



global**news**.org.uk
classroom activity

Activity: Causes-effects-solutions

Activity summary

Using information from selected global news sites students consider the causes and effects of a major international news story. They consider whether this information constitutes fact or opinion. They also use the information provided by news services to explore the potential solutions to the issue and who might or should be involved in implementing these solutions; as part of this they consider how they or their school community might be part of the solution.

Aims of the activity

- To use global news services to find out new or additional information on a topical global issue
- To gain a greater insight into the causes and effects of a topical global issue
- To analyse news reports for factual and opinionated reporting
- To encourage students to consider solutions to a topical global issue, who should be responsible for these solutions and how they and their school community might be involved in these solutions

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 – at least one computer for every 2-4 students; copies of the causes-effects-solutions worksheet (see below).

Activity details

Raising an issue

Ask students to consider the current leading international news stories. List these on a board etc. Reach a consensus on one story/issue in investigate further.

Explain to the students that the issue selected will be explored in terms of causes and effects; they will be asked to try and decide whether the causes and effects are reported as facts or opinions. Explain that they will also be asked to consider any solutions to the issue, either their own ideas or ideas mentioned in reports they examine.

Questioning/Discussion

Begin by clarifying with students what constitutes a cause and its corresponding effect. Consider what might be a solution to this. Start with simple examples such as traffic congestion causing air pollution. With this example there may be many potential solutions, and many different people who might be responsible for addressing the issue. Upon first examination, traffic congestion and air pollution may be considered a straight forward factual cause and effect. However, try to encourage

students to think critically and creatively. Who decides what level of emissions constitutes air pollution? Would the relationship between traffic congestion and air pollution be as straight forward if all cars were electric or hydrogen powered? Such critical questions can help students think about whether what is reported as factual actually contains elements of opinion.

The issue of fact and opinion could be further explored as the selected issue is discussed. Find out how much students already know about it, considering whether the information they have is factual or an opinion. The main 'facts' and 'opinions' raised could be written onto a board etc.

Researching/Group work

Students should work in pairs or small groups to research the selected topic and complete the causes-effects-solutions worksheet. They should be encouraged to think about causes in the widest possible sense - natural, environmental, social, economic and political causes. In terms of the effects they should consider how the issue impacts locally for the people and environments concerned, but also the regional or global impacts of the issue and any impacts of the issue in the students own locality.

Students could either be asked to look at one particular report/website or a limited number of websites. It would be useful if different groups focused on different news services/reports so that these could be compared. In considering possible solutions ask students to consider ways in which they themselves might be part of the solution.

Disseminating

Following the research ask groups to provide the outcome of their research as recorded on their worksheets. A general discussion examining the different ideas raised should follow. Key ideas on causes, effects and to what extent these form facts or opinions should be noted, as should possible solutions and who is responsible for implementing these solutions. Try to focus on actions students themselves could take. The information they have learnt could be compared with those ideas, perceptions and opinions that students raised at the beginning of the session to see if they have increased their knowledge and understanding of the issue.

Positive action

Considering what actions students could take individually or collectively on the issue being explored forms an integral part of this activity. 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 a greater insight into the causes and effects of a topical global issue
- have learnt to explore news reports more critically; having a clearer idea of how news reports can contain both facts and opinion
- have considered a range of solutions to a topical global issue, who should be responsible for these solutions and how they individually and collectively might be involved in these solutions



...global**news**.org.uk worksheet...

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This sheet should be discussed and completed in groups.

Global issue explored: _____

<p>Causes - natural, environmental, social, economic, political</p>		F	O
<p>Effects - globally, regionally, locally,</p>			
<p>Possible solutions</p>		<p>Involving who?</p>	
		<p>Us/me</p>	

F = Fact O = Opinion

