AMERICAN BOY GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL LISTENING TO THE RADIO FOR THE WEATHER FORECAST, TAKES OFF HIS JACKET AND HAPPILY STAYS HOME. IN A CORNER BOX OF SCREEN WE SEE WEATHER SATELLITES.

My friend John hears on the radio that there's going to be a blizzard later today and his school will be closed. The weather forecasters were able to predict this because of information sent from a faraway place in another country. Now someone has to make arrangements so meteorologists from different countries can help each other.

JAPANESE GIRL WRITES LETTER, PUTS A STAMP ON IT AND MAILS IT. IN A CORNER BOX OF SCREEN WE SEE AFRICAN MAIL WORKERS SORTING LETTERS.

Yoko is sending a letter to her pen pal in Africa. The stamps she uses are Japanese, but an African postal worker will deliver the letter. Someone has to arrange for agreements among countries so Yoko's letter can get to her friend's house.

EUROPEAN BOY WATCHING TELEVISION, IN A CORNER BOX WE SEE TRANSMITTERS.

Joakim is watching his favourite TV programme. Reception is clear and there's no interference from a nearby TV station across the border in another country because someone gives out different radio and TV frequencies to different countries.
African girl in plane looking out of window. in a corner we see control tower.

Kemi is taking her first plane ride. To land safely the pilot must follow instructions from the control tower. The air traffic controller and the pilot are from different countries, but everything will go smoothly because someone makes sure there are international rules and procedures that are followed all over the world.

Latin American boy in clinic getting a shot. In a corner box of screen we see people being vaccinated.

Elee is getting his shots today but there is one shot he doesn't have to get anymore, because a disease called smallpox has been wiped out. Someone has to co-ordinate the fight against diseases which can spread from country to country.

In every case the someone that makes the arrangements among the different countries is an organization connected with the United Nations.

Slit screen of all boxes, transmitter, postal worker, air traffic controller etc.

Dissolve to UN symbol

Titles "The UN is for you" in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish
John, Yoko, Joakim, Kemi, Elee and You, all live on planet Earth.

Our planet Earth, seen from far away, is a bit like a spaceship, hurtling around the sun, with only a thin skin of atmosphere to protect it.

On this space ship are some 160 countries, or nations, each with its own government. If you think of a country as a bit like a person, then you could say that each one thinks of itself as the boss of everything that goes on in its own part of the spaceship. And sometimes particularly bossy or greedy ones think they're in charge of other peoples' areas as well.

But ... in an enclosed space, almost everything that happens in one place affects what's going on next door.

In people, greediness and lack of consideration for others can lead to quarrels, in countries they can lead to war.
In 1945 after a terrible war that affected most of the world, and left much of it in ruins, the countries decided to set up an organization to help each other get along. They called it the United Nations or the UN for short.

At the UN the nations decided together on a Charter, a code of conduct that tells countries how they should behave. The Charter also decided how the United Nations would work and what it should do.

The headquarters of the United Nations is in New York, but it has offices in many other countries. Any country large or small can join. The UN includes many different branches or organs to deal with all the different kinds of problems in the world. And there's no shortage of problems!

The UN's most important job is to stop wars and keep the peace. It can't always manage, but it tries.
There's a part of the United Nations called the Security Council, where countries that have disagreements can send representatives to talk to each other and explain their country's point of view... The Security Council members try to calm them down and persuade them not to fight.

Except for a few powerful nations who are permanent members, countries are elected to take turns on the Security Council. So it's quite small and can work fast in an emergency.

Six different languages are used in the Security Council and simultaneous translations are provided.

If a quarrel can't be resolved peacefully, sometimes the Security Council can decide to borrow soldiers from countries that didn't take sides and send them to help.
ARCHIVE FOOTAGE OF PEACE-KEEPING TROOPS

The UN troops never shoot except in self defence, but just by being there they can sometimes stop the others from fighting.

But the UN is not really a world government, it can't make countries behave if they don't want to and there are still wars that the UN can't stop.

One of the most striking things about our planet, something that a visitor from outer space would notice at once, is the huge difference between the way people in rich countries live and the way people have to live in poor countries. Now people in rich countries are not cleverer or harder working than people in poor countries. Nor is it just a question of luck. Nations don't agree about WHY things are this way but they do agree that it's unfair. It can't go on forever, something has got to be done about it. So the UN's other most important job is to help make things fairer on our planet.
First the UN helps countries make the most of what they've got.

It tries to find ways for people to grow or catch more food.

The UN also works on ways to keep people healthier.

The UN trains scientists and helps to start new industries.

It gives advice on the planning of new roads and railways.

It also helps countries help each other by sharing new ideas.

The UN doesn't have a lot of money to spend, its main job is to organize things and get them started.

The UN also tries to persuade the richer countries to pay more for the things they buy from the rest of the world, to give more aid and to lend money and expertise.
The United Nations system includes a lot of different organizations or agencies to do all this work. Each one specializes in something different like food or health.

One you've probably heard of is called UNICEF which works for children.

The United Nations also tries to make sure that in all countries everybody is treated the same way whether they're black, white or brown (or green or purple).

And that women and girls get the same chance in life as men and boys.

Another thing about living on a spaceship is that almost everything is finite. That means there's only so much of it and no more.
We could easily run out of some very important things soon and in some places we're getting very overcrowded. Also, we could pollute our planet so badly that one day we'll wake up and it won't be fit to live on. We've got enough bombs on board to blow the earth to smithereens and the money spent on bombs could build millions of hospitals and schools.

But what are fair shares of all the good things? Who owns the sea? Who owns the moon? Who stops the polluters? Who bans the bombs?

These are the sort of questions that are asked in the General Assembly of the United Nations. Here every member country, large or small, has a vote.

Sometimes, if enough countries make a promise, a treaty or international agreement can be written down and signed by them, then the treaty becomes international law. For example, no country is allowed to put bombs in outer space.
But mostly, what the countries vote on here are not laws because we haven't got a world government yet on our spaceship. They vote on resolutions and proposals, that is suggestions about how countries ought to behave.

"The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. Will all those in favour of the draft resolution please signify. Opposed: Abstentions. Then the voting is complete, the machine is locked. One hundred and eleven in favour, 26 opposed and seven abstentions. The resolution has been adopted."

But the UN can't make anyone obey. General Assembly resolutions are a sort of world public opinion, countries that ignore them can get pretty unpopular, and countries are like people, they don't like being unpopular.

If the UN succeeds in making things fairer, then its other job, keeping the peace, will be easier because there won't be so much to quarrel about.
And because for the moment there's no getting off our spaceship, well at least not in large numbers, the countries really have no choice but to get along with each other and The United Nations is helping them to do it.

This United Nations program was thought up and put together by Elspeth MacDougall and Kit Laybourne. They were helped by Adam Bernstein, Robert Burden and Mat Kaplowitz. My name is Diana Hollander. Bye bye.