



DIT IS EEN LESBRIEF VAN THEATER ARTEMIS

Dear teacher,

Shortly, you and your pupils will be attending the theatre show *War*, a show with a brief title about a very big subject. In this letter we would like to tell you more about the show and offer ways to prepare your pupils for their visit and ways to process *War* afterwards.

Sorry,

*We wish we had something sensible to say.
But a war is too big a thing even for us.
We are just here to make a show.*

Something about a balloon slowly deflating, a nose bleeding, little helicopters falling down from a tree, a shower crying, audience members shooting and three soldiers roller-skating and talking backwards.

*Huh?
Come and see for yourself.*

The show features three actors who are trying to pull through within a hostile space. Things come crashing down, they are being shot at by the pupils and they don't always agree with each other. In 28 (or more) scenes, war is dissected. And at the end of the journey there is peace, finally. Or is there? It is a highly imaginative and absurdist show; a thrill, but not dangerous.

The show does not feature any guns or other military equipment, and the uniforms the actors wear are very old-fashioned. There are, however, some loud noises as the set collapses, the actors bicker and the children are asked to mimic the sound of gunshots.

For this show Theater Artemis has sought collaboration with War Child. War Child is an organisation that strives to improve the quality of life for children in war-torn areas. They help children cope with the upsetting experiences, teach them how to re-establish contact with people and help build their self-confidence. War Child offers children in war-torn areas lessons on dealing with conflicts. To achieve this, the organisation departs from the premise that conflict is a natural part of human life. People have different values, ideas and interests and from time to time, they will clash. But as long as we keep the conversation going, a conflict can lead to a positive outcome.

When we made this study package, we were inspired by War Child and the lessons they offer children who live in conflict zones.

We wish you a special and pleasant experience with our show and look forward to hearing what you and your pupils think.

With kind regards,
Theater Artemis, Education Department,

Erica van de Kerkhof (erica@artemis.nl)

TAKE OFF - FLIGHT - LANDING



Visiting a show takes the shape of a jump, with a take-off – flight – landing. We have translated this jump analogy into the following phases: preparation – show – processing.

In this jump, we would like to encourage you to talk about conflict and war with your pupils. Not to impart new knowledge to them about war, or to point out to them all that is wrong with the world, with a finger raised in warning. We are keeping it close to what they already know. Children know more than we sometimes think (or want them to know) about war, Syria, IS, and the types of weapons people use to fight each other. Our show and this study package are intended to offer pupils room to experience, imagine and share in a safe way.

In the take-off we will be addressing war, or more specifically, conflict: close to home and further away. In the real world. We will be identifying and using four separate phases of conflict to make sure you and your class can explore what conflict is and how to deal with it step by step.

During the flight phase, the pupils will be visiting the show, discovering how Theater Artemis interprets war.

The final phase for the pupils is the landing. Pupils can share their experiences of the show, and then set to work creating and sharing their own interpretation of it.

TAKE OFF

duration: approximately 60 minutes

War Child separates conflict into four phases. In this take-off we will tackle the phases step by step: from stories close to their own lives about conflict and arguments, to the bigger story of war.

Phase 1 Intrapersonal: Conflicting thoughts, ideas and emotions within an individual.

Phase 2 Interpersonal: A conflict between two or more individuals.

Phase 3 Intragroup: A conflict within a sports team, family, community or class.

Phase 4 Intergroup: A conflict between different communities, gangs, or ethnic groups.

The exercises below allow children to experience these phases of conflict.

Start by telling the children that you will soon be attending a show called War. Let them respond briefly, without extensively addressing the matter. Tell them you will be doing a few exercises with them around war and conflict / arguments.

EXERCISE 1

About phase 1

the intrapersonal conflict: *conflicting thoughts, ideas and emotions within an individual.*

What you need:

- 1 questionnaire (4 pages) per child (cf. appendix)
- 1 answer sheet per child (cf. appendix)

Objective: making the pupils experience some doubt about choices they make.

1. We're starting with a difficult test. Only those who answer every question right will get a treat. (exaggerate a little, the test is really very difficult...) Every pupil receives a questionnaire and a sheet with the answers (place them face down on their desks). They will get 5 minutes to answer all the questions, and afterwards they can check their answers with the sheet (no cheating of course...).
2. Find an excuse to leave the classroom: tell your pupils not to talk, not to leave their seats and not to cheat while you are out. (Again: EXAGGERATE! The aim is to set the wheels of doubt in motion inside their heads.)
3. Come back after four minutes. Your pupils should write their names on their sheets and hand them in. (But you won't be marking their work – after all, the aim of the exercise is not the test...)
4. Who cheated? Who used their answer sheet? Or talked to another pupil? It helps if you confess you would have cheated yourself. It's not a bad thing if one of the pupils has cheated. Discuss this with your class.

Questions

- Was it difficult to be given the option to check the answers?
- Has anyone checked the answers? Why did you do it?
- Is there anyone here who doubted whether they would cheat or not?
- Did the treat that was promised make it more difficult not to cheat?

5. Now make the connection with conflict / argument. Is this exercise about conflict? In what sense? A miniature conflict, inside the mind...

Explain to your pupils what an intrapersonal conflict is.

EXERCISE 2

About phase 2

the interpersonal conflict: *a conflict between two or more individuals.*

What you need:

- Four apples (or four other identical items)

Objective: bringing the pupils into conflict with each other and allowing them to find their own solutions.

1. Ask your pupils to move all the desks aside and place their chairs in a circle. Let them take a seat. Make sure this happens in a structured way (this will be helpful for exercise 3.)

2. Ask four pupils to come to the middle of the circle. Let them stand with their backs to each other and their elbows linked. In front of each of the four pupils is an apple which they cannot immediately reach. Now they should try and take an apple, without talking and while still attached to each other. Stop the exercise if it fails.

3. Let your pupils discuss what they have seen.

Questions

- How did the exercise go, which steps were followed?
- What could the four have done to improve the result? Any tips?

4. Every solution offered is tried by four different pupils. When it is completed successfully, talk about what happened.

Questions

- Were the suggestions useful to the pupils doing the exercise?
- What suggestions did you miss?
- Is it difficult to stick to the agreements you made?
- Do you prefer to stick to the plan or do you want to go against it?
- For those on the sidelines: did you want to help? Or would you rather watch?

5. Now make the connection with conflict. Are there any similarities with the previous exercise? Explain to your pupils what an interpersonal conflict is.



War Child uses this exercise in their programme for children in conflict areas. If you want to find out more about this, take a look at: www.warchildlearning.org

EXERCISE 3

About phase 3

the intragroup conflict: *a conflict within a sports team, family, community or class.*

What you need::

- Six cards with assignments (cf. appendix)

Objective: bringing the entire class into conflict with each other and then allowing them to find solutions.

1. Ask the pupils to put all the chairs and desks back into place. But to do so, divide the pupils into six groups and give each group a card with an assignment.

2. The pupils perform their assignment in groups. Do not intervene unless a dangerous situation occurs. The chaos is part of this exercise and will form the basis for a conversation later.

3. Stop the assignment after 5 minutes and ask each pupil who holds a card to share with the class which assignment their group was given.

Questions

- Can all these assignments be executed at once?
- What would happen?
- What were moments when you thought it was unpleasant to perform your assignment?
- What agreements could you make with each other to make sure you can all perform your assignment?

4. Appoint one pupil to be the leader. With the agreements the group has decided on, make sure the class places all the desks back into their original positions.

5. Whenever a pupil acts against the agreements, you and the leader remind them what was agreed. When everyone is back in their seat, discuss with the class what happened.

Questions

- What was it like to be doing assignments that worked against each other?
- Did you feel the group would eventually succeed, or could the chaos have gone on forever?
- Is it difficult to stick to the agreements?
- What was different from the last time you had to move the desks, during exercise 2?
- What happens when someone takes the lead?
- Have you ever experienced this yourselves, that you were doing something with another child and you ended up not helping each other but opposing each other?
- Is there something about this exercise and the preceding exercises that is the same?
- If so, what is it?

6. Now make the connection with the previous exercises and conflict. Explain to your pupils what an intragroup conflict is.

EXERCISE 4

About phase 4

the intergroup conflict: *a conflict between different communities, gangs, or ethnic groups.*

What you need:

- Five images (cf. appendix. We have chosen a wide range of images of war in different ages and allowing for plenty of distance)

Objective: discovering what the pupils know about war and what they think about it.

1. The pupils watch the five images in silence for 60 seconds. Then they can share what they have seen.

Questions

- What do you see?
- What do these images have in common?
- Have you ever been at war (in conflict / in a fight) with yourself or with each other?
- Were you ever at war with each other during this lesson?
- What do you do? (refer to the solutions found during exercises 2 and 3)
- Could you do the same thing in a war?

2. Revisit the last three phases of conflict with your pupils. Then tell them about the final phase.

Questions

- Do you recognise the phases of conflict in the exercises we did?
- When you are in conflict with another person, do you think you could use one of these exercises we did to reach a solution?

To end this exercise, talk some more about the show: *War* by Theater Artemis. It can be good to share what pupils are expecting from the show.

Questions

- Has anyone ever been to a theatre show? What was it like?
- What do you expect from a show called WAR?
- Do you agree that this is a very big subject? Why? Or why not?

Watch the teaser together at www.artemis.nl/voorstellingen/oorlog-6 (the second clip). The video is in Dutch, but there is not a lot of text so it will not be a problem. After watching the teaser, talk about it with your pupils.

Questions

- What did you notice about the teaser?
- Does the teaser meet your expectations of a show that is called WAR?

FLIGHT

duration: approximately 50 minutes

It is time for your visit to the show. It's good to sit among your pupils, so you can all experience the show together.

During the show there will be some dark scenes, things will fall over and the set will make some noise. The pupils will be asked to mimic the sounds of gunshots and war cries, and they will be challenged to throw balls at the stage. It calls for responses from our audience, which is something we enjoy immensely. We would ask you to only intervene if the response from pupils hinders the performers or other children (or if they leave their seats to go and find more balls all around the theatre)

LANDING

duration: approximately 60 minutes

Attending a show brings quite a few (new) experiences for children. It is important that children get an opportunity to share their experiences and process them through sharing. You can do this in conversation, but you can also let them reimagine the experience themselves to voice their experience.

What you need:

- a folding sheet representing the marble wall for each pupil (cf. appendix)
- a collection of "knick-knacks" from the classroom (like pens, erasers, paperclips, little blocks (like the ones you use for math), sticky tape rolls)
- additional materials such as balloons, buttons, marbles, sticks (match sticks or ice lolly sticks), band-aids and sandwich bags

Objective: letting children process their experiences during the show by working creatively with different materials.

1. Discuss the beginning, middle and ending of *War*.

Questions:

- How did War begin? When was War at its worst? How did War end?
- What did you see? What happened?
- Was it a real war? Did it seem like a real war? (Was there a conflict? Who with?)
- What did you think of War? And especially: can you explain why?

On the Theater Artemis website you will find a number of images from the show. It can be of help to the conversation to watch the images again.

artemis.nl/voorstellingen/oorlog-6 bottom of the page at "scènefoto's bekijken"

2. The pupils decide if they will be working on the beginning, the middle or the end later. Which part did they think was the funniest/ most exciting/most important?

3. Hand out the folding sheets to the pupils. Help them fold the sheet into a wall that will stand up straight.

4. Everyone collects their own materials to build with. Think of pens, sticky-tape rolls, erasers, pencil sharpeners etc. Things you can find in the classroom.

5. The pupils can now build their own beginning, middle or ending of *War* in front of (or perhaps also behind) their own marble, or actually, paper wall. See it as a personal translation of their experiences during the show.

6. While the pupils are constructing, hand out the additional materials. These refer more or less to objects from the show. Use this time to answer any questions the pupils may ask and to trigger the imagination of those who aren't sure how to start or what to build.

Questions:

- What do you think of when you think of the beginning / middle / end? What did you see?
- How could you remake this with the material that is in front of you?

As an extra tool, there is a list in the appendix of the names of all the battles in the show. Children generally don't remember exactly what happened at any specific moment, but the titles can help fire up the imagination.

8. All the pupils come up with a new name for their scenes.

9. Point to one pupil at a time. Ask this pupil to stand and tell the class the new title of their scene.

10. Discuss some of the pupils' images with the group.

Questions

- What do you see?
- What does it mean to you? Is it war? Conflict? Peace?
- Which moment in the show does it remind you of? Which aspects are the same? Which are different?

CONNECT WORDS TO PICTURES

Uniform



Roller skate



Balloon



Soldier



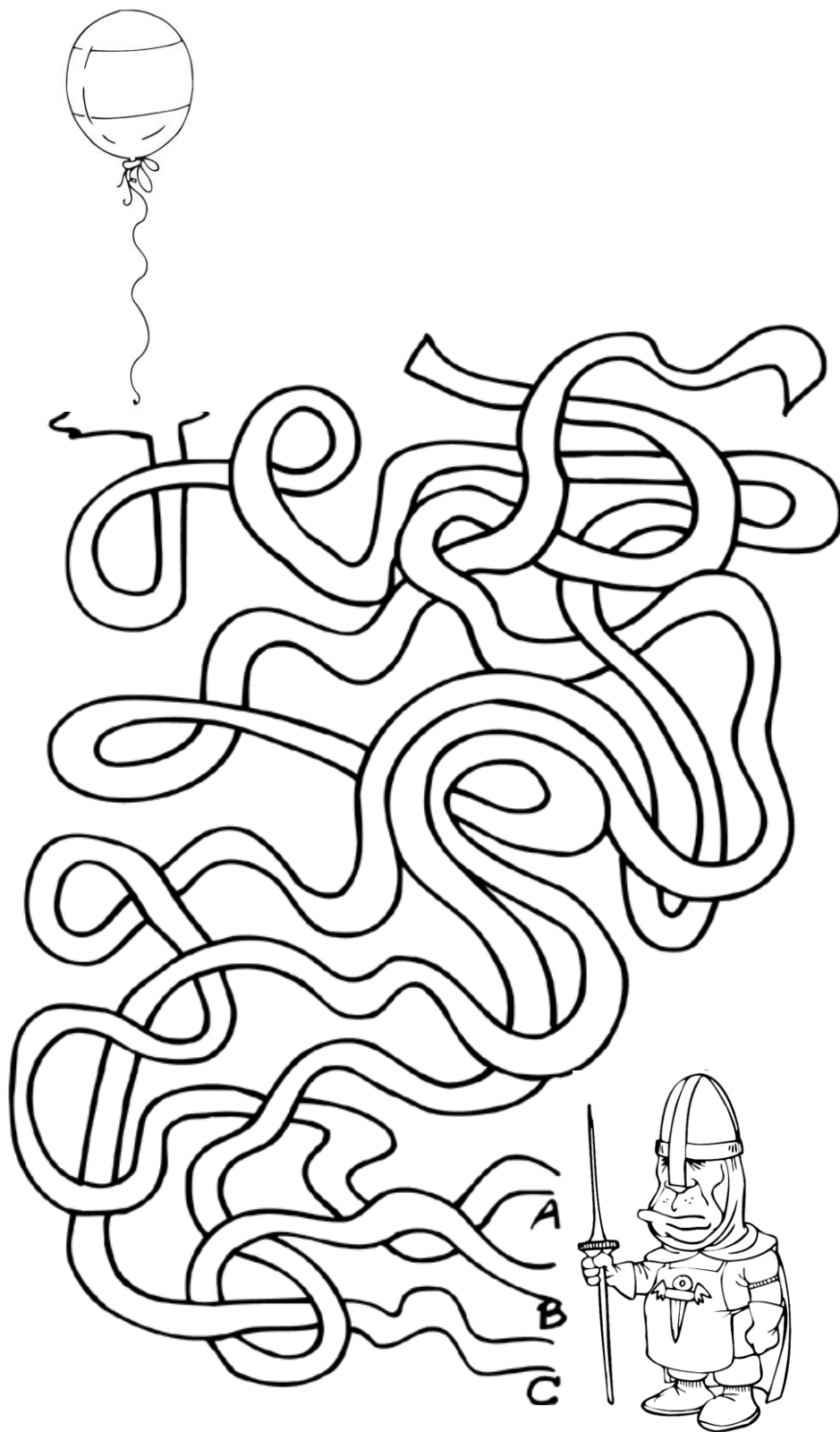
Swing



Rifle



MAZE



POP QUIZ

1. What is a conflict?

- A- Battle
- B- Colored paper shreds
- C- Roller skate

2. What do you put in a gun?

- A- Throwdowns
- B- Bullets
- C- A feather

3. What does a soldier wear on his head?

- A- A helmet
- B- A tire
- C- A balloon

4. How long ago was the 80-year war in The Netherlands?

- A- 321 years
- B- 380 years
- C- 369 years

5. What can explode?

- A- A cake
- B- A bomb
- C- A uniform

SPOT THE 6 DIFFERENCES



ANSWERS

CONNECT WORDS TO PICTURES

Uniform

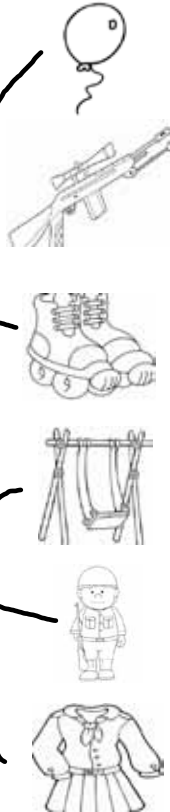
Roller Skate

Balloon

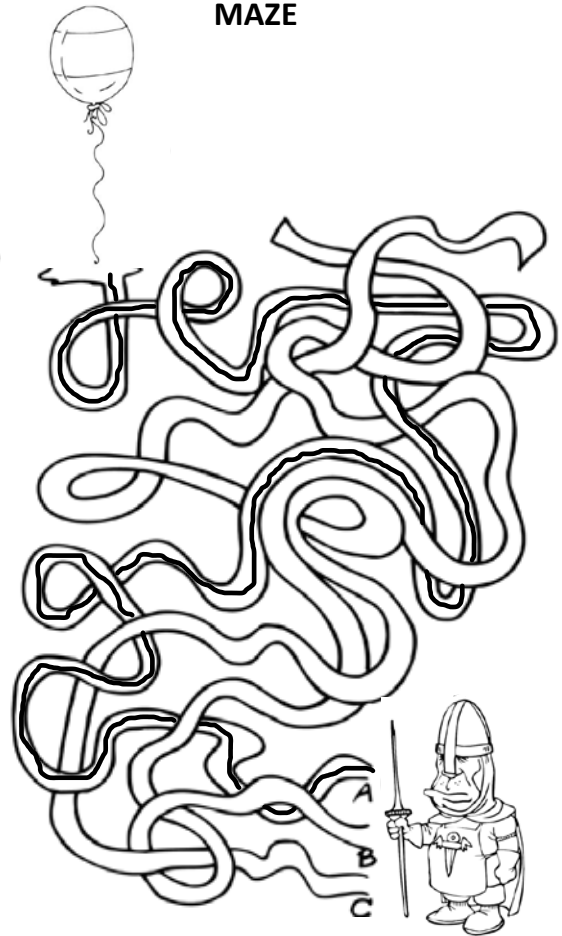
Soldier

Swing

Rifle



MAZE



POP QUIZ

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- B- Colored paper shreds
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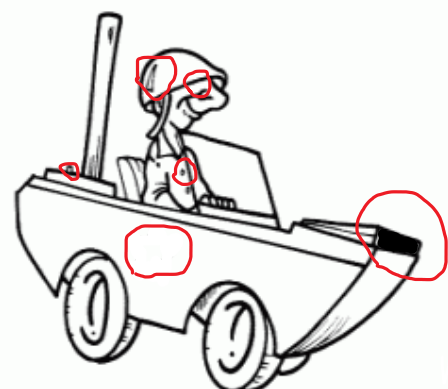
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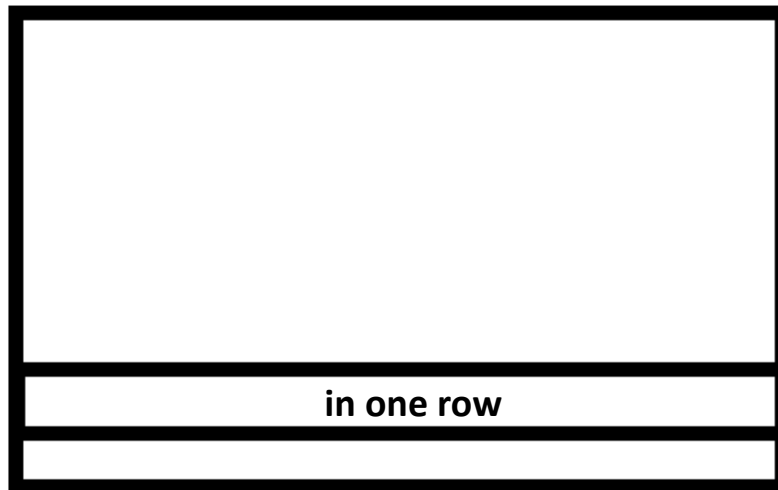
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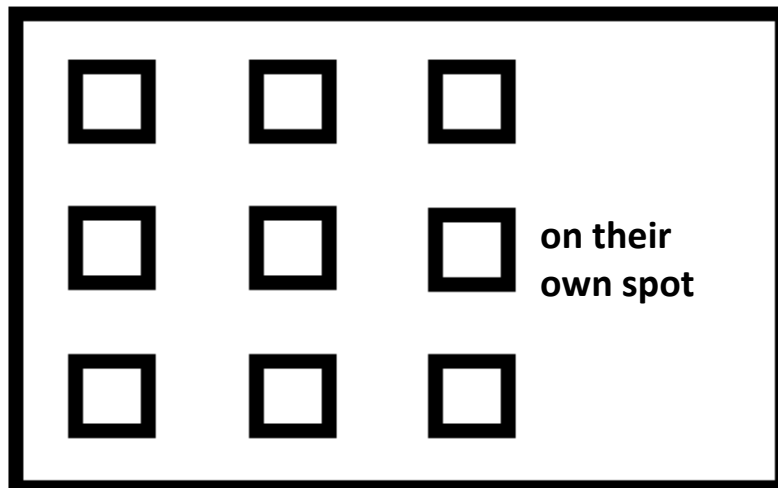
SPOT THE 6 DIFFERENCES



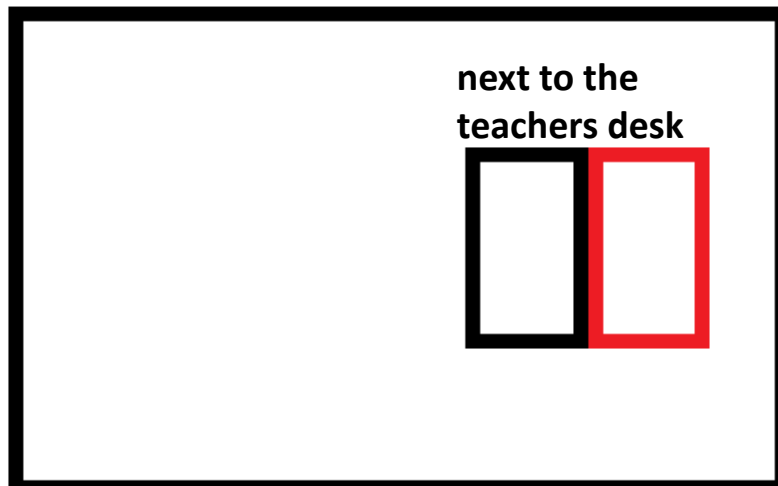
ALL TABLES



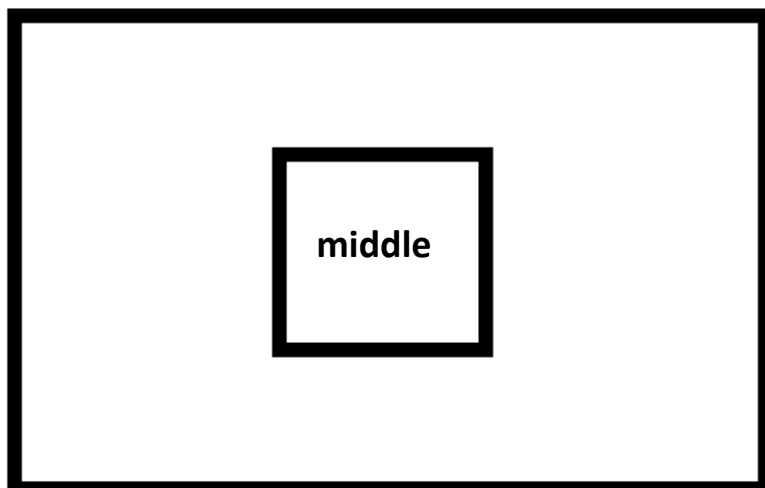
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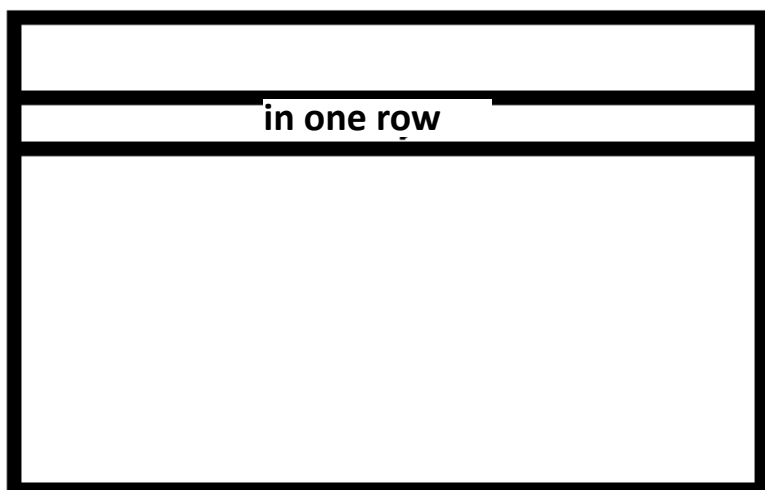
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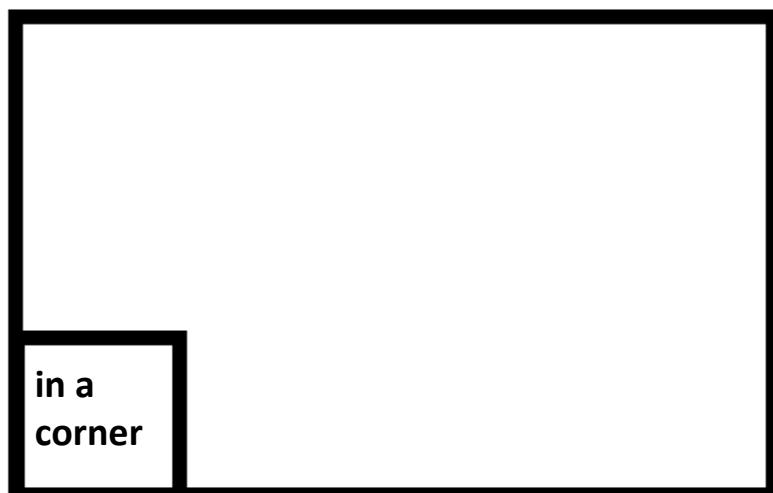
ALL CHAIRS



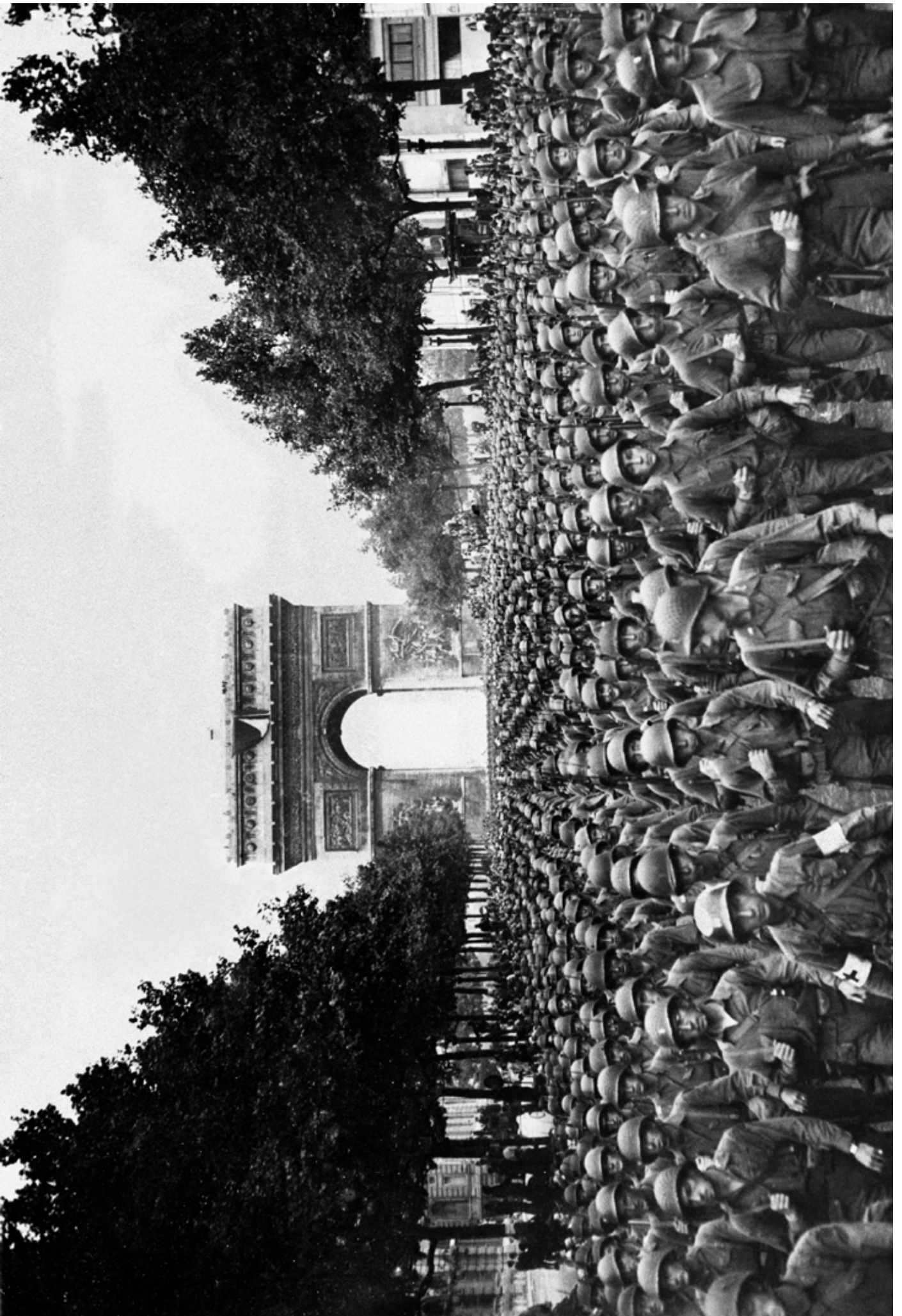
ALL CHAIRS



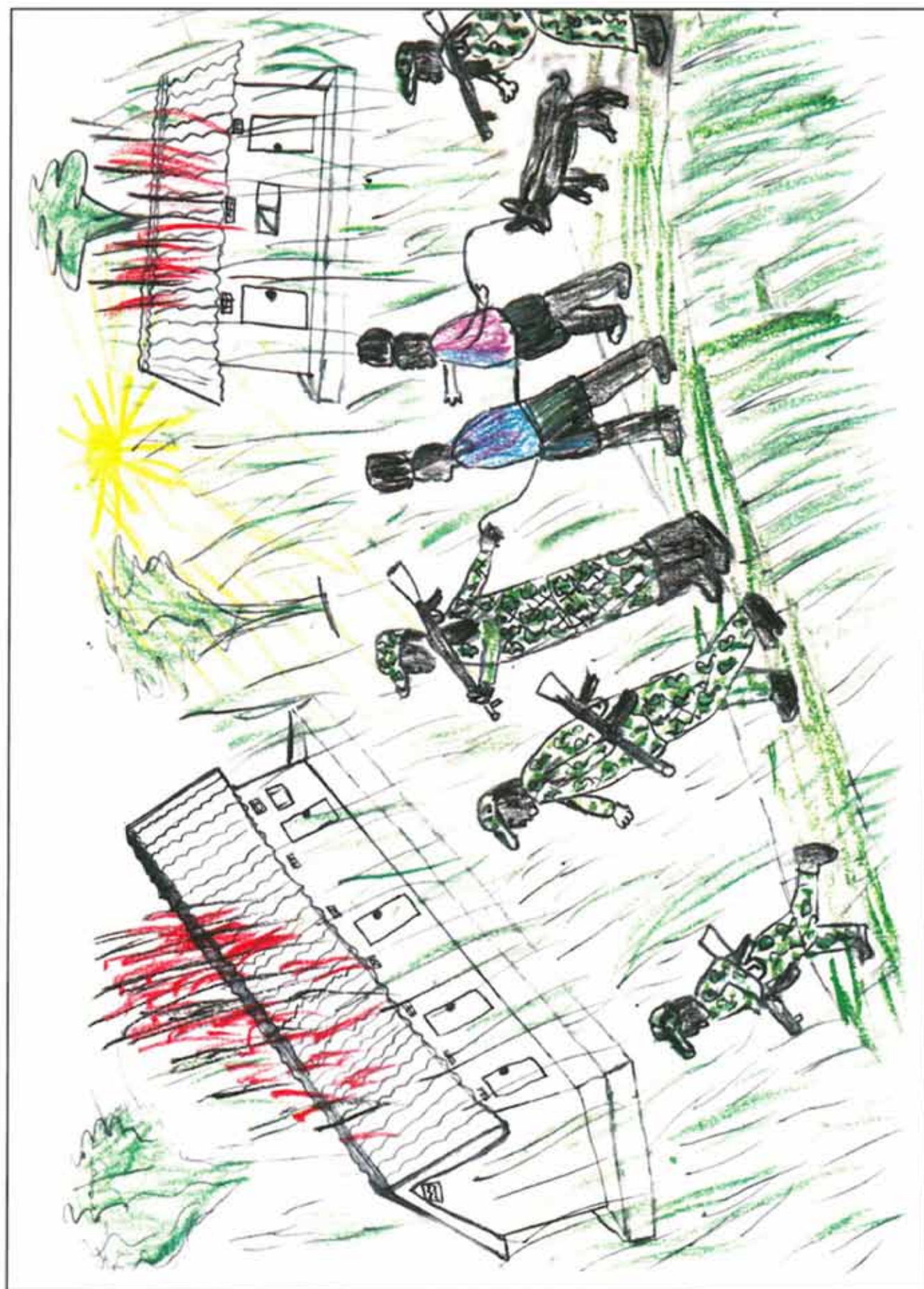
ALL CHAIRS













APPENDIX for the LANDING

Battle 1: Attack!
Battle 2: Charge!
Battle 3: For king and country!
Battle 4: The ambush
Battle 5: The raid
Battle 7: The armed conflict
Battle 8: The skirmish
Battle 9: The ground combat
Battle 10: The pursuit
Battle 11: Hand-to-hand combat
Battle 12: The death stroke
Battle 13: The insurrection
Battle 14: Take cover
Battle 15: Regroup
Battle 16: The bombing
Battle 17: Swinging
Battle 18: Skating
Battle 19: Carousel
Battle 20: Playing tag
Battle 21: Eating ice cream
Battle 22: Swimming
Battle 23: Building huts
Battle 24: Playing war
Battle 25: Soccer
Battle 26: Dancing
Battle 28: Crafts
Battle 29: The survivors
Battle 36: The survivors
Battle 73: We can't go on anymore
Battle 268: We're through
Battle 1250: My nose is still bleeding
Battle 32653: We're hurt
Battle 68245: We're frightened
Battle 1200356: The truce
Battle 53500007: Crying
Battle 883400006: Peace
Battle 250000000678999: The reconstruction

