

Lesson Plan for Betty Bigombe: Building Peace in Uganda Witness Video

Rationale: Testimonials provide first-hand accounts of experiences that can help clarify complex concepts. The video of *Betty Bigombe: Building Peace in Uganda* gives insight into the risks and challenges involved in negotiating in difficult circumstances. The video also explores the role of women in peacebuilding. The lesson engages students in watching the video, and then in an exercise that asks them to think about themselves in terms of their gender and to listen to the stories of their peers. In reflecting on how they were raised in terms of their gender, students are asked to think about the hidden messages they have received from society that shape how they perceive of others.

Objectives:

1. To explore the challenges of negotiating peace in difficult circumstances.
2. To consider gender differences in approaches to conflict management and peacebuilding.
3. To reflect on experiences around gender that shape students' assumptions of others and their worldview.
4. To understand the range of experiences and perspectives around gender.

Age: 15 and above (U.S. high school grade 10 and above)

Time: 60 minutes

Materials:

- Betty Bigombe: Building Peace in Uganda

<http://www.buildingpeace.org/teach-visit-us-and-learn/exhibits/witnesses-peacebuilding/betty-bigombe-building-peace-uganda>

- Handout: Background for video
- Worksheet: Betty Bigombe: Building Peace in Uganda Note-Taking Sheet
- List of questions for growing up in my gender exercise (for instructor)
- Chart paper
- Markers

PART 1: Viewing the Betty Bigombe Video (15 minutes)

Procedures:

1. Share with students that they are going to watch a video in a few minutes about one woman's efforts to negotiate peace in Uganda.

2. Ask students:

- What does gender mean to you?

Note: Differences between men and women are often thought of only in biological and physiological terms. But the differences are far more complex when seen in society. It is the term *gender* that encompasses the socially constructed roles, activities, and behaviors that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. These roles vary according to socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts; and are affected by other factors, including race, age, class, religion, and ethnic group. Furthermore, gender roles are learned and reinforced through education, political and economic systems, social expectations, legislation, religion, culture and traditions.

2. Ask:

- How do you think men and women are treated differently in violent conflict? What examples from the past can you think of?

3. Ask:

- What are some examples of leaders of countries or individuals who have negotiated peace in the past?
- What might women contribute to the conversation that might be different?

Note: Conflicts of the past reveal that most leaders and negotiators at high levels have been men. There is a concerted international effort today—from the United Nations (UN) to local organizations—to focus on the role of gender in peacebuilding and to consider ways for women to be more involved in peace processes, both official and unofficial. For more information on gender and peacebuilding, visit USIP's study guide on Gender, War, and Peacebuilding at <http://www.usip.org/files/NPECSG12.pdf>. And to learn more about what USIP is doing in this area, visit our issue page on gender and peacebuilding: <http://www.buildingpeace.org/think-global-conflict/issues/gender-and-peacebuilding>.

4. Tell students that the video they are going to watch is about a Ugandan peacebuilder named Betty Bigombe who worked to negotiate peace in her home country, first as a government representative and later as a private citizen. Provide background on the conflict in Uganda taken from the attached background.

5. Distribute the *Betty Bigombe: Building Peace in Uganda* note-taking sheet and review it with students. Ask students to listen for answers to the questions while watching the four-minute video and to take notes on the sheet.

Debrief:

1. What stood out to you about Betty Bigombe in this story?
2. What risks did Betty face as she engaged with the Lord's Resistance Army?
3. How did being a woman affect Betty's ability to work with the Lord's Resistance Army?
4. Who are some other women working for peace around the world, and what do they do?
5. How would you describe Betty? Are these characteristics gender-specific?
6. Why might these be important qualities for someone working for peace to have? How can you develop these qualities in yourself?

Betty Bigombe: Building Peace in Uganda Note-Taking Sheet

Directions: Read the questions below. Watch the video and answer the questions based on what you see and hear.

1. What risks did Betty Bigombe face when negotiating with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)?

2. How did being a woman affect Betty's ability to negotiate with the LRA?





Background for Betty Bigombe: Building Peace in Uganda Witness Video

The civil war in northern Uganda between the government and the rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) began in the late 1980s. While rebel leader Joseph Kony claimed to fight for the rights of the region's Acholi people, the Acholis bore the brunt of the fighting.

The LRA forced large numbers of people from their homes, and tens of thousands of civilians—including many women and children—were terrorized or killed.

Betty Bigombe was a member of the Ugandan Parliament. She was appointed Minister of State for Pacification of north and north eastern Uganda, and was tasked with seeking a peaceful end to the violent conflict there.

Prior to Bigombe's appointment, military efforts to stop the violence and establish peace talks had not succeeded. Bigombe reached out to Joseph Kony, the rebel leader, and initiated talks that brought the rebel leaders and government ministers face to face for the first time.

Betty Bigombe acted as a lead negotiator on behalf of the Ugandan government, and then later became an independent mediator in the peace process. Even after talks collapsed, Bigombe continued to urge the rebels to return to the negotiating table. While the violence in northern Uganda has eased in recent years, the LRA continues to wage brutal attacks in neighboring countries, and efforts to promote peace still continue.

From 2005—2007, Bigombe was a Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

PART 2: Growing Up in My Gender (45 minutes)

Procedures:

1. Explain the purpose/rationale of the activity (see rationale for lesson).
2. Divide students into concentric circles. Have them count off 1,2,1,2... Have the 1's stand shoulder to shoulder in a circle facing each other. Ask them to turn around so they are facing the rest of the students. Have each 2 stand up and face a 1. To make sure everyone has a partner, have the 1's acknowledge their partner by raising their hand (they can shake hands with their partner, if culturally appropriate). If you have an odd number of students, you can have the extra student observe the activity and share what they observe at the end of the activity.
1. Explain that you will read a statement and either the 1's (inside circle) or the 2's (outside circle) will respond. The person speaking will have one minute to respond. The person listening should not talk. They should use body language to show they are engaged, but they should remain silent, allowing the speaker the full minute to respond.
2. After one minute, have the pairs switch roles, so the person speaking is now listening, and the listener is now responding to the same statement.
3. At the end of one minute, have the outer circle rotate one person to the right, so everyone has a new partner. Read the next statement, following steps 3 and 4 above. This time, however, the person who responded second to the previous statement should now respond first. After both pairs have responded, have the inside circle move one person to the right.
4. Continue through the statements, alternating who speaks first after each statement and alternating the order in which the circles rotate one person to the right.
5. After you have read the statements, lead a discussion using some or all of the following questions.

Discussion:

1. How did it feel to share personal information about yourself with different partners?
2. Which questions were more difficult to answer? Why?
3. What did you learn about yourself in this activity? What did you learn about others, both your peers of the same gender and peers of a different gender?
4. Where do the messages we receive about identities come from?
5. How do these messages shape our perceptions of others, as well as our expectations of others?
6. How can our perceptions of other identities lead to conflict?
7. What can you take from this exercise that will help you in managing conflicts in the future?

Statements for Growing Up in My Gender exercise

Share with your partner the messages you received when you were younger about male and female gender roles.

Share with your partner how you were taught to interact with people who are of a different gender.

Share with your partner the people of your gender that you were encouraged to hold as role models.

Share with your partner the people of a different gender that you were encouraged to hold as role models.

Share with your partner something you were discouraged from doing because of your gender.

Share with your partner a stereotype about your gender that bothers you.

Share with your partner a stereotype that you have about another gender.

Share with your partner the ways in which you do not fit the gender roles assigned to you by society.

Share with your partner how gender differences affect you.

Share with your partner an example of gender differences in an international context, either from your experience or from the news.