

# HEMISPHERES



THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
ASIA, LATIN AMERICA, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND RUSSIA, EAST EUROPE & EURASIA

HTTP://INIC.UTEXAS.EDU/HEMISPHERES  
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SPRING 2003

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### Advocate/Decision-Making Activity

We are pleased to offer a classroom activity presented by Jeffrey Helsing, Program Officer in the Education Program at the U.S. Institute of Peace, at Hemispheres' 2002 Summer Institute, "On War and Peace: Teaching about World Conflict."

Mr. Helsing opened the week-long workshop with a presentation on "The Challenges of Teaching about Peace and Conflict in an Interdependent World." Throughout the week, we heard from UT faculty and graduate students on a variety of conflict situations in the world, such as Chechnya, Israel & Palestine, Nigeria, Colombia, and Sri Lanka. Our teacher-facilitator, Shagufta Ellam of Cedar Valley Middle School, provided valuable teaching tools for translating the academic content of the workshop into viable classroom lessons. Finally, we closed the week with a talk by John Burnett, of National Public Radio, on "The Unheard Voices of War."

In addition to the presentations, Hemispheres organized a four-night public film series to enhance the workshop. Over 700 members of the local community attended showings of "Not One Less" (China), "Guelwaar" (Senegal), "Prisoner of the Mountains" (Russia), and "Kandahar" (Iran).

Evaluations from the summer institute proved it to be one of our most successful yet. We thank our speakers, our wonderful teacher-facilitator, and our participants for an interesting and thought-provoking week. For those of you who attended, we hope that you have already been able to use the materials. For those of you who were unable to attend, turn to page 2 for a great teaching activity. Considering recent world events, we believe this activity to be more timely than ever.

**Topics for the Advocate/Decision-Making Activity**, covering all of our world regions, page 5.

**Good Reads Recommendations**, page 5.

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## Advocate/Decision-Making Activity

Developed by John Rossi, School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University,  
and revised by the Education Program of the United States Institute of Peace

Advocate/decision-making activities allow for complete class involvement. Unlike class debates, which are usually dominated by a few of the most vocal students, the advocate/decision-making activity works well because each student is accountable for a role. Every student is either a debater or a decision-maker. The exercise sets up clear points of disagreement, and the competition to persuade the decision-maker enhances student motivation. In addition, such activities can be used with a large variety of historical and contemporary social studies problems and issues.

The activity revolves around a controversial historical or contemporary issue that is presented to the students. It is presented in the form of a "should" question (e.g., Should the United States have dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?). In the exercise highlighted for this article, the following "should" question was asked: **Should Israel withdraw its settlements unilaterally from the occupied territories in the West Bank and Gaza?**

The activity will then have four phases:

(1) Class preparation. In the preparatory stage, the issue should be discussed and clarified. This should be done in the class as a whole. The teacher should work to establish the setting and context in which the issue takes (or took) place. Then divide the students into 3 groups: advocates for, advocates against, and decision-makers. The groups need to be equal in size. When the class number is not divisible by 3, make the one or two extra students decision-makers. One may deliberately make the less able students decision-makers, but this might lessen the quality of the decision and subsequent analysis.

(2) Argument preparation. Individual advocates prepare arguments and evidence supporting their position. Decision-makers prepare questions to ask the advocates (see attached worksheets). Students will then come together in three groups and share information gathered by individual preparation. Thus, advocates for will meet with the other advocates for, advocates against with their counterparts, and decision-makers with the other decision-makers. Advocates decide best arguments and discuss adequacy of data. Decision-makers choose best questions to ask.

(3) Confrontation. Two advocates (one per side) will meet

with a decision-maker. Each small group can do this in front of the entire class, or all groups can be run simultaneously. Advocates for spend no more than 10 minutes with an individual decision-maker on a one-to-one basis. Advocates against may listen only. Then roles are reversed, with advocates against talking for no more than 10 minutes and advocates for listening only. Both advocates next debate the issue with the decision-maker for 10-15 minutes. The decision-maker then prepares a ballot, which shows his or her decision and gives reasons for the decision.

(4) De-briefing. Ballots are reviewed and arguments listed and analyzed. Arguments are discussed in terms of which were most persuasive and most supportable with evidence. Arguments and decisions should also be reviewed in terms of values. What values underlay the positions and statements? Where did the values conflict? What values did the decision-makers demonstrate?

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All advocates receive a worksheet to outline their position statements. For the Israel-Palestine example, worksheets with the following statements could be created:

ADVOCATES FOR:	ADVOCATES AGAINST:
Palestinians want...	Israelis want...
a.	a.
b.	b.
c.	c.
d.	d.
Palestinians deserve this because...a., b., c., d.	Israelis deserve this because...a., b., c., d.
In order to get what they want, Palestinians are willing to...a., b., c., d.	In order to get what they want, Israelis are willing to...a., b., c., d.
Under no circumstances are Palestinians willing to...a., b., c., d.	Under no circumstances are Israelis willing to...a., b., c., d.

**Reproducible worksheets, adaptable to various topics, are included in this issue of *Hemispheres*.**

## Advocates' Worksheet

My **position** on the issue is that \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1. One **reason** to support the position is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

One **piece of evidence** that backs up this reason is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. A second **reason** to support the position is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

One **piece of evidence** that backs up this reason is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. A **third** reason to support the position is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

One **piece of evidence** that backs up this reason is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. The **opponents** of this position might say \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I would **reply to their reason** by saying \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Decision-Makers' Worksheet

I. List the questions you will ask the advocates when they try to persuade you. Ask challenging questions that show what you already know about the issue. Make sure your set of questions is balanced and does not show favoritism for one side.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

II. On the back of this sheet, list the reasons given by each advocate when they persuade you. Divide the reasons into two columns, as shown here:

**REASONS FOR**

**REASONS AGAINST**

III. Before making a decision, think about these questions:

1. Is the reason relevant?
2. Is the reason supported by evidence?
3. What reasons presented by one advocate went unchallenged by the other advocate?
4. What contrary evidence was presented?
5. How unbiased are the sources?

IV. After evaluating the reasons and evidence presented by both advocates, I have decided that

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V. The reasons and/or evidence that most influenced my decision, in order of importance, are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Suggested "Should" Questions for Advocate/Decision-Making Activity

Following are suggested issues appropriate for debate and discussion in the Advocate/Decision-Making Activity. The Outreach Coordinators in the appropriate Centers can furnish you with additional background resources for your class, should you need them.

**Asia:** Should the Taiwanese government pursue a "one nation - two states" stance, rather than a "two nations" stance, in its political policies toward China?

**Latin America:** Should the Colombian government resume peace talks to end the 38-year civil war despite escalating violence from rebel forces?

**The Middle East:** Should the United States, having identified Iran as part of the "Axis of Evil," pursue a hard-line foreign policy stance toward Iran similar to its position on Iraq?

**Russia:** Should Russia allow Chechnya to become an independent state?

## Congratulations to Amber Burghart, winner of the Hemispheres t-shirt design competition!



Last year, Shagufta Ellam asked her 6th grade World Cultures classes, at Cedar Valley Middle School, "How do you see the world?" Amber's vision was chosen for our Hemispheres t-shirt, soon to be seen in full color at Hemispheres workshops and events.

This Spring, Hemispheres launched an international fiction book club, **Good Reads**. Interest has exceeded our expectations, and the club is already at full capacity. For those of you who are not participants, but who are interested in international fiction, here are our selections for the semester. Enjoy!

**The Beginning and the End** by Naguib Mahfouz (Egypt)

**The Woman with the Flying Head** by Yumiko Kurahashi (Japan)

**Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon** by Jorge Amado (Brazil)

**The Yellow Arrow** by Viktor Pelevin (Russia)

**Things Fall Apart** by Chinua Achebe (Nigeria)

# Hemispheres

## AREA STUDIES RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

**HEMISPHERES NEWSLETTER** is distributed to schools throughout Texas to be shared with social studies, geography, language, English, literature, math, and science teachers within each school. This biannual newsletter is a tool for teachers who use, or would like to incorporate, area studies materials in the classroom.

**Please distribute copies of *Hemispheres* to all who may benefit from our resources!**

**HEMISPHERES WEB SITE** You can sign up to receive upcoming issues of *Hemispheres*, workshop announcements, our weekly e-bulletin, and other information from the centers' outreach programs via the Hemispheres Web site: <<http://inic.utexas.edu/hemispheres>>.

**HEMISPHERES LISTSERV AND E-BULLETIN** We invite you to post your events to our weekly e-bulletin and to use our listserv to communicate with fellow teachers regarding area-studies issues.

Simply e-mail us at <[hemispheres@inic.utexas.edu](mailto:hemispheres@inic.utexas.edu)>.

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## Explorers, Traders & Immigrants: Tracking Cultural Contact through Food

A three-day workshop tracing cultural contact  
by examining the geographical context of food

**June 3-5, 2003**

Learn how trade, exploration, conquest, and other social forces affected food and eating around the world. The four National Resource Centers at the University of Texas at Austin are hosting an innovative three-day workshop designed for middle and high school teachers of history, geography, economics, politics, cultures, and literature.

Deadline for registration: May 16. Limited to 30 participants on a first-paid, first-registered basis. If space permits, others may be added after the deadline. Registration fee is \$50 per participant (nonrefundable; includes lunch, handouts, coffee).

**For further information or to register, contact: Natalie Arsenault, Outreach Coordinator, Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1 University Station D0800, Austin, TX 78712-0331, (512) 232-2404, fax (512) 471-3090, [n.arsenault@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:n.arsenault@mail.utexas.edu)**

*A collaborative outreach project of: Center for Asian Studies, Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies.*

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