

Three Class Research Tasks on Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

- The UN & NGOs / Russian anti-war protests / Street Interviews -

If educators around the world wish to engage their students in studying about – and working to stop – Vladimir Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine, they'll need teaching materials that specifically deal with the issues involved in this brutal conflict.

This fifth edition of my “Emergency Bulletins” for language teachers contains three class research activities on the Russia-Ukraine conflict to try out in your classrooms.

(1) RESEARCH TASK #1: “What are NGOs and UN agencies doing to help?”

- <> Have students brainstorm what NGOs and UN agencies they know.
- <> Put them into pairs or teams and have each choose an NGO or UN card.
- <> Give them time to research how their NGO or UN agency is helping Ukraine.
- <> When ready, have them report to the class on the results of their research.

(2) RESEARCH TASK #2: “Anti - War Protests in Russia”

- <> Have students brainstorm what they know about Russians protesting the war
- <> Put them into pairs or teams, then have each team choose a card.
- <> Give them time to research the Russian anti-war group that they chose.
- <> When ready, have them report to the class on their group and its actions.

(3) RESEARCH TASK #3: “What do people around the world think?”

- <> Have students brainstorm what people around the world think of the invasion
- <> Put them into pairs or teams, then have each team choose a country card.
- <> Give them time to watch the street interviews on Ukraine filmed in their nation.
- <> When ready, have them report to the class on their country's interviews.
- <> To follow-up, have them design and do their own street interviews on Ukraine.

Please feel free to:

- experiment with these activities – in full or in part - in your classroom
- modify, improve or tailor these for your own teaching situation
- share these with other teachers and schools in your network of contacts

Our most important goal as teachers, in my mind, is to educate our students about this brutal war on Ukraine, raise their awareness of the humanitarian crisis it has caused, have them think critically about the complexities of the conflict and mobilize their energies to help end the war, bring peace back to Ukraine and assist the innocent victims of Russia's cruel attacks.

Do get in touch with any questions or comments and let me know how things go with your teaching about – and actions against – Russia's war on Ukraine.

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March 27, 2022 Tottori, Japan

FOR REFERENCE

- Bulletin #4: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iN9i4xsU1fXE20xg49V_FUqt1PFLHCQT/view
- Bulletin #3: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16auqhWsHgTIWJlWvCUz3PNTnWlbGRQg3/view>
- Bulletin #2: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lqSByLhHjUyuqVoMBWGGwN28isQQUp2W/view?usp=sharing>
- Bulletin #1: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ppjedWviu7PYBN3wBCG3Cy1xM4NityYb/view>
- 14 Things We Can Do: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k8UO5bJmOPiQ6tZrYOdJf142W6WIRFLb/view>
- 3 Classroom Activities: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RS_1Z51mwmEghw85n1uoigmmWQ8Oxx5K/view
- Songs for Ukraine: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PeL7yc-jv906B47gCkDHsXBaS9zFU4vP/view>
- Letter to Russian Teachers: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YHQYKDUlqWI8vGFXFEYzAuWkdp23rxZk/view>
- FLT Ukraine statements: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CD2gEZ3rdmAskuDnSkWRInyHERzO_sw3/view

Russia's War on Ukraine - Three Class Research Tasks

Break students into pairs or teams, have them select a task, choose a card, then start researching the topics listed.

Task #1



What are NGOs and UN agencies doing?

Have individual students, pairs or teams select a card below, then research and report on what they learn.

Amnesty International

The Red Cross

UNICEF
(UN Children's Fund)

UNESCO
(Education, Science, Culture)



Doctors without Borders
(Medecins sans Frontieres)

Save the Children

UNHCR
(UN refugee agency)

Other NGOs and agencies

Task #2



The Anti-War Movement in Russia

Have individual students, pairs or teams select a card below, then research and report on what they learn.

Russian scientists

Russian celebrities

Russian tech workers

Russian musicians



Russian athletes

Russian mothers

Other Russian protestors

Russian expats in our country

Task #3



What do people around the world think?

Have individual students, pairs or teams select a card, then research and report on the interviews they watch.

RUSSIA

CHINA

PALESTINE

JAPAN



KAZAKHSTAN

THE USA

ISRAEL

YOUR COUNTRY

Russia's War on Ukraine: What are NGOs and UN Agencies doing?

Read the profiles and click on the links to learn what NGOs and UN agencies are doing to help Ukraine.



Amnesty International

www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/03/russia-ukraine-invasion-of-ukraine-is-an-act-of-aggression-and-human-rights-catastrophe/

- Amnesty International is working to document war crimes and human rights violations linked to the crisis.
- See their site above to learn more about their work.
- **Statement:** *Russia's invasion is a violation of the UN Charter, a crime under international law, a humanitarian crisis and a human rights catastrophe. People are dying and thousands of lives are at risk. We ask that people take action to demand the Russian authorities stop this act of aggression and protect civilians now.*



The Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/2022/ukraine-red-cross-delivers-aid-to-families.html>

- The Red Cross has distributed life-saving aid to 750,000 people, helped evacuate 58,000 people, provided first aid training to 42,000 and delivered 400 tons of food, blankets, medicine and trauma kits.
- See their site to learn about their humanitarian work and to hear refugee stories at their "Voices of Ukraine"
- **Statement:** *We call on all parties to place humanitarian imperatives first. People's safety and access to food, water and shelter must be guaranteed.*



UNICEF (UN Children's Fund)

<https://www.unicef.org/ukraine/en>

- UNICEF is supporting health, nutrition, education, clean water and protection for children and families.
- See their website above to learn more about the life-saving support that UNICEF is providing in Ukraine.
- **Statement:** *3.4 million Ukrainians need humanitarian assistance. 60% are women and children. Tens of thousands of civilians have been killed or wounded. We call on all sides to recommit to a ceasefire and to respect international humanitarian law,*



Save the Children

<https://www.savethechildren.org/us/where-we-work/ukraine>

- Save the Children ensures access to education, distributes winter kits, provides cash grants so families can buy food and medicine, and helps children to overcome the trauma of violence, conflict and war.
- Check the site above to learn how Save the Children is helping children caught in the cross-fire of war.
- **Statement:** *War is forcing children into bomb shelters. Temperatures are below freezing. Children are at risk of hunger, illness and abuse.*



Doctors Without Borders (MSF)

<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/ukraine>

- Doctors Without Borders (MSF) is an independent, impartial organization committed to providing medical humanitarian assistance to people affected by war.
- See their site for info on their work sending medical supplies, training doctors and assisting refugees
- **Statement:** *MSF is stepping up its medical response to this humanitarian crisis. It calls for the protection of civilians and an end to attacks on health facilities.*



UNHCR (UN Refugee Agency)

<https://www.unhcr.org/ukraine-emergency.html>

- UNHCR (the UN High Commission for Refugees) is a United Nations agency devoted to assisting refugees, stateless people and displaced communities.
- Check their site above to see how they're providing humanitarian assistance to Ukrainians forced to flee.
- **Statement:** *We are gravely concerned about Ukraine. The consequences will be devastating. There are no winners in war. Countless lives will be torn apart.*



UNESCO

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unescos-global-education-coalition-responds-to-ukrainian-call-support>

- UNESCO is a specialized United Nations agency that works to promote world peace through international cooperation in education, arts, culture and science.
- Check out their site to learn what UNESCO is doing
- **Statement:** *More than 1 million school children have been forced to flee the violence to neighboring countries. Education must be part of our humanitarian response. We cannot lose this generation of kids.*



Other NGOs

See a list of international NGOs at:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_non-governmental_organization

A few examples:

- Oxfam <https://www.oxfam.org/en/>
- Human Rights Watch <https://www.hrw.org/>
- International Rescue Committee <https://www.rescue.org/topic/ukraine-crisis>
- List of Ukraine NGOs: <https://standforukraine.com>
- More Ukrainian NGOs: interaction.org/blog/ukraine-ngos-on-the-ground/

Anti-War Protests in Russia - Some Examples



Russian Celebrities

www.standard.co.uk/news/world/russian-celebrities-condemn-ukraine-invasion-b984480.html

Many Russian celebrities are protesting the invasion:

- TV host Maxim Galkin stated, “How can this be possible? There is no justification for war. No to war!”
- Eurovision pop star Svetlana Loboda said, “My heart is broken. How is this possible? Lord, stop all this!”
- Chess champion Yan Nepomniachtchi tweeted, “History has seen many Black Thursdays. But today is blacker than others. #saynotowar.”
- Theater director Yelena Kovalskaya resigned from her government-sponsored job, saying “It is impossible to work for a murderer and receive a salary from him.”



Russian Athletes

www.abc.net.au/news/2022-02-28/russian-athletes-against-war-in-ukraine-fifa-ioc-measures/10866956

Russian athletes have also spoken up against the war:

- Soccer player Fedor Smolov posted a black square on Instagram with the trending hashtag #NOTowar
- Hockey player Alex Ovechkin at a press conference said, “Please, no more wars. We have to live in peace.”
- Biathlon champion Larisa Kuklina posted “What’s going on? Pull up! We live in the 21st century!”
- Tennis player Andrew Rublex wrote “No war please”
- Figure skater Tatiana Volosozhar stated, “All of us are horrified. It’s unimaginable that this is happening in 2022. No person in their right mind thinks war is good”



Russian Musicians

<https://qz.com/2135849/a-list-of-russian-artists-speaking-out-against-the-ukraine-invasion/>

20,000 musicians have called for an end to the war:

- Conductor Semyon Bychkov stated, “To remain silent today is to betray our conscience and our values.”
- Pianist Evgeny Kissin described Russia’s unprovoked invasion as a crime that can’t be justified.
- Pianist Alexander Melnikov said, “I’m furious with [Putin] for making me feel guilty to be Russian.!”
- Conductor Kirill Petrenko wrote, “Putin’s attack is a knife in the back of the peaceful world.”
- Pianist Polina Osetinskaya pleaded, “Remember that a lot of Russians don’t want this fratricidal war.”



Russian IT Tech Workers

<https://techcrunch.com/2022/03/01/russian-it-workers-anti-war-petition/>

An open letter from Russia’s IT community protesting the war has been signed by 30,000 people. The signers include tech entrepreneurs, managers, developers, designers, marketing specialists and system analysts. The letter says, “We employees of the Russian IT industry are categorically against military actions in Ukraine. War is unjustified and entails casualties on each side. We worry about our Ukrainian colleagues, friends and relatives. We want our country to be associated not with war, but with peace and progress. We ask our leaders to resolve this situation peacefully.”



Russian Scientists

<https://www.chemistryworld.com/news/more-than-600-russian-scientists-sign-open-letter-against-war-with-ukraine/4015292.article>

An open letter criticizing Russia’s invasion was signed by 600 Russian scientists. The scientists described the war as “unfair” and “senseless.” They pointed out that many had relatives, friends and colleagues in Ukraine and said the attack betrayed the Russians and Ukrainians who had fought together in World War II. They said the invasion would isolate Russia, turn the nation into a pariah and make it impossible to carry out scientific work. They called for an immediate halt to the war and respect for Ukrainian territorial integrity.



Russian Mothers

www.lbc.co.uk/news/russian-mothers-accuse-putin-ukraine-war/
www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXxtDouM-4

- A number of angry Russian mothers have accused the Kremlin of lying about the invasion and lashed out at government officials for using their sons as “cannon fodder”. They said their sons were unprepared to go to war and their families “deceived” by Vladimir Putin.
- One desperate mother in Moscow said that her son had been told his army unit was just doing drills. Then, without warning, he was suddenly sent to invade Ukraine. “He’s just a child,” she said, “Please stop this bloodshed and return Russian sons to their mothers!”



Other Russian War Protestors

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_anti-war_protests_in_Russia

- Anti-war petitions have been signed by 6,000 medical workers, 3,400 architects and 4,300 teachers
- A petition to impeach Vladimir Putin launched by a Russian on Change.org gathered 200,00 signatures
- Russian astronauts on board the space station wore yellow and blue space suits– the colors of Ukraine:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOKZNCXV94>



Russians in Our Country

To check your nation, do a Google search of “Russian expats protest in “

Two brief examples:

- The UK: Some Russian expats burned their passports to protest their country’s war against Ukraine
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/russia-expats-burn-passports-protest-war-ukraine-hv29scjmf>
- Turkey: Russian expats joined Ukrainians to protest
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-peace-protests-in-istanbul-draws-expat-ukrainians-russians-who-have/>

Street Interviews: What Do People Think About Russia's War on Ukraine?



- What do people in countries around the world think about Russia's invasion of Ukraine?
- Join your students to view and discuss the street interview video clips below.
- Then, do your own interviews on Ukraine and Russia in your school, community or city.

1	RUSSIA 	<p>What do Russians think now, 3 weeks after the start? (March 19)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street interviews carried out in Moscow on March 19th by Russian Youtuber "1420" ▪ Questions: <i>Have you been impacted by sanctions? Will things get worse? What do you think about President Putin's "special military operation"?</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5GS4uUeHVA</p>
3	Russians & Ukrainians in Korea 	<p>We Asked Ukrainians and Russians in Korea about the War (March 11)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street interviews in Seoul, South Korea carried out on March 11th by Asian Boss" ▪ Questions: <i>What's your reaction to the conflict? How have you been affected? What can people around the world do? What's your message to your countrymen?</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6iETyc5u0Q&t=215s</p>
2	CHINA 	<p>What do the Chinese think of Russia? (March 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street interviews carried out in Shanghai on March 8th by the group "Asian Boss" ▪ Questions: <i>What's your reaction to the conflict? Why is Russian invading Ukraine? What do you think about Vladimir Putin? What's your message to Ukrainians?</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZoxqltgS0Y&t=199s</p>
5	JAPAN 	<p>What Japanese People Think about Russia's Invasion of Ukraine (Feb. 27)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street interviews carried out in Tokyo, Japan by "Crazyllah and Sophi" ▪ Questions: <i>Do you know what's going in Ukraine? What do you think about it?</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJ9KCMZR6Oc</p>
3	KAZAKH-STAN 	<p>Kazakhstanis React to Russian Invasion of Ukraine (March 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street interviews carried out in Almaty, Kazakhstan on March 15th by "Asian Boss" ▪ Questions: <i>Have you heard about the conflict? What about Kazakhstan's reaction? What do you think about Vladimir Putin? What's your message to Ukrainians?</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7ohcUcYdyo</p>
4	PALESTINE 	<p>Palestinians: Do You Support Ukraine or Russia? (March 13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street interviews in the West Bank and Jerusalem done March 13th by the Ask Project ▪ Questions: <i>Who do you support: Ukraine or Russia? Why?</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cj3-JydZQ2I</p>
4	ISRAEL 	<p>Israelis: Do You Support Ukraine or Russia? (March 16)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street interviews done in Israel on March 16th by the Ask Project (Corey Gil-Shuster) ▪ Questions: <i>Who do you support: Ukraine or Russia? Why?</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XUETRzPJ5Y</p>
8	USA 	<p>Americans with Family Roots in Ukraine React to Russian Invasion (Feb. 25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with Americans having Ukrainian roots on Feb. 25th by the Washington Post ▪ Questions: <i>Thoughts on Ukraine, the conflict, having relatives and family in Ukraine</i> <p>Video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOHA Ug8z3w</p>

MORE RUSSIA STREET INTERVIEWS 	<p>For more street interviews done in Russia about the crisis in Ukraine, check out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The great videos done by a young Russian guy on his "1420" Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/c/1420channel Sample titles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>Do you feel the sanctions?</i> (Mar 26) * <i>What young Russians think of Putin</i> (Mar 9) * <i>Do you hate the USA?</i> (Mar 24) * <i>What do you think of the fake news law?</i> (Mar 13) ▪ Street interviews by Moscow Youtuber "Eli from Russia": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>The conflict in Ukraine</i> (Mar 13) www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD4fKDicTvl&t=639s * <i>Life under sanctions</i> (Mar 19) www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4EA8VSZdZ8&t=420s
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OR Do a Youtube search for "street interviews Russia Ukraine" or "what people think Russia Ukraine"

Street Interviews: Pro-Ukraine Comments From Around the World

Have students read and discuss the pro-Ukraine comments below taken from the street interview videos.

I know that there are people in much worse situations. But it's not easy for us Russians as well. We are now cut off from the rest of the world. We never wanted this. – Eli from Russia

Q: *Who do you support: Russia or Ukraine?*

A: Ukraine. Because I'm against aggression. I think there are other ways to try before destroying a country.
– young Israeli woman in Gdera

Q: *What do you think of Vladimir Putin?*

A: That's a very dangerous question.
– young Russian guy in Moscow

It pains me to know that Ukrainian people are suffering from a war which they never wanted.
– young Japanese guy in Tokyo

Since both Russians and Ukrainians are like our brothers and sisters, what's going on in Ukraine makes me sad. Innocent people suffering is what disappoints me the most.
– young Kazakhstani woman in Almaty

Q: *Who do you support – Ukraine or Russia?*

A: I support Ukraine. Why? Because I'm against any country occupying another.
– Palestinian man in Ramallah

Personally, I don't like Putin. I don't think the leader of a nation should be in power that long. I think changing leaders could be better for a country
– young Chinese guy in Shanghai

Let's be honest and call things what they are. This is a war against another country's population. We'll be thrown back in development by decades. Nothing good awaits us in future.
– Russian man in Moscow

Q: *What do you think of Vladimir Putin?*

Q: I see him as a typical dictator. The question is: How is he able to exist in the 21st century?
– young Kazakhstani man in Almaty

I was born in Ukraine and spent my childhood there. We moved to the US when I was in 3rd grade. My relatives are in Kherson. Every time I see something related to bombings or air strikes or sirens, it sends a shiver down my spine.
– American woman with relatives in Ukraine

Ukraine is a sovereign state. And, in spite of this, Russia invaded. Choosing to invade a sovereign state is wrong. – Young Chinese guy in Shanghai

It's a pity that Slavic people are fighting. They're supposed to be friends and cooperate. How sick people are that they have to wage a military operation against their own brothers!
– angry Russian woman in Moscow

Russia and Kazakhstan are soulmates. I have Russian colleagues and friends. They're all nice people. You know, this whole situation is more of a political game than a war between ordinary citizens. But, as they say, who suffers? We ordinary people are just pawns in their chess game.
– young Kazakhstani guy in Almaty

Q: *Who do you support – Ukraine or Russia?*

A: I support all human beings for the right to live without any wars. – Palestinian man in Jerusalem

Russia is actively using state propaganda. They introduced a new law about "fake news." If Russians talk about what's going on, they may get 15 years in prison. It's terrifying because we can't even call a war a war.
– Russian woman living in Seoul, South Korea

Q: *Who do you support – Ukraine or Russia?*

A: I'm Russian but my grandfather is from Ukraine. I have a brother in Ukraine. So, of course, I stand with Ukraine. But only 10-15% of Russians support Ukraine. They don't have real information about what's going on because they only watch Russian news.
– Russian woman in Ashdod, Israel

Generally, Chinese people oppose the invasion because we think Russia is seizing Ukraine by force. We can see the hardships that ordinary citizens go through due to this invasion.
– Chinese woman in Shanghai

100 years ago, the whole world was at war. And it feels like the same is happening now. It's sad.
– young Japanese woman in Tokyo

Q: *Have you been affected by this conflict?*

A: My Dad is from the Donetsk region of Ukraine. My grandpa fought for the freedom of Ukraine during World War II. And now it's affecting our family. We are all against this fratricidal war.
– young Russian guy living in Seoul, Korea

Street Interviews: Neutral & Pro-Russia Comments Around the World

Have students read and discuss the neutral and pro-Russia comments below taken from the street interview videos.

Q: *What do you think of Vladimir Putin?*

A: He's strong and also incredibly wise. All the actions he takes are very thoughtful and they are well evaluated from a logical and political standpoint. – Kazakhstani man in Almaty

I think if Russia started it, they should finish it.

– young Russian guy from Moscow

Q: *Who do you support: Russia or Ukraine?*

A: No-one. Because Ukraine is with Israel and Russia destroyed Syria, so there's no side I can support. – young Palestinian woman in Ramalla

Q: *What do you think about the Ukraine crisis?*

A: I think this is connected to the deep state. There's something in the background. It's not as simple as "Putin wants Ukraine's natural resources and that's why he attacked."

– older Japanese man in Tokyo

Q: *What lies ahead for Russia?*

A: I believe in a bright future and have a phrase that helps me to move on. No matter what, I always say that everything that happens is for the best. – young Russian guy in Moscow

Q: *What do you think of the special operation?*

A: I'm ambivalent. On one hand, it was needed. On the other hand, it's not good for ordinary people. – young Russian guy in Moscow

Q: *What do you think of Vladimir Putin?*

A: Putin is a man's man. He sticks to his words. In order to protect Russia's territory and ensure its prosperity, he took this action. He's the kind of leader I really support. I appreciate his effort.

– Older Chinese man in Shanghai

Q: *What do you think of the special operation?*

A: I think it's worth it. Before, when our Russian president was a drunkard, the Americans claimed we had a democracy. Our country should get up off its knees. Otherwise, if there were no special operation, then we would be destroyed.

– older Russian woman in Moscow

The news I heard is that Ukraine and Russia have some kind of military conflict. So, each side has a different opinion. Russia claims it's not an invasion while Ukraine claims it is.

– young Chinese guy in Shanghai

Q: *Who do you support – Russia or Ukraine?*

A: Russia. Because now everyone is standing with Ukraine. But when Palestine needed someone to stand with us, Ukraine didn't stand with us.

– older Palestinian woman in Ramallah

Q: *Who do you support – Ukraine or Russia?*

A: Russia. Because during World War II, the Ukrainians slaughtered us Jews. But the Russians saved the Jews. They saved and supported them.

– older Israeli woman in Tsarei Tikva, Israel

Street Interview Videos: Note to Teachers

- Have students note that all those interviewed on video are basically very nice people with a variety of opinions
- Point out how their views are influenced by the news they get, their backgrounds, experiences, national biases...
- Explain how even nice people can hold views that are prejudiced, ignorant, illogical or that support violence
- Note how most people speak freely in contrast to the Russians who can be arrested for using the word "war"

Do Your Own Street Interviews about Russia's War on Ukraine

After watching the street interview videos, why not do street interviews in your own community? Here's how:

[1] Decide on Your Topics

- Sit down with your partner or group to discuss and decide what topics you want to deal with.

[2] Brainstorm Questions

- Next, start brainstorming good questions to ask that deal with the topics you've decided on.

[3] Practice & Rehearse

- In pairs, practice approaching people, politely ask them to participate and thank them afterwards.

[6] Report Your Results

- Finally, explain the results you got in a written report, a PPT presentation or a video clip.

[5] Analyse The Responses

- Sit down with your team to review your responses, analyze them and put them into categories.

[4] Do Your Interviews

- Next, go into the street to do your interviews. Choose a good place (city square, mall, park, station...).