

Teaching Global Issues



Note – *This is part of a Booklet on Global Education with a Research and Writing assignment on global issues,*

[Global Education: Research & Writing on Global Issues](#)

This includes a student assignment for researching and writing about a global issue, though any particular issue can be chosen. It also includes assignment guidelines, learning objectives, class and semester ideas, question and note-taking worksheets, critical thinking questions and discussion guidelines, writing guidelines and rubric, general objectives and themes in global education, and an extensive outline of global issues for research and study.

from **EducationForWorldSolutions.org**

a non-profit website, free of ads, dedicated to global education on world issues, with hundreds of links to information websites

For the classroom

This research & writing assignment, along with its learning objectives, can be used for classes, online courses, or independent studies.

In some class sessions the teacher could present lessons and guided practice, in order to help students develop *key skills* in – identifying important ideas, analyzing, evaluating, note-taking, summarizing, synthesis, as well as vocabulary and key concepts.

In other class sessions the students could read a teacher-selected section from an online information source, proceeded then by a class discussion about the issue and information, as well as about how this information is presented and organized by the website.

Class discussions about an issue could include: the problems and those affected, along with possible solutions. Exercises in critical thinking and socratic questioning can also be integrated into class discussions.

[see the book pages on 'inquiry & discussion']

Small-group work is also an option, which could be interspersed with individual project time. Once a global topic is generally introduced, students could be grouped into *specific* issue-tables, for the purposes of small-group discussions and group collaborative assignments.

In summary, some of the class time (or some days) could be allotted for class lessons, showing examples of issue-researching and note-taking, with guided skills practice and class discussions, while at other times students could work on their individual projects or in small groups.

Teachers can also add in interdisciplinary lessons involving science, math, geography, ethnic studies, economics and government, along with lessons in critical reading and expository writing.

Ideas for a Semester or Year Course on *Global Issues*

Semester A – Global Issues Overview:

- First 2-3 weeks – an overview of Global Concepts and overview of 5 main Global Topics:
 - Basic Life Necessities for everyone
 - Human Rights & Justice
 - Conflict-resolution & Peace-building
 - Environmental Care & Stewardship
 - Sustainable Economics & Development
- Then, 3 weeks devoted to *each* of the 5 main topics (*covering next 15 weeks*)
- For each 3 week period, covering *one* of the main topics, the teacher picks 3 *subtopics* to focus on; thus one subtopic for each week
- Teacher also weaves in lessons and practice in:
 - researching and what to look for
 - how to read for information & relevance
 - critical thinking, questioning, evaluating, and reasoning
 - summary, synthesis, and writing skills
- Use the Research & Writing Assignment, the questions and worksheets, the teaching approaches and creative ideas
- Interdisciplinary/cross-curricular lessons can also be woven into any Global Issues unit; any research or study of global issues can involve science, math, geography, cultures, and other social study disciplines, as well as reading and writing

For each Topic/subtopic (for example: *ocean pollution*)

- The teacher picks 2-3 Information Websites to focus on, learn from, analyse, evaluate, and have students write about

In the beginning weeks, work as a class with these websites. Then later on in the semester, the class could divide into small groups with each focusing on a different website, then sharing their findings with the whole class.

- Teach helpful ways to research & learn
- Use note-taking and key-question worksheets
- Teach lessons on *how to* categorize, take notes, outline or map out what is presented:
 - recognizing main ideas, important facts, causes, implications, and suggested solutions
 - distinguishing between facts and normative statements
- On the last day of a topic focus, have students/class discuss and summarize main points of learning, inferred implications, student opinions, and creative solutions. This helps students remember, learn, and reason about issues.
- For an end of semester project, students can choose one topic-issue to study more in depth, also producing a final expository & persuasive essay.

Semester B could cover *different* subtopics or issues, especially looking for issue-*interconnections*, and also *discuss more* about personal values and responsible action. Semester B could be a time for more *individual* choice and study, or it could be a time for *small group* research projects. Projects can also integrate aspects of science, math, geography, cultures, econ, politics, etc.

More class ideas

- build a class community of global inquiry and concern
- discuss current events/news relevant to a global issue
- learn from people experienced in international affairs
- learn from people directly involved in a global problem
- use interactive lessons: cultural story-telling, skits, songs
- role-play or debate different perspectives on an issue
- have students identify & critique a bias or stereotyping in a media source, a webpage, news report, video, picture
- as a class or in small groups, have students share & write their learning discoveries and ideas for positive change
- class project – create a bulletin board showing global and local groups working to solve a world problem or issue
- use tools of technology, internet, news, and social media
- integrate science, math, geography & other social studies

Ideas for student projects

- create a short news report on a global issue
- create a brochure or webpage – with information about a global problem with ideas for solution & citizen action
- create a display, art piece, video, skit, music, song
- research about organizations/groups that educate people about a particular global issue and their work to solve it
- share information and positive ideas on social media
- write to lawmakers, business leaders, or decision-makers

Teaching approach

- show your own passion about learning about global issues and engaging in global challenges
- teach and think-aloud with a global perspective, finding connections and relationships between global issues
- encourage global inquiry, interest, and world concern
- emphasize questions, discussion, thinking and reasoning
- teach students to question and how to think with reason
- be interested in each student's questions and thinking
- be curious about student ideas, opinions, and concerns
- encourage student choices and student-led activities
- be positive, hopeful, and optimistic about the future
- show open-mindedness for learning from a diversity of sources, people, organizations, and perspectives
- show respect for cultural diversity in class & in the world
- show concern for decisions & actions affecting the world
- show respect for each student's power to make positive contributions and to be catalysts for change in the world
- encourage ethical thinking and responsible action
- encourage positive social values such as cooperation, collaboration, caring, sharing, and conflict-resolution
- provide examples of compassionate & responsible action
- provide opportunities for participating in positive change
- collaborate with other teachers, schools or organizations