



Global Wealth Distribution

A lesson about how money is spread throughout the world

Age range: Elementary, Middle & High School

Overview

This activity is designed to show students hunger facts in a concrete way. The questions are there to help the students reflect on what they are seeing. The idea is not to make the largest group feel guilty or the students feel guilty for what they have in real life. It is to open their eyes and get them thinking.

Instructions

1. Split your group/class into three groups and give them candy as indicated below to represent individuals in high, middle, and low-income levels. Let the class know that this is a picture of how the resources of the world are spread out. There is a small part of the world that has a low, a little bit bigger group that has less, and the biggest group has the least. The activity is designed to show students hunger facts in a concrete way. The questions are there to help the students reflect on what they are seeing. The idea is not to make the largest group feel guilty or the students feel guilty for what they have in real life. It is to open their eyes and get them thinking. The discussions will hopefully let the students see that things need to change and that there is enough to go around in the world.

HIGH INCOME - Group 1: Each person receives 11 pieces of candy. This group should have 15% of the class (about 1 in 6) and receives about 90% of the candy. Ask the students what countries might be in this group (US, England, Canada). They have plenty to eat, good doctors, and clean water. On average, people in this income level live to be 76.

MIDDLE INCOME - Group 2: Each person receives 1 pieces of candy. This group should have 25% of the class (1 in 4) and receives about 25% of the candy. Ask the students what countries might be in this group (Poland, Thailand, and the Philippines). More people here don't get enough to eat. Five times more children die in this group than in the first one.

LOW INCOME - Group 3: Give out 1 piece of candy for every 4 people. 60% of the world is in this group and receives about 2% of the candy. Ask the students what countries might be in this group (Ethiopia, Haiti, etc). People earn less than \$2 dollars a day here and many people go hungry every day. The drinking water makes many sick and people here only live to be about 60.





Questions:

1. Ask group one how it feels to have so much when the others don't have much at all.
2. Ask group three how it feels to be in their group.
3. What are some of the reasons for such inequality?
 - There are many hypotheses about what the reasons are for such inequality, and there is not a simple answer. Allow the youth to struggle with what the reasons may be. The youth may come up with several other possible answers, but the following is a list of reasons to help with your discussion: exploitation, imperialism, colonialism, internal national inequality, the lack of societal institutions that protect rights, corruption, education, and technology.
4. What are some of the consequences of such inequality?
 - Like the question above, the answer to this question is very complicated. However, here are some suggestions that might help with discussion: unemployment, poverty, environmental degradation, and the reduced role of government in developing countries affecting such things as public education, health, housing, and utilities.
5. Who, if anybody, is responsible to try and change this situation? Do you know people or organizations that are currently trying to make this situation better?
6. How does the Souper Bowl of Caring have an impact on this problem?

