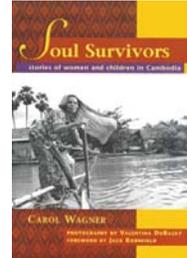


# Lesson Plans on Cambodia:

## *Soul Survivors – Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia*

### Overview

These lesson plans were written by Bhavia Carol Wagner, educator and author of *Soul Survivors – Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia* with support from the [Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Northern Illinois University](#), DeKalb, Illinois (through funding from US Department of Education Title VI grant). Carol Wagner was assisted by Dr. Maureen Kincaid from the education department at [North Central College](#), Naperville, Illinois. Dr. Kincaid serves as an educational consultant with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University.



**(Please note that the book, *Soul Survivors – Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia* is out of print, but copies may be found at local libraries or available through sites such as Amazon.com. Some links in the lessons may be broken or redirected. Updated September 11, 2009)**

#### Introduction

These nine lessons relate to Cambodian history, art and culture, genocide, human rights, landmines, sweatshops, refugees in America, war and peace, and powerful women. Each lesson plan relates to chapters in *Soul Survivors – Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia* by Carol Wagner. The lessons are taught through the life stories of Cambodian people. Lists of related books, videos and websites are also included. These lessons may be used in sequence or individually. The first lesson is a good overview of the country and is a useful introduction to any of the other lessons.

Cambodia is a dramatic country. Within its history are the mystique of a beautiful ancient empire, the horrors of genocide and war, and the excitement of an emerging democracy. It has opportunities for students to learn about how the US government affects the lives of people in other countries, both negatively and positively. Students discover how their personal clothing purchases impact people in Cambodia. They gain insight as to what it is like to be a refugee in the United States. Students are inspired by strong Cambodian women who put into action their desire to benefit humanity.

#### Grade Level:

8 – 12 (written for high school, but adaptable for middle school)

#### Materials Needed:

- Copy of *Soul Survivors – Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia* by Carol Wagner.
- A world map.
- Optional: Students can use the Internet for research.

#### Pace:

Each lesson contains a lot of material to absorb; therefore, teaching one lesson per week is ideal.

### **Lesson One – Introduction to Cambodian History**

Students gain an overall picture of Cambodia's history, appreciate how ancient Angkor still lives in Cambodian culture, understand the resentment that builds during foreign occupation, and get to know a Cambodian student named Daravuth and the challenges he faces.

### **Lesson Two - Genocide in Cambodia**

Students learn to recognize the eight stages of genocide, as they occurred in Cambodia and elsewhere, and what can be done to prevent each stage. Meet a 15 year-old girl who survives the genocide and works to rebuild her life. She becomes the leader of an organization working to help poor women.

### **Lesson Three - Human Rights in Cambodia**

Students learn about human rights in Cambodia through the story of Chath, a genocide survivor and US refugee, who now works for a Cambodian human rights organization. Students discuss the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and how these rights have been violated in Cambodia and in our own communities. Students also learn about non-governmental humanitarian organizations in Cambodia.

### **Lesson Four – Sweatshops in Cambodia**

Through the study of sweatshops, students explore the link between American students' clothes and the exploitation of Cambodian garment workers. Students consider what can be done about sweatshops.

### **Lesson Five - War and Peace in Cambodia**

Students discuss the role of US foreign policy and how it affected Cambodia from 1969 to the present. Students learn about US aid to Cambodia, activities of the UN and the Buddhist peace movement.

### **Lesson Six - Cambodian Artists and Culture**

Through the stories of a dancer and a weaver, students learn about Cambodia's traditional arts of classical dance and silk weaving. Students also learn about other aspects of Cambodian culture including food, celebrations, holidays, language and literature.

### **Lesson Seven - Powerful Women in Cambodia**

Students read the personal stories of two women in Cambodia. One became a doctor and the other started a non-profit organization to help poor women. Students learn about the problems facing women in Cambodia and how to improve the status of Cambodian women.

### **Lesson Eight - Landmines in Cambodia**

Students read the story of Maline, a school girl who stepped on a landmine and survived. They learn about landmines, demining efforts, the campaign to ban landmines and what we can do.

### **Lesson Nine - Cambodian Refugees in America**

Students explore the topic of refugees through the stories of two orphaned Cambodian boys who came to live in the US. What challenges did they face? What are the similarities and differences between their culture and life experiences and our own? How can we help refugees?

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