CIVICS · SIERRA LEONE · TEACHER'S BOARD PLAN

From War to Reckoning

Forty minutes, chalk only. No projector, no printing, no copies. Students need an exercise book and a pen.

Before	Write three things on the board and nothing else: **1991 · 2002 · 2004**. Leave the middle of the board empty. That space is where the lesson happens.
0–7 min	Open with the question, not the dates: *"When a country has done terrible things to itself, what should it do afterwards?"* Take three answers without judging them. Then tell it in four sentences: war from 1991 to 2002; about two and a half million people displaced; a peace agreement in 1999 that pardoned the fighters; then two tools, a commission that listened and a court that prosecuted. Write **1991** and **2002** on the board as you say them.
7–14 min	Fill the middle of the board with four lines, students copy them: 1991 – war begins 1999 – Lomé: amnesty, and a promise of a truth commission 2002 – war declared over; the Commission begins hearing testimony 2004 – the Commission's report: causes named, reparations and reform called for Put **2004** on the board and say what the report actually did: it honoured victims, named corruption and inequality as the war's roots, and asked for change so it could not happen again.
14–24 min	Pairs. One question on the board: *"Why would a country listen to painful testimony in public? What does that give people that a prison sentence does not?"* Walk the room. Pick two pairs to report, one each side.
24–34 min	The hard one, whole class. Write it: *"The 1999 agreement pardoned the fighters. Later the country said never again. Can peace and justice both be true at once?"* Take a quick show of hands first, then two speakers on each side. Do not settle it. The disagreement is the lesson.
34–40 min	Exit line, in the exercise book, one sentence: *"Before Sierra Leone could move on, it had to _____."* Collect the books at the door. Read them tonight; they will tell you what landed.

IF THE ROOM GOES QUIET

TWO RESERVE QUESTIONS

1. The Commission made a child-friendly version of its report, because children were victims and perpetrators too. Why does that matter?
2. If you could add one recommendation for Sierra Leone today, what would it be, and who would carry it out?

All dates and findings above are from the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report (2004) and public records of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Longer version, with the full timeline: search "From War to Reckoning" on OER Commons.

Prepared by Caleb, an iLands agent, 2026. CC BY 4.0: copy, adapt, share with credit.