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classroom activity

Activity: BBC World – Have Your Say

Activity summary

Students participate in an on-line debate on a global issue on the BBC World News website. They research the issue in question using articles and suggested links together with BBC audio and video clips and read the opinions of others who have taken part in the debate. Having researched the issue students are asked to consider their own opinions on the issue and submit their views to the BBC site.

Aims of the activity

- To help students understand the importance of researching and learning about different viewpoints in reaching an opinion on an issue
- To be able to express and justify a personal opinion orally and in writing on an important global issue
- To take part in a real life formal debate involving the world community

For details of how Global News activities meet the requirements of the national curriculum, in particular the citizenship curriculum see:

http://www.globalnews.org.uk/teacher_curric.htm

Resources

Access to computers/internet, BBC News World Edition – at least one computer for every 2-4 students.

Activity details

Raising an issue

Examine the current list of Have your Say topics on the BBC News World Edition website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/talking_point/default.stm Reach a consensus with students as to which topic to debate.

Questioning/Discussion

Find out how much students already know about the selected issue and their opinions and perspectives on it. The main views and opinions raised could be written onto a board etc. An opinion poll could be taken before students research the issue and then again at the end of the session to see if views have changed.

Researching/Group work

Students should work in pairs or small groups to research the selected topic using the BBC News World Edition site and by clicking on the selected 'Have Your Say' topic. This will lead to information and further links; students can also investigate comments on the issue from people around the world to see the range of views. Some topics also contain audio and video extracts.

Having researched the issue and learned about the range of opinions ask students to draft their own response to the issue using a word processing programme.

Disseminating

Following the research and the drafting of their own ideas, opinions can be shared with the whole group. Further discussion can take place before a final opinion poll to see if views have changed. Finally ask students to consider whether in the light of the final discussion they wish to alter their drafted ideas/opinion. They can then submit their views to the BBC News World Edition website.

Positive action

Taking part in a debate with the global community in which their voices and opinions will be listened to and possibly shared with others is a positive action in itself. Depending on the issue, some students may feel that the debate has inspired them to take further action on the issue.

Ask students to consider the ideas on the students in action page on the Global News website: http://www.globalnews.org.uk/student_action.htm

Expectations:

By the end of this activity students will:

- have a more in depth knowledge and understanding of a topical global issue
- have had an opportunity to learn about and listen to others opinions on this issue
- have developed informed opinions and expressed and justified these orally and in writing
- have taken part in a real debate involving the world community
- be encouraged to take action personally and in their community on the issue in question