

Hopeful Voices

education, inspiration, action

Quotes from Educators

My students have used the essays to improve reading skills, as springboards for writing prompts, and as sources to begin research projects throughout the year. I sincerely believe that this series of essays is one of the most engaging and relevant elements of my curriculum this year. - Robin

I used the essays as a research / non-fiction reading activity as part of our state standards of learning, as well as using them to open students to what life is like for students in other parts of the world. - Chris

My students have found the Hopeful Voices essays very engaging. They were surprised to learn so many details about the lives of children around the world. I used them in my high school English classes as a basis for our research papers. The students chose one country from the essays and read the story and then did additional research to write their own papers. I was impressed by the level of interest in their topics this year. They had a human face to go along with their facts and figures, making the assignment far more personal and worthwhile. The students have frequently referred back to their research papers and the essays that they read throughout this year. - Kelli

The essays are used mainly with third and fourth grade students at our elementary school. The students find them very engaging and want to know more about the essay writer's life. Prior to the earthquake in Haiti, we read and discussed Senise's story. I was touched when a parent told me her daughter was concerned about Senise when she heard of the devastation. - Maria

My upper-level students have them in their literacy menus from time to time. We choose the essay that fits into the region we are currently studying. They love them and are able to really empathize with the children they read about. They are given a very accurate, humanitarian view of the world. The extension activities are awesome! My students are not only becoming people of greater character, but are becoming master researchers. - Trishia

I teach middle school English Language Learners in Iowa. My students come from all parts of the world, bringing with them rich diversity and culture. When I read the stories from Hopeful Voices, the kids are intrigued and often find more similarities than differences. For others, these stories open their eyes to another way of looking at life and challenges. Great discussions ensue and both my students and I are inspired by the hope and strength of the life stories you have passed on to us. Thank you so much for these incredible life stories. These kids need a voice, and you are giving it to them. - Jennifer

I used the essays in conjunction with a novel by Kim Antieau - *Broken Moon*. The essays were very helpful in showing students that real people go through things we can hardly imagine here in the U.S. Students got a lot out of the essays. I plan to use the same essays in the future, since I specifically picked children from the Middle East to go with the novel. Thank you for providing this for students! - Dominique

I love the essays. This year I used the essays as an introduction to our freedom unit. My 8th graders are required to write an essay for a "What Freedom Means to Me" essay contest. We read and presented your essays as a way to brainstorm the freedoms we have that others don't and then discussed strengths and weaknesses of the essays. Thanks for giving my students this opportunity! - Amy

I have used the essays often in my World Geography class. The students really like them, and they bring up very interesting conversations. I typically use a coinciding essay when I am introducing a new region of the world. I will plan on using them next year as well. I think they are great! - Monesa

My students and I enjoyed the essays. I used them in reading class for comprehension, in Language Arts as writing samples and in Social Personal (a class to encourage positive behavior) to model determination and goal setting. In all classes, they generated great discussions. - Margaret

I teach high school English language acquisition. I used the essays to prompt discussion of what makes writing vivid and powerful, and how to use personal material in writing. After reading and discussing some of these examples, my students launched into writing their own personal statements. - Ruth

We used the essay written by the young girl, Inbal, who lives in the West Bank territory of Israel. During a unit in Language Arts on "Tolerance", we discussed the situation in Israel's occupied territories, refugee issues in Darfur, Sudan, and historical connections to The Holocaust. Our students composed "imaginary letters" to Inbal, in which they commented on her essay, wrote their thoughts on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, and compared life in a West Bank refugee camp to their own lives here in North Carolina. I believe the essays are a valuable tool in inspiring our students to "think globally", an aspect of 21 Century Learning that our school (and state) supports. - Chris

I have been using the essays during counseling classes. We are a special day school for kids with severe behavior difficulties and I have used them to show that others have had struggles, made different choices and had success in their lives. Thanks for all you do. - Alice

I am very appreciative of the Hopeful Voices essay collection. I assigned them on a reading / technology center for my fifth graders. After reading a selected essay, students respond on our classroom blog to questions I have generated and to one another. My students have been moved by the lives of those young people. - Mary

I found some of the essays to be very fitting with different units in my Human Relations class for juniors and seniors. I use one in my depression unit, another in responsibility and maturity. I usually read the stories aloud to the class, and then give them questions to think about. Some questions were provided with the essay, and others I develop on my own to connect them to our specific topic. The students' feedback has been very positive. Many also commented that it made them more aware of how much they take for granted. - Lynda

I have found the Hopeful Voices essays very helpful in teaching about the world. I use it in Civics class with freshmen. We read them together and then the students answer the reflection questions. After we read three or four more I am going to design a research project around the articles and have the students choose one of the countries that we read about. Thank you so much. - Kim

We used the essays as part of our human rights unit. Each student read an essay and then shared what they read. We then had a class discussion about them. The students were amazed that things like that still happen in today's world. I think the students liked them. - Jen

Thank you for creating such an interesting and accessible way for students to learn about events around the world. My students wrote essays on the Hopeful Voices youth and how their lives compared. - Gwen

I have enjoyed reading and sharing the essays with my elementary students. I am the school counselor and have used them throughout the year to help illustrate or reinforce our character education concepts. The students enjoy them and learn from them. Thank you! - Martha