

Unit 5: Class relationships (3) Comparison/contrast

Consolidation: A

Title: Children's responses to World War III.

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Russian children don't share the same opinion as American children concerning the outcome of a nuclear war between the two super-powers. The American kids have a stronger believe in surviving a nuclear war than the average Russian kid. They are also more optimistic about the survival of the nation.

On the question if they thought a nuclear conflict would happen in their lifetime 11.8% of the Soviet children and 38.5% of the American children answered yes. A question which follows out of the last question is how they judged the possibilities to prevent a war. Of the Soviet kids, 93.3% said yes, of the American children 65%.

Summarized, the Russian kids are more optimistic about not having to take part in World War III and preventing a nuclear war as a whole. They are pessimistic about the effects of a nuclear war on themselves, their family and on their country. The American children have a strong believe in the nuclear force of their country, are pessimistic about preventing a nuclear war but at the same time believe in surviving an atomic war.

Another interesting outcome of the questionnaire is that in 3 out of the 4 questions around 40 percent of the American children are *uncertain* while the Soviet children have much lower rates at this point. Does that mean the American kids don't have an opinion (haven't thought about it or don't know much about it) or are the Russian kids better informed or instructed what to fill in?

A simple (but maybe untrue) explanation for the more aggressive but also optimistic attitude of the American kids is the influence of the television and movies. The average American watches 4 or 5 hours TV every day, being drowned in 'violent' cartoons and A-team alike series. Maybe it isn't a good idea to sell satellite tv and cable networks to the USSR in the spirit of *glasnost*. The Soviets might start to think alike, shifting the balance and start a war. Or just understand each other finally.

Interesting.

P: Good

C: Very good.