THE RED CHAIR
St Aloysius College
AMDG
April - May 2016
“The Red Chair”

Typical classroom; students are disruptive while teacher is standing in front of whiteboard patiently trying to explain something.

Teacher: ... As I was explaining, greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, like carbon dioxide, absorb the heat, and this makes the atmosphere warmer. (Notices Paul and some other students being disruptive, throwing papers at each other, talking, turning in their seats/swinging in chairs) ... Paul, I’m trying to answer your question and you’re not even paying attention.

(Teacher stops and addresses the whole class in a serious tone): Listen, you should appreciate what it means to be sitting on that chair. ... (Teacher gets an idea, turns, switches on computer/TV) I’d like to show you this video clip, perhaps it will help us to see things differently. (Teacher and students turn to watch video clip.)

Transition to interviews

Shown on screen (typed text with typewriter sound effect): Khaled is 11. Kidnapped by the Taliban at age 6.

Child Soldier 1 - Afghanistan:
I was trained as a suicide bomber. I’m from Afghanistan. I don’t have time to go to school or a school to go to. I am one of many children recruited by the militia. A lot of children were recruited during the Afghan civil war. We are used as suicide bombers, or gunmen ...

Shown on screen (typed text with typewriter sound effect): Dikembe – boy soldier.

Child Soldier 2 - Congo:
... even I was recruited by a militia. I’m 14. I was one of the 1000 boys recruited 2 years ago in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Thousands of children around the world end up being used as soldiers instead of being given the opportunity to learn.

Shown on screen (typed text with typewriter sound effect): Adesh – 15 years old.

Child Labour:
My family have no money so I can’t go to school. I have no choice. I have to work from 8 in the morning till 2 o’clock at night. I work in a carpet factory in Mumbai, India, toiling in cramped, dark, airless huts. The little money I
earn I have to send back to my family and I’m not even sure if they receive it or not.

Shown on screen (typed text with typewriter sound effect): Samir - 12 – Refugee

Displacement:
My school was bombed two years ago. My family had to leave our village in Syria. We’ve been on the move for the past two years. I hope we’ll manage to find shelter in a safe country and maybe I can even go back to school.

Shown on screen (typed text with typewriter sound effect): Fabio – 13 – Living on the streets in Rio/ Sao Paulo

Crime: I live on the streets. I’m usually pickpocketing here and there. I have to do what the gang asks me to do. They give me some food and shelter in return. School is only for the rich and for good families. I wish my life was different. (... as the Journalist starts walking away, the child calls him back) ... Wait! Wait! (takes out a letter from his pocket) May I read this letter from my friend, Fatima? She really wanted to be here but she couldn’t ...

This line could either be said be teacher / typed on screen.

Teacher: After listening to these children, the question remains: What can we do so that these children can sit on that chair?

At this point, the class starts singing the song: When We Stand Together, (montage between class and footage) On the refrain “We must stand together” one of the students gets up and reaches his hand into the screen to Ernesto and helps him out of the screen.

Version 1: As Ernesto’s coming out of the screen he comes out wearing St Aloysius uniform to join class. The song continues moving from footage to classroom. Other students follow in the same way one by one reaching out to boys in the interviews. In the end all students are together in class.

Version 2: The Ernesto/Samir/Adesh one of the children comes out from the screen as described before, still dressed like he was in the interview footage. The change into uniform happens gradually along the song and in full uniform by the time they sit on the red chair to join the class.
Ref:
La Silla Roja:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwMoj8U1N_I    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCWafIRBTEw
Entreculturas