Funding values

Level of difficulty: 2
Recommended age:
>12 years.

Objectives:

- Gain an understanding of the effects of funding advocates for war.
- Reflect on arguments for and against professional military service, and on the suitability of military advertising in certain places.

Summary: Students play a role-playing game and use it for discussion sake.
Time: 30 min.
Lesson Type: Indoors or outdoors, quiet.
Group Size: Around 10-12; the lesson works best with more than one group.
Materials: -

Instructions

• Dress up as a Public Relations Officer of the Ministry of Defence. If you have an assistant, have them dress up as well. Pretend you are visiting a newspaper to convince it to put in, over the next six months, a half-page army-recruitment advertisement in the paper, in exchange for a sizable sum of cash. Have the newspaper, staffed by students, give arguments to convince you otherwise. Whichever side manages to convince the other gets to decide what issues the paper covers and its angle.
• Once arguments have been offered on both sides, have the newspaper widen discussion to include which brands and businesses may advertise in the paper and which may not, keeping in mind that the paper needs a lot of money to operate.

Debrief and Conclusions

Questions:
What were the arguments on both sides? Which are most commonly used by people? Where do you stand? Where is it legitimate for the military to advertise? Where should the military be permitted to advertise?

Tips for the facilitator

As an officer of the Ministry of Defence, ensure you are well prepared in advance to sway students at the paper. For background and arguments for military recruitment, see www.soldados.com (in Spanish).

Get involved

If the class leans toward an opposition to military advertising, inform them of the many venues where this advertising is done, including the Internet, educational fairs, textbooks, television in the metro, regular television, and so on. Demonstrate your own discontent at this kind of advertising and how to fight it by calling, writing, or complaining formally to businesses and organizations which take money from the military for the right to advertise.

Source: School for a Culture of Peace (2009). Juegos de paz: Caja de Herramientas para educar para una cultura de paz. Madrid: La Catarata.