

ACTIVITY ONE**INTRODUCING GOALS – PERSONAL AND GLOBAL****AGE RANGE**

10-18

AIM

To help students understand goal setting and encourage them to set their own goals; to introduce the Millennium Development Goals and begin discussion about the issues behind them.

SET UP

A copy of the 'Millennium Development Goals' handout for each student.

ACTIVITY

1. Ask pupils to call out what they think of when they hear the word 'goal'.
(They may say 'soccer', encourage them to think about what it means to score a goal – something the players are trying to do; what they have set out to achieve.)
2. Have students consider their own goals. Get them to look at different aspects of their lives and all they want to achieve: school, family, friends, sport, hobbies... what do they want to do or be?
3. Ask them to prepare a 'charter' of their goals. By when should each goal be achieved? Have them draw a time line to illustrate this. They should add some details about how they will achieve their goals, what steps they'll take towards them and when.
4. Encourage students to be specific. If they have a goal to 'be famous' – how will they know when they have achieved that? If one of their goals is to 'be rich' – how much money are they aiming for? One of the criticisms of the MDGs is that some of the targets are too vague, for example the target to have achieved a 'significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers'.
5. Have a class discussion around why people set goals. Ask students to talk in pairs or small groups about their goals and what could get in the way of achieving them. If they don't achieve them will they 'fail'? What other reasons are there that may mean they don't reach their goals?
6. Split students into groups of four or five and encourage them to consider what goals their school should have, goals that Aotearoa New Zealand should have and finally, goals that the world should have. Ask students to brainstorm the sort of future they would like to see, by thinking about what goals would need to be set and achieved to make the world that way. Have each group decide on eight goals for the world. Share these goals with the class.

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7. Explain what the MDGs are, how they came about, and that the international community has pledged to achieve all the goals by 2015 (see MDG onepager, or copy it for the class). How old will the students be in 2015? Will the world be a better place then?
 8. Ask them to work in small groups and give each group a copy of the MDGs; get them to arrange the MDGs according to how important they think each goal is. Put two groups together and have them compare results.
 9. As a class consider:
 - Which MDGs are the most important? Why?
 - Who did you have in mind when you made your decision?
 - Do you think that everyone everywhere would agree with your conclusions?
 - Why or why not?

The aim of the ranking is to get people to engage with the goals and to discuss them together. You could tell them that specialists think all the goals are important because they affect each other, and they can't be achieved independently – as further exercises will show.

ACTIVITY TWO

WHAT IS POVERTY?

AGE RANGE:

13-18

AIM:

This activity encourages students to critically consider the assumptions given to definitions by looking at the limitations of measuring money when discussing poverty.

SET UP:

A copy of the 'Definition of Poverty' handout for each student.

DISCUSSION STATEMENTS:

'Ending poverty requires knowing how poverty is created... the poor are not those left behind, they are the ones who were pushed out and excluded from access to their own wealth and resources... The elevation of the market and man-made capital has led to the neglect and destruction of ecology... without clean water, fertile soils and crop and plant diversity, human survival is not possible... people do not die for lack of incomes. They die for lack of resources.'

- Vandana Shiva, physicist, environmental activist, eco-feminist and author.

'Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.'

- Nelson Mandela, 2005.

ACTIVITY:

1. Ask students to consider whether they are rich or poor.
2. Discuss how they measured whether they were rich or poor.
3. Challenge students to write a one-sentence definition of 'poverty'.
4. Have students work in small groups to decide whether they agree (or how much they agree) with the following statements:
 - a. Poverty has nothing to do with money.
 - b. Poverty can mean something different in different circumstances.
 - c. Poverty is about not having any control over your life.
 - d. You cannot be happy and poor at the same time.
 - e. Millionaires experience no form of poverty.
 - f. New Zealand is a wealthy country. That means no one here is poor.
 - g. Fiji is a poor country. That means no one there is rich.
5. Give each student a copy of the 'definitions of poverty' handout. Have them read it silently.
6. In pairs ask students to consider the different ways poverty can be defined. Have each pair list the strengths and weaknesses of each definition.
7. Students can research other ways people measure poverty and quality of life: The Human Development Index (HDI), Gross National Happiness, Child Development Index, Physical Quality-of-life Index, Happy Planet Index, Living Planet Index, Gender Empowerment Measure, and the Gini Coefficient. Wikipedia is a good place for them to start.
8. Have students create their own measure of poverty – what would they include? Income? Life expectancy? Environmental impact? Democracy? Education? Employment? Encourage them to think creatively and use a combination of indicators.
9. After some discussion around their measure of poverty, divide the class into groups of three. Half of the groups will design a poster explaining their measurement of poverty. The other half of the groups will design a poster explaining their measurement of wealth. Bring the two types of posters together for comparison and discussion around what is poverty and what is wealth.

DEBRIEF:

As a class look at the initial seven statements they were asked and their reactions to them. Has anyone's opinion changed since considering other definitions of poverty?

DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY

Do you have a flash cellphone? Are you allowed to go out late at night? Do you help other people through charity?

There are different measures of what it means to be 'poor'.

The word 'poverty' is often used in terms of money, measuring how much income an individual (or country) has. The World Bank uses the following terms to measure poverty:

- Extreme (or absolute) poverty: Less than US\$1 a day.
- Moderate poverty: Less than US\$2 a day.
- Relative poverty is based on a person's position in comparison to others in their society.
- GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita: The total income created in a country divided by its population, showing the average income of people in one year.

The average weekly income (for a household of four people) in Aotearoa NZ is NZ\$827.

Do you think this is a lot of money? Is it enough to live on? How much do you earn? What would you do with \$827 a week?

Monetary definitions of poverty are increasingly being challenged. The United Nations Development Programme defines 'human poverty' as 'a denial of choices and opportunities for living a tolerable life'.

This includes a lack of choice and opportunities in a person's life which are basic to human development: living a long life, receiving medical care and treatment when required, being well-nourished, leading a fulfilling life, being educated, having a reasonable standard of living, living in freedom, having self-respect and dignity and participating in the community.

While parts of this list can be bought, such as food ('to be well-nourished') and medical treatment ('to live a long life'), others, such as leading a fulfilling life and living in freedom, are not necessarily about money.

In 1968, United States Presidential Nominee Robert Kennedy, spoke of the limitations of judging a country's wealth by their GDP:

'Gross Domestic Product measures neither the health of our children, the quality of their education, nor the joy of their play. It measures neither the beauty of our poetry, nor the strength of our marriages. It is indifferent to the decency of our factories and the safety of our streets alike. It measures neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our wit nor our courage, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country. It measures everything in short, except that which makes life worth living, and it can tell us everything about our country except those things that make us proud to be part of it.'

Vandana Shiva, who has worked as a physicist, eco-feminist, environmental activist and author, has spoken of the 'poverty of balance' experienced by people in the minority world:

'The North is affluent in economic terms, but not in human terms. People in the North have lost a spiritual connection to the Earth and have become alienated from their fellow citizens. They take drugs for everything. Consumerism has not bought the North more in human terms.'

Do you agree with these quotes? Why or why not?

A DIFFERENCE OF PERCEPTION

Jane got a week off from her busy job so she could go on her first holiday in five years. She decided to try a cruise around the Pacific Islands as she thought she'd get to meet lots of other people on the cruise. She had her own cabin with ocean views and took every opportunity to hop off the boat and explore the islands.

At one stop she landed on a particularly beautiful island. She marveled at the pristine beaches and enjoyed a swim in the ocean in the warm sunshine. She went for a walk along the beach and saw some small children playing. They had bare feet and worn clothing and they were laughing as they played a game involving an old plastic bag and a few sticks.

She felt sorry for them. They have no toys, no decent clothes, and she thought they should be in kindergarten. Jane went to the nearest shop and brought a train set. She gave it to the mother of one of the children.

The mother took the train set out of the cardboard wrapping and put it on the shelf in her kitchen. She gave the packaging to the children and they added the cardboard to their game.

What do you think?

ACTIVITY THREE

INTERCONNECTED GOALS

AGE RANGE:

13-18

AIM:

This activity encourages students to think about the links between different MDGs.

SET UP:

Students will need to research the goals further; references from this resource are a good starting point.

DISCUSSION STATEMENT

'Addressing the MDGs is not enough. We must recognise the interconnectedness of extreme weather patterns, empty grain and rice storage houses, and poverty.'

– Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations.

EXPLANATION

1. Split the class into eight groups. Assign each group one of the MDGs.
2. Give students a chance to discuss the goal in their groups, discuss what it means, what the targets are, and how they might be achieved.
3. Allow each group time to research their goal and the targets further. This may involve looking at what progress has been made, what criticisms that goal has generated, and some of the success stories around the goal.
4. Once groups have a solid understanding of their goal, encourage them to think about the relationship between their goal and targets, and the other seven goals and targets. The eight MDGs are interconnected: success in one area will have a positive effect on the other goals, and failure in one area will affect progress in others.

If students have limited understanding of the other goals at this point, it may be a good idea to have each group deliver a short presentation about their goal to the class.

5. Get students to come up with a creative visual way of showing the relationship between their goal and the other MDGs. How could slum living affect healthcare? How could education affect infant mortality?
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DEBRIEF:

Quickly outline some of the criticisms of the MDGs. As a class discuss what is missing from the eight goals, and how the achievement of these eight goals will have positive spin offs in other aspects of people's lives which the goals do not cover.

ACTIVITY FOUR

CARTOON ANALYSIS

AGE RANGE:

13-18

AIM:

This activity aims to teach students literacy of images by analyzing a cartoon, and then creating their own cartoon linked to one of the MDGs.

SET UP:

A copy of the cartoon, paper and pens for each student.

DISCUSSION STATEMENT

'Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice.'

- Nelson Mandela

ACTIVITY:

1. Hand out a copy of the cartoon to everyone in the class.
 2. Give the students a few minutes to work independently and study the cartoon, analysing what they see.
 3. After they have had a chance to react to the cartoon, write the following questions on the board:
 - Facts: When you look at this cartoon what do you see?
 - Opinions: When you look at this cartoon what do you think?
 - Feelings: When you look at this cartoon what do you feel?
 4. Ask students to write three responses under each question.
 5. Join students up into small groups once they have completed this independently. Have them share their answers with each other and consider what message they think the cartoonist is trying to communicate.
 6. As a class discuss what's communicated through the cartoon. Is this done effectively? Why/why not?
 7. This may also be a good time to have a class discussion around another criticism of the MDGs; whether it is fair to focus on individual countries' or regions' 'success' or 'failure' in achieving the MDGs. The United Nations established the MDGs as a set of benchmarks to measure global progress, not individual countries or regions, yet in all evaluations the progress of individual countries is reported. Is the often reported idea that 'Africa is failing' useful?
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8. Once students have an understanding of what works/doesn't work in cartoons they can draw their own cartoon based on an element of the MDGs. This could be about a particular MDG, a success story, or a criticism.

Encourage students to think about something that has surprised or shocked them, and consider a way to effectively communicate how it made them think and feel through one image.

Try and make the cartoons as provocative, clear and simple as possible. Share the cartoons with the rest of the class or display them around the school.



Cartoon by GADO, from www.politicalcartoons.com

ACTIVITY FIVE**WHAT HAPPENS AFTER 2015?****AGE RANGE:**

13-18

AIM:

This activity aims to get students to think of what happens after the MDG target date of 2015. It encourages students to consider the world of their future and the impact they can have on it.

DISCUSSION STATEMENT

We are the first generation that can end poverty and we refuse to miss this opportunity.

ACTIVITY:

1. Have students imagine the year 2015. Get them to write a paragraph about 2015, ask them to consider how old they'll be, what they hope to be doing, what the world will look like to them.
2. The MDGs have a deadline of 2015. In small groups have students debate whether they think the MDGs will be met. Why or why not?
3. Have students write eight goals for the fifteen years following 2015, to be completed by 2030. They may base this list on the assumption that all the MDGs are met, that only some are met, or that none are met.
4. In small groups have students share their goals with each other.
5. Ask each group to decide on eight goals between them. Then have each group create two or three targets for each of their goals to assess whether it is being met.
6. Have each group present their goals and targets to the class. Encourage students to debate and defend their goals, get the whole class to agree on eight goals and 16-24 indicators for their goals for 2015-2030.

DEBRIEF:

Who do the students think are responsible for achieving these, or other, goals?

This activity is an excellent introduction to the idea of taking action by encouraging students to educate and empower themselves to make a difference to the world they live in.