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TOPICAL TALK
HEADLINES *Advanced*

1-HOUR LESSON

POVERTY

+

COVID-19





POVERTY AND COVID-19

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Target age 11–15 years
Group size 10–30 students
Time 1 hour

In this session, students will explore the relationship between covid-19 and poverty. They will answer questions like: what is poverty? Does every person in poverty face the same difficulties? And what impact has the pandemic had on people in poverty?

CRITICAL-THINKING SKILLS

This session provides opportunities for students to practise the following critical-thinking skills which are important for understanding and discussing the news. The activities that develop each skill are shown by icons in the *Session guide*.

We break skills down into steps for progression. Download our skills poster bit.ly/SkillsPoster

THIS SESSION'S SKILL FOCUS



STEP 11

I speak adaptively by planning for different possible responses of listeners



STEP 11

I listen critically and compare different perspectives



STEP 8

I explore complex problems by analysing the causes and effects



STEP 10

I develop ideas by considering different perspectives

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This session focuses on the following UN Sustainable Development Goal:



For more information, look here: sdgs.un.org/goals

SHARE



Tweet us with news of your discussions and your thoughts as you work through the session!

@Econ_Foundation
#CovidAndPoverty

CHOOSE YOUR CHALLENGE



Use these extra questions and activities to tailor this session to your students.

	SCAFFOLD	STRETCH
Keywords	For each keyword, ask: why is it important to know this word in a discussion about poverty?	Ask students to put each keyword into a contextualised sentence.
Crunching numbers	Ask: is it always easy for a family to predict their income and living costs? Why?	Explain to students that poverty lines are higher in richer countries and lower in poorer countries. Ask: why do you think this is?
Deeper discussion	Ask: why was the number of people living in poverty getting smaller before the covid-19 pandemic?	Ask: could anything have been done to stop more people from falling into poverty during the covid-19 pandemic?

KEEP THE DISCUSSION GOING

Has this session sparked your students' interest? Here are some tips to help them to continue the conversation:

RESEARCH

What is being done to help people in poverty in their country or area. Is it enough? How does it compare to other parts of the world?

READ

Find out more about the UN Sustainable Development Goal "NO POVERTY" here: bit.ly/UN_NoPoverty

RECOMMEND

Why is it important to talk about the issue of poverty? Who should have this discussion? Find some sources that you could recommend to others so they can learn more.









SESSION GUIDE

Objective: to understand the impact of covid-19 on global poverty



Before the session you will need to:

- Print and copy the *Chat mat*, enough for one between two (or display on screen)
- Print and display the *Keywords posters*

ACTIVITY	TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS	TIME
Keywords   	<p>Hand out the <i>Chat mats</i> – students should work in pairs. Ask students to think of a three-digit number and write it in the grid in ACTIVITY ONE. Choose three students to read the <i>Keywords posters</i>. Students should try to sum up the keywords using only the amount of words from each digit in their number. For example, if the number is 358, they should sum up “POVERTY” in three words, “POVERTY LINE” in five words, and “INCOME” in eight words. If a digit is zero, they should think of an action.</p> <p>Ask: have you heard these words before? Where?</p>	5 mins
Crunching numbers  	<p>Tell students that they will create a financial scenario for a fictional family in this activity.</p> <p>Ask students to fill in the grids on their sheet. They should decide the number of family members and add up their family’s living costs. Reveal that their three digit number from ACTIVITY ONE is their family’s monthly income. Students should subtract their family’s monthly living costs from their income and work out if they have any money left.</p> <p>Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have money left over, what could you spend it on? • If you don’t have enough money, what should you prioritise? • What else do people have to pay for to survive? <p>Label one side of the room as “above the poverty line” and the other as “below the poverty line”. Students should stand where they think their pretend family lies on the continuum. Share answers</p> <p>Ask: Does every person in poverty face the same difficulties? Why / why not?</p>	15 mins
Stopping stereotypes  	<p>Ask students to read the statements in ACTIVITY TWO and decide whether they are true or false. Reveal the answers. (1 = TRUE, 2 = FALSE, 3 = FALSE, 4 = FALSE). Ask a student to read <i>Keywords poster 4</i>.</p> <p>Ask: what stereotypes are there about people living in poverty? Why can stereotypes be harmful?</p> <p>Extra time? People with the same income can live very differently. Find out more at Dollar Street: gapminder.org/dollar-street</p>	5 mins
Deeper discussion  	<p>Explain that from 1990 until 2019 (before covid-19), the number of people living in extreme poverty fell from 36% of the world’s population to 8%. Ask students to say one word or make a face to describe how this makes them feel. Students should try not to repeat words that have already been said.</p> <p>Choose one person to read the first statistic in ACTIVITY THREE. Ask students to describe how they feel in one word again and share opinions. Then ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this fair? Why / why not? • How does this statistic link to power? Justice? Scarcity? (Share definitions on next page if needed) • Which people are worst affected by this statistic? Why? <p>Repeat the activity for the remaining statistics. Then ask students to decide which statistic is the worst news for poverty. If students disagree, they should try to persuade each other to change their minds.</p> <p>Ask: what effect has the pandemic had on poverty? Why?</p>	15 mins
Solutions 	<p>Ask students to read the opinions in ACTIVITY FOUR in groups of four. Each person should choose one opinion and argue that it is the best solution to reduce poverty. Ask students to make a note of the strongest and weakest arguments they hear. Can students think of any other solutions?</p> <p>Ask: who is responsible for helping people living in poverty?</p> <p>Give students two minutes to work through the SPEEDY SKILLS REVIEW.</p>	15 mins

KEY NEWS CONCEPTS DEFINITIONS



POWER

The ability of an individual or group to influence others and control their actions. Some people have more power than others. There are many different reasons for this.



JUSTICE

Doing something that makes a situation fair. For example, when someone is punished for committing a crime or given something to make up for unfair treatment.



SCARCITY

When there isn't enough of something to meet everybody's needs. For example, if there is only enough food for one person but more people are hungry, then food is scarce.

KEYWORDS POSTERS

- 01 -

POVERTY

= when someone does not have enough money to meet their basic needs, such as food, clean water, clothing and shelter.



KEYWORDS POSTERS

- 02 -

POVERTY LINE

= the amount of money needed for people to meet their basic needs.



If people have enough money they are
above the poverty line.

If people do not have enough money they are
below the poverty line.

KEYWORDS POSTERS

- 03 -

INCOME

= the amount of money someone
has to live off.



KEYWORDS POSTERS

• 04 •

STEREOTYPE

= when people wrongly assume that everyone within a group is the same, for example, “all girls like the colour pink”.



CHAT MAT

ACTIVITY ONE

THREE-DIGIT NUMBER		
NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS		

MONTHLY LIVING COSTS PER PERSON	A = FOOD	\$25
	B = RENT	\$110
	C = WATER AND ELECTRICITY	\$95
NUMBER CRUNCHING...	Total Living Cost (A + B + C) X Number of Family Members = ?	
	What's Left? Income - Total Living Costs = ?	

ACTIVITY TWO

- //1 Some people in rich countries live in poverty.
- //2 People end up in poverty because they are bad with money.
- //3 It is obvious when someone is living in poverty.
- //4 Poverty is caused by people choosing not to get a job.

ACTIVITY THREE

- 1 – The covid-19 pandemic could cause 25 million people to lose their jobs around the world. Lower-paid workers are most likely to lose their jobs.
- 2 – Generally, people who are better educated earn more money. School closures because of covid-19 have disrupted 1.6 billion learners, with poor countries the worst affected.
- 3 – During the pandemic, governments in poor countries have given their citizens an average of \$4 per person to support them. Governments in rich countries have given their citizens an average of \$695 per person.

ACTIVITY FOUR

"Rich countries should support poorer countries financially."

"Governments should give more support to people living in poverty in their countries."

"Governments should improve education and create more jobs."

"Rich people should support poorer people financially."

SPEEDY SKILLS REVIEW

The world needs to get rid of poverty. Which of these skills will be the most important to achieve this?

Challenge: can you argue for each one?

