Spotlight 9	Reading Task 9621

Read the text and mark the statements

True (1), False (2), Not Stated (3).

The Modern day Slave Fighter

Close your eyes and imagine what slavery looks like. You see a time in the past with hordes of people shackled together, dirty and dressed in rags, right? But could you imagine that the person serving you in a restaurant or begging on the street could in fact be a victim of modern-day slavery?

Two hundred years after English member of parliament William Wilberforce campaigned to end slavery, an estimated 27 million people are still trapped in a modern-day form of slavery. Its victims are forced into sweatshops, agriculture, construction or to be street beggars for little or no pay. Shockingly, this is now the fastest growing criminal activity in the world.

Given Kachepa, a boy born in a small poverty-stricken village in Zambia, found himself a victim of one of the most widespread forms of this evil trade, illegal forced labour. Orphaned at the age of nine, he joined a local singing group where he met Keith Grimes. Grimes set up auditions to form a boys' choir to tour the USA. He promised his recruits an American education and salary and money for the boys' village. When Grimes offered Given a place in the choir, he eagerly accepted.

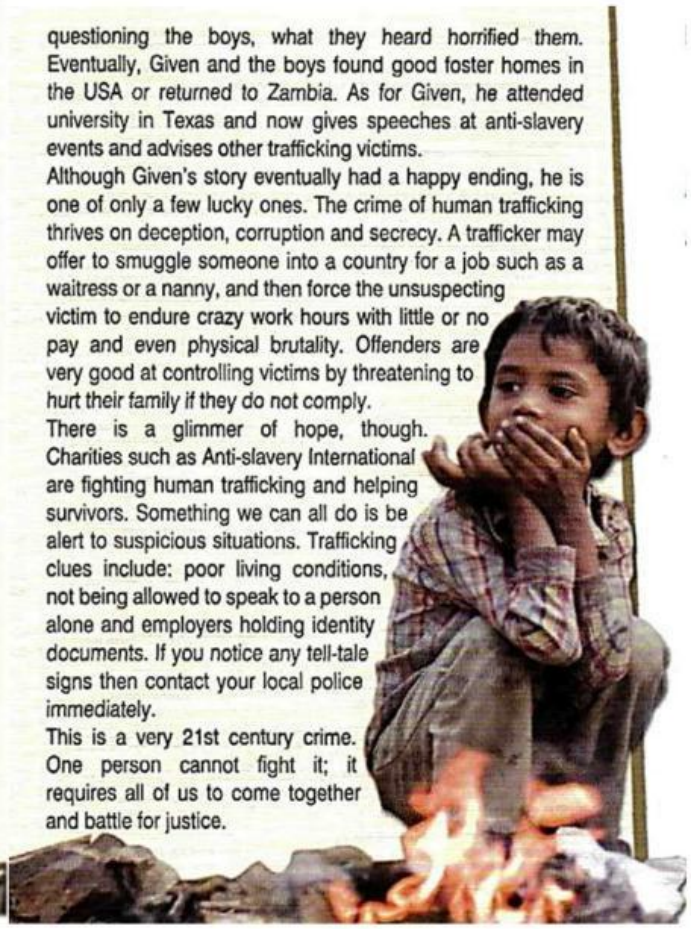
But after arriving in the USA, Grimes forced the choir boys to perform between four to seven hour-long concerts every day, often without any food or rest. When they complained, Grimes threatened to send them back to Zambia in disgrace. There was no question of escaping as Grimes kept their passports.

After a year, Grimes passed away but his equally brutal daughter took over the choir. By then, the boys had begun to resist instructions. As a result, Grimes' daughter called the US immigration office to deport them. The officers arrived but after questioning the boys, what they heard horrified them. Eventually, Given and the boys found good foster homes in the USA or returned to Zambia. As for Given, he attended university in Texas and now gives speeches at anti-slavery events and advises other trafficking victims.

Although Given's story eventually had a happy ending, he is one of only a few lucky ones. The crime of human trafficking thrives on deception, corruption and secrecy. A trafficker may offer to smuggle someone into a country for a job such as a waitress or a nanny, and then force the unsuspecting victim to endure crazy work hours with little or no pay and even physical brutality. Offenders are very good at controlling victims by threatening to hurt their family if they do not comply.

There is a glimmer of hope, though. Charities such as Anti-slavery International are fighting human trafficking and helping survivors. Something we can all do is be alert to suspicious situations. Trafficking clues include: poor living conditions, not being allowed to speak to a person alone and employers holding identity documents. If you notice any tell-tale signs then contact your local police immediately.

This is a very 21st century crime. One person cannot fight it; it requires all of us to come together and battle for justice.



1. William Wilberforce's campaign to end slavery lasted for a long time.
2. The victims of modern-day slavery are never paid.
3. Forced labour is a common form of modern-day slavery.
4. At first, Given Kachepa didn't want to join Grimes' choir.
5. Grimes' daughter tried to have the choir sent back to Zambia.
6. Not many human trafficking victims escape.
7. Traffickers get a lot of money for their job.
8. Traffickers often say they will harm victims' families.
9. There is no way to tell if someone is a victim of trafficking.

LIVEWORKSHEETS