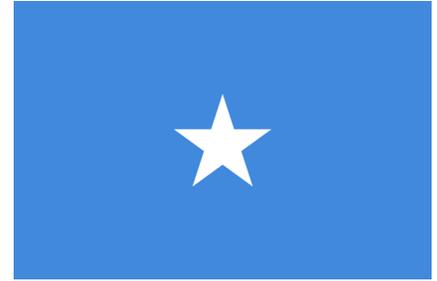


Somalia

- ◆ The capital city of Somalia is Mogadishu.
- ◆ Somalia is the only country in the world where its citizens speak one language: Somali!
- ◆ Somalia, and neighbors, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya, is located in the Horn of Africa.
- ◆ Almost all of the people in Somalia are Muslims. Christians are not welcome and missionaries are not allowed into the country. Many people have been killed because they are Christians. Believers keep their faith a secret because of the danger.
- ◆ An average Somali family has seven to eight children.
- ◆ Somalia is very hot with normal temperatures ranging between 85 and 105 degrees.
- ◆ Somalis eat a lot of meat, including goat, beef, lamb, and sometimes chicken.
- ◆ Most Somalis are nomads and are constantly on the move, walking the country with their camels, goats, and sheep to find water and new pastures. Some nomads have farms that they return to after the rainy season.
- ◆ The name Somali is originally from the two Somali words SOO and MAAL that means “Go and milk it.”
- ◆ Somali women and girls must cover their heads with a “hijab” or get into trouble with their government.



Story: Soldier Boy

This day was like any other school day for ten-year-old Sharif, except for one thing. His religion teacher had told the class the day before that today they would go on a trip to pray for a sick relative in a poor neighborhood of Mogadishu.

Sharif didn't like school very much, so he was looking forward to the break in the regular routine. “We are almost there,” the teacher declared. Sharif was glad. It was a long walk and his feet were hurting.

Suddenly, without warning, several men in black hoods grabbed the children from behind and ordered them onto buses that were parked nearby. Sharif was terrified and did just as they told him.

The bus ride was long and the day had turned to night before they finally stopped. Sharif wondered where they were being taken and why. But he knew from the angry look on the men's faces that he shouldn't ask questions.

The class was taken to a training camp in the south part of the country. Here they were shown how to use weapons and ambush people. The boys were often given drugs that made them feel really brave. The men treated them harshly and they were severely punished if they did not do exactly as they were told.

Story cont...

Sharif was kept in the camp and used as a soldier to fight other militia groups for over two years. When he was twelve years old he finally got the courage to try to escape. One evening he waited until dark and was able to sneak past the guards.

He ran as fast as he could until he could run no further. Sharif had escaped the camp, but he still was not free. He could not go home because if he was discovered, the militia that kidnapped him would kill his family. He hasn't seen his parents in two years and they don't know if he is dead or alive.

Militia groups and the government of Somalia have used children as soldiers because they are easier to care for than adults and they don't fight back as much. They can easily be trained for "jihad" or war.

Many people have died in Somalia from years of drought, famine, and war. There are clans that fight each other, but no central government to keep peace and provide safety for its people.



Recipe: Canjeero

- 1 cup of yellow corn flour
- 2 cups of white corn flour
- 1/2 cup of all purpose flour
- Sugar (1 cup, depending on preference)
- Salt to taste
- Butter
- 2-3 cups of water (or milk, depending on preference)
- 2 eggs

Mix the eggs, corn flour, milk, and water until chunks are smooth. Add sugar and salt to taste. Apply some butter to the non-stick frying pan. Pour 1/2 cup of mix in the pan (depending on preferred size) turn spoon around, swirl around until the mix has spread across the pan. Cover for 1 minute. Remove from pan, ready to be eaten. Add sugar or butter.

Activity:

The Somalis have a very rich story-telling tradition. Many Somali tales have been passed from generation to generation. Most often these stories are intended to teach a lesson. Usually the characters in the stories are animals with unacceptable behavior or qualities like greed, theft, lying, etc.

Have the class sit in a circle on the floor. Explain this type of story format and have a volunteer begin the story. After he has told a bit of the story, move to the next person, letting him share. Continue around the circle. Let the very last person in the circle conclude the story with the lesson that was learned.



Go to www.frontlinekids.com/resources to find lesson supplemental materials such as: prayer points, recipes, maps, videos, printable coloring sheets and more.