

1. Abstract:

Assignment title: Violence: An Unsustainable Behavior

Instructor: Deborah Clarke-Blome

Department: English for Academic Purposes

My primary goal as an EAP instructor is to help non-native English speaking students become proficient in English language skills, including reading comprehension, writing, listening and speaking at a college-ready level. Toward this end, students engage in exploring challenging texts, learning subject-specific vocabulary, summarizing and responding to readings and lecture topics in written and oral assignments. To explore the “big sustainability ideas” of *Intergenerational Thinking* and *Interconnectedness and Interdependence*, I plan to introduce an assignment in EAP 121: Composition for College that will involve reading, summary writing, listening comprehension activities, team research, and group presentation on the topic of “Violence: An Unsustainable Behavior.”

2. Introduction and Overview

a. I have recently been thinking a lot about how one teaches peace. As I write this lesson plan, our nation is involved in no less than two major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the world worries about Iran acquiring nuclear weapon’s capability; North Korea’s government tests long-range missiles in a show of its power and willingness to strike at those it perceives as its enemies; and terrorists have recently launched attacks in India, Indonesia and Pakistan. On a more personal level, I have spoken with two young female students of mine, both of whom have recently faced domestic violence committed by boyfriends. I have also been deeply moved by the story and music of Corneille, a young musician who lost his parents and siblings in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In a recent interview, Corneille mentioned that it took him over a decade to even allow himself to remember his lost family. He could not even look at a picture of their faces as the pain was too intense. Just last year, 14 years after the murders of his family members, Corneille began to write about his love for them and the deep loss he has experienced. In the interview he said that the only reason why he believes he is functioning today (and many of the survivors of the Rwandan genocide are not) is that he had “17 years of pure love [with his family]” and was lucky enough to find the love of a good woman, his partner. That foundation of love and peace is what allows us to thrive as human beings. Violence is its antithesis.

b. The assignment will be completed during the last two weeks of class. Students will already have completed three out of four major writing assignments for the course.

c. Human violence--its roots, its patterns, its taming—impacts us all and deserves in-depth, interdisciplinary study. As violence affects our personal lives, the societies in which we live, and the entire future of human life on this planet, it is a compelling topic for reading, writing and discussion. In making violence the focus of an assignment, it is my hope that students will begin to question the value of violence and its effects on individuals and societies.

3. **Teaching and Learning Activities**

Instructor will introduce the assignment with an overview sheet including due dates. As part of that introduction, instructor will talk about the notions of Intergenerational Thinking and Interconnectedness and Interdependence and how violence relates to these themes. Instructor will also introduce students to the story and music of Corneille, a young Rwandan musician who survived but lost his family in the Rwandan genocide of 1994. This lecture will include a brief introduction to the 1994 conflict and a period of listening to Corneille's musical tribute to his family on his album titled, "The Birth of Cornelius." Beginning in this way will involve the students both intellectually and emotionally in the topic.

- Students will be given a copy of the article, "The Lingering Effects of Violence" to read and summarize. They will also be given a copy of "Statistics on Violence" to read. Their summaries of the first article will be graded for fluency, checked for grammar, and revised. Points will be assigned to both the draft and final of their summaries.
- Students will participate in an all-class discussion of the two articles. Participation points given.
- Students will form four groups assigned to research the common causes, current statistics and long-term consequences of each of the following forms of violence. They will prepare a brief (10 minute) presentation with some form of visual aid (PowerPoint, poster board, slideshow). Group points given.

--Child abuse

--Spousal/partner abuse

--Date rape

--Bullying in schools

- To conclude the course, the instructor will arrange for a guest speaker on Anger Management and there will be a final reflection period/discussion.

5. **Resources**

Home Page of Corneille, a young soul artist who writes in his album “The Birth of Cornelius” about surviving the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

<http://www.corneille.ca/>

The Lingering Effects of Violence. This article shows how modern neuroscience sheds light on the research of Richard Hellie, Professor in History, who has been studying the effects of violence in 16th- to 18th-century Russia. Hellie’s research shows how violence in society can perpetuate itself over decades, long after a nation has suffered an initial traumatic experience.

<http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/961205/violence.shtml>

Statistics on Violence. This article, compiled by The Peace Alliance Campaign to Establish a Department of Peace, highlights a number of statistics compiled by the World Health Organization (WHO), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Bureau of Justice, all reputable research organizations.

http://www.thepeacealliance.org/files/outreach_material/stats_violence.pdf