that you

a) review basic HIV/AIDS information, <http://www.niaid.nih.gov/factsheets/hivinfn.htm>, b) locate South Africa on a map, and c) briefly review recent South African history, <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sf.html>.

AIDS in Numbers

- ◆ An estimated 40 million children will be orphaned by 2010, one every 14 seconds.*
- ◆ In 11 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, more than 15% of all children were orphans in 2003.
- ◆ 2010, sub-Saharan Africa will be home to an estimated 50 million orphaned children, and more than a third will have lost one or both parents to AIDS.
- ◆ Eight out of every 10 children who have lost parents to AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa, and the number is expected to increase over the next two decades at least.
- ◆ In 2004, an estimated 3.1 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa became newly infected. By comparison, there are 40,000 new HIV/AIDS infections in the U.S. every year.**
- ◆ Each day, an estimated 1,600 children are born with HIV; 1,500 of them in sub-Saharan Africa.
- ◆ Nine in every 10 newly-infected children live in sub-Saharan Africa, as do nearly eight out of every 10 women living with HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ Overall HIV prevalence for pregnant women in South Africa in 2003 was 27.9%.
- ◆ More than two out of three newly-infected 15 to 24-year olds are female. For adolescents between the ages of 15 and 19, five or six girls are infected for every boy in worst-affected areas.
- ◆ South Africa has the highest number of people living with AIDS in the world: an estimated 5.3 million people were living with HIV at the end of 2003.

Source: UN & UNICEF

*Save the Children

**American International AIDS Foundation

III. After Viewing *Beat the Drum*

Engage the students in discussion after you've viewed *Beat the Drum*. You'll want to respond to their questions before asking your own. Here are some possible directions your discussion might take.

- ❁ What are some cultural taboos related to HIV/AIDS as represented in the film? Are they similar or different to cultural taboos related to HIV/AIDS in your country or community?

*The film shows how traditional religions and customs, as represented by the spiritual leader and elder in Musa's village, are often in conflict with AIDS education. Even religious leaders, such as the priest in Johannesburg, that are aware of the disease cannot always do as much as they'd like because people are afraid to admit they have the disease out of fear that they or their families will be viewed as cursed. Stefan's father represents the taboo against white aiding blacks, despite the decade-long end of apartheid. Students might note that homosexuality is not an issue in *Beat the Drum*, and yet the association many people have with HIV/AIDS and homosexuality, a taboo subject for many people, has been one of the biggest obstacles faced by educators in the U.S.*



Photo: AFXB

- ❁ "It feels good to speak the truth," Nobe tells Musa. What does this statement mean, both in context of the film and the lives of young people today? Does this statement differ between cultures or is it an absolute truth?

With regard to the film, this statement relates to the widespread denial and/or ignorance displayed by many characters in the film, including Nobe himself who initially does not want to listen to his wife's admonitions. Likewise, Stefan's father doesn't want to hear or understand about the orphans and why there are so many. The elders in Musa's village aren't interested in the health workers' information and advice. And Nobe's trucker friend says, "We're all going to die some time." By speaking the truth, Nobe—along with Stefan, Musa, and other characters—is one small but powerful antidote to such denial and ignorance. Even if his meeting at

the church swayed one person, it would have made a difference (think back to your glove/handshake exercise to know how true this is). With regard to youth in general and whether this is an absolute truth, these are broader questions for your students to debate.



Why do you think the writer and director decide to tell the story from Musa's point of view? How would the film have been different if it had been told from the point of view of Nobe's wife? Of Thandie? Of the grandmother? Of Stefan?

The writer and director clearly wanted to focus on how HIV/AIDS are impacting children and orphans in particular. Musa's is an effective point of view because he is so affected, but also because he's a boy, he can move a bit more freely in South Africa than a girl. His friend and cousin, for instance, were both victims of sexual abuse and violence. Nobe's wife might have focused on issues of infidelity, women's roles in South African culture, and the strain on a family when relative's children need to be cared for. Thandie may have told about the abuse she suffered from her teacher, the school's closing, expectations placed on her as a girl, and her inability to go to the city as Musa did. The grandmother would undoubtedly have focused on the stress of losing one's children and raising their children as an elderly person, and her confusion

over who to trust regarding the "curse." Finally, Stefan might have talked about the role of whites in a post-apartheid society and the role of the privileged in helping the poor.



What obstacles do children in South Africa and other parts of Africa face to getting an education?

Students may wonder why Musa is not in school. In part, this is probably because of the costs involved in attending school. There is no such thing as the free, public education available to most children in the West. Instead, families must pay for a child to attend school, in addition to buying books and supplies. Another obstacle is the shortage of teachers due to the AIDS epidemic; many schools have had to close as a result. Finally, as is inferred through the early scene with Thandie at the school, some teachers sexually prey on female students. This is partly due to the belief among men that girls are less likely to be infected than older females. There is even a widespread myth that having sex with a virgin will cure one of the disease.

Photo: AFXB



IV. Resources

Organizations

The GlobalTribe Network
<http://www.globaltribenet.org>

Association Francois-Xavier Bagnoud
<http://www.afxb.org/>

Save the Children
<http://www.savethechildren.org>

Global Health Council
<http://www.globalhealth.org>

African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnerships
<http://www.achap.org>

Tanzania Care
<http://www.tanzaniacare.org>

Doctors Without Borders
<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org>

World Bank
<http://worldbank.org/aids>

Global Fund
<http://www.globalfundatm.org>

UNAIDS
<http://www.unaids.org>

Articles

Africa's Orphan Crisis: The Worst Is Yet to Come
http://www.unicef.org/media/media_16287.html

Malawi Battles AIDS Orphan Nightmare
<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol15no3/153chil5.htm>

AIDS Orphan's Preventable Death Challenges Those Left Behind
<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,128736,00.html>

Hearing Voices: African AIDS Orphans' Memory Books
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1504732>

AIDS in Africa: Myths and Facts
<http://www.africaaction.org/action/mythfact.htm>

Africa's Orphaned Generations
<http://www.unicef.org/media/files/orphans.pdf>