

# International Labor Rights Forum

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ILRF is an advocacy organization dedicated to achieving just and humane treatment for workers worldwide. This resource, created by Mike Schultz, is part of ILRF's Labor Rights in the Classroom resource page for educators. For more information or resources, please visit <http://www.laborrights.org/labor-rights/labor-rights-in-the-classroom>.

## Perspectives in Cocoa Production & Child Labor in Côte d'Ivoire

### Lesson Overview:

Child labor, like most social justice issues, is a complicated and controversial issue. To fully understand the issue, one must understand the perspectives of those involved. The following lesson ideas are intended to give students an introduction to these perspectives through a number of different means, including discussion, debate, research, and composition. On the following page is a list of resources that may be useful in the lesson.

### Lesson Ideas

1. Class Discussion – Give students a selection of each perspective. As a class, analyze the statements made by each side. Highlight key point in each's perspective (i.e. What facts were included? What facts were intentionally/unintentionally left out? What statements are deceptive? What statements are completely false?) Discuss each side's motivation and make conjectures as to the reasoning behind the statements made and left out.
2. Debate – Assign groups of students a pro/con child labor position. Have them read the resources included and prepare arguments supporting their position. Resources can be divided based on the perspective or made available to both sides. Set a date for students to debate the issue and invite a panel of impartial judges (e.g. students/ teachers/community members) to determine the side with the stronger arguments.
3. Research - Give groups of students selections from each perspective. Have each group compare and contrast the statements made from each side. For each difference found, have students research the point on the internet and check the validity of each statement.
4. Composition – Compile a list of facts (as unbiased as possible) from the resources above. Discuss the facts with the class and randomly assign students a perspective (Chocolate manufacturer, child-labor activist, newspaper, cocoa farmer). Have students construct a document (press release, newspaper article, interview, editorial) from that perspective by selecting relevant facts that support their

position. Compare finished perspective papers with actual documents from that perspective.

## Perspective Resources

### Newspaper / Press / General:

- Listing of news & paper related to child labor in cocoa industry  
<http://www.laborrights.org/press/index.html#cocoa>
- US Department of Labor on child labor in Cote D'Ivoire  
<http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/media/reports/flt/cote-d'Ivoire-2002.htm#d19>

### Corporate Perspectives:

Press Releases, Statements, Websites

- **General:** <http://www.responsiblecocoa.org/>
- **Nestle:** [http://www.nestle.com/Our\\_Responsibility/Responsibility.htm](http://www.nestle.com/Our_Responsibility/Responsibility.htm)
- **Cargill:** <http://www.cargill.com/news/issues/cocoaindustry.htm>  
<http://www.cargill.com/news/index.htm>
- **ADM:** <http://www.admworld.com/pdf/ADMStatementEnglish.pdf>  
<http://www.admworld.com/naen/pressroom/>

### Activist / Local Perspective:

- **NPR Kojo Nnamdi Show Interview: [Cocoa and Child Slavery](#)**  
**Abstract:** It's sweet, sugary...and scandalous? For many Americans, chocolate is connected to indulgence and pleasure. But human rights advocates say chocolate has a darker side. In West Africa scores of children are forced to harvest the cocoa beans that make our chocolate. A look at the issue of forced labor and the chocolate industry.

#### Guests

**Lowell Satre**, author of "Chocolate on Trial: Slavery, Politics, and the Ethics of Business"

**Jolene Smith**, Executive Director, Free the Slaves

**Natacha Thys**, Associate General Counsel, International Labor Rights Fund

**Eliot Engel**, Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives (D-NY)

Link: <http://www.wamu.org/programs/kn/05/08/08.php>

Direct link to audio: <http://www.wamu.org/audio/kn/05/08/k2050808-7927.asx>

- **ILRF Child Labor and Cocoa Campaign**  
Fact sheets, list of press releases, and legal proceedings  
<http://www.laborrights.org/stop-child-labor/cocoa-campaign>