Questions & Note-taking

Worksheets

**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 includes assignment guidelines, learning objectives, class ideas, question and note-taking worksheets, critical thinking questions, 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](http://EducationForWorldSolutions.org)
a non-profit website, free of ads, dedicated to global education on world issues, with hundreds of links to information websites
Introductory Questions

1) What are some world problems, or global issues, you already know about?

2) What do you already know about this problem or topic?

3) Which of these problems are you most interested in, or most concerned about?

4) Why do you care about this, or why is this a concern?

5) What are some questions you would like to explore?
Think-About Questions

to help students think about their concerns, values, beliefs,
and to help them choose their specific research

• Values –
  ◦ What are some values important in your life?
    (examples: safety, peace, health, freedom)
  ◦ What do you believe is important in life,
    for the world, or for your community?
  ◦ What circumstances do you wish for others?

• Concerns –
  ◦ What are some problems in the world that you are concerned about?
  ◦ Why are you concerned about each of these?
**Ideals –**
- Imagine an ideal world
  - write down some descriptions of your ideal world

- How is life for people in the world?
  What is good in their lives?

- How do people get along?
  How do nations and cultures get along?

- How do people treat the shared environment and the Earth?

**Needed Action –**
- What is an important solution needed in the world?

- Write this out as a sentence –
  *We need to (or we should) ... “________________________”*
  example: “We need to protect the oceans and stop pollution”
  example: “We should help to eliminate hunger in the world”

- Why is this needed?
  *(reasons can be practical or ethical)*
  example: “...because unpolluted oceans are needed for life”
  example: “need to end world hunger, because of compassion”
Researching a Global Issue

What is the Issue of your research?

Why are you interested in this? or why is this issue important?

Main problems at issue (state problem, along with a fact)
  1.
  2.
  3.

Related problems (or related causes, or related effects)
  1.
  2.
  3.

Main solutions suggested
  1.
  2.
  3.
Key Questions & Note-taking
This can be expanded to a 2 page question-sheet
(this can also be used as a question-guide for the research & writing)

Problems and Concerns
List significant facts about the problem and concerns about it

Causes and Effects
List the various causes of the problem, any understood connections between the causes, and the various consequences

Values and Principles
Why are the authors concerned about this problem?
What values or principles are important to them?

Solutions and Strategies
What solutions and strategies are proposed for dealing with this?
What are people trying to do? How are people trying to help?

Anything accomplished already with success?

Global–Local Connections and Organizations
How does this problem or issue affect us locally or nationally?

How can I personally help in a positive solution?

List any suggested local connections, ways to get involved, or organizations you could join, participate in, or work for
Components of Research & Thinking

- Researching and summarizing FACTS
- Investigating and Inferring CAUSES
- Thinking about and expressing VALUES
- Researching and summarizing SOLUTIONS
- Summarizing and evaluating DISAGREEMENTS (*arguments or reasons against the solutions*)
- Personal OPINIONS and CONCLUSIONS
Questions to explore & answer

Students answer these questions, which can then be used to organize the research essay.
Students should also make note of the sources.

Researching & Summarizing FACTS

What kinds of facts about this problem are important?
– write 3-10 relevant facts gathered from your sources.

Here is just an example: (world hunger)
How many children are in daily hunger?
What regions have the most hunger?

Investigating & Inferring CAUSES

1. What are some causes of this problem?
   (for example: droughts, poverty, bad-planning)

2. What situations or other problems are connected to this?
   (use facts along with your own reasoning)

3. What human choices and actions are partly responsible?
Thinking about & Expressing VALUES

1. What ethical values lead you to seek an end to this problem?
   *(example: I care about others in the world and want to help them live)*

2. How does solving this problem make the world better?

Researching & Summarizing SOLUTIONS

1. How can this problem be solved?

2. What are some key steps to solve this problem?
   *(kinds of solutions – political or economic, scientific or technological)*

3. What can people do to help solve this problem?
   *(by way of personal action, politics, social media, or?)*
Summarizing and Evaluating DISAGREEMENTS
(arguments or reasons against the solutions)

1. What are some facts or solutions that others question or disagree with?

2. Are these disagreements reasonable or not?

3. Are their values different?

4. Are there any facts or solutions that you question? and why?

Personal OPINIONS & CONCLUSIONS

Think about and make notes of any opinions, feelings, or conclusions you have while researching or reading.

Also make note here of any facts, quotes or sentences that you think are especially important points, truths, or concerns.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researching &amp; Summarizing FACTS</th>
<th>Researching &amp; Summarizing SOLUTIONS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigating &amp; Inferring CAUSES</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking about &amp; Expressing VALUES</td>
<td>Opinions &amp; Conclusions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes & References**
Explaining

After stating a problem, issue, solution, or belief, – then explain more about it, elaborate with more detail and give examples. The purpose of explaining is to improve the reader's understanding of an idea, a belief, an issue, a problem or solution.

• sharing what you know or understand, or what you have read
• informing others about a situation, problem, idea, or solution
• summarizing information to make it more easily understood
• elaborating on key aspects of a situation, problem, or issue
• describing the situation – the facts, causes, consequences
• clarifying one's reasoning, inferences, core beliefs, or values

Some important types of explaining

• Clarify or define the meaning of key terms
• Describe a situation, an example, or a discovered fact
• State the causes of a situation or problem
• State the effects, consequences, or implications
• State the reasons for a belief or a concern
• Answer the questions of: what is, why, how, and what for
What is a **Summary**

- identifying what is *most important* from the research, then stating this in fewer words and in your own words
- identifying the main ideas from a source of information, while ignoring irrelevant or excessive details
- main ideas are not the same as information details, yet some details can *support* the main ideas or proposed conclusions

What is **Synthesis**

- *combining & integrating* multiple ideas or types of facts, *organizing* it all in a logically connected and related manner, to produce a more comprehensive coherent understanding
- *simplifying* the combined information, without ignoring the complexities and nuances involved in the subject
- *combining & integrating* newly learned knowledge with prior knowledge, to form a larger interrelated understanding
- synthesis produces an *integrated & holistic* understanding of the topic or issue, with new insights and a wider perspective
- instead of just summarizing the main ideas & concerns from each source; synthesizing combines, integrates, and unifies these ideas, to create a more comprehensive exposition
- synthesis is a kind of summary that is especially *integrated, comprehensive, organized* and *united*; using multiple sources of information, multiple ideas and truths, to build a synthesis
What is Analysis – (the various aspects of analysis)

- inspecting thoroughly the presented information
- dividing a topic or issue into its various aspects (or sub-topics)
- finding connections, related causes & effects, and patterns
- finding meaning in the information, and comprehending what is being implied or inferred; it's not merely a list of facts
- determining what problems and facts are most important
- finding the important values or concerns, explicit or implicit
- removing excessive or unimportant details

Kinds of analysis & evaluation

Analysis and evaluation work together
( evaluation comes from analysis; analysis supports evaluation)

- evaluate the source's credibility, validity, and truthfulness – give reasons why you believe (or not) with this source
- check on the organization or author of the information
- evaluate the overall importance and usefulness of the presented information in each source
- compare & contrast different conclusions or proposals
- evaluate the logic of an argument, inference, or proposal
- recognize over-generalizations and hasty conclusions
- distinguish reasonable conclusions from unreasonable
- distinguish between facts, inferences, and opinions
- identify the implicit values & concerns in the information
- uncover any cultural, economic, or ideological interests
Graphic organizers for research and pre-writing

Here are 2 online organizer tools, intended more for younger grades yet could also be useful for high school students:

- Persuasion Map
- Online popplet-maker

Here’s a printed-out web organizer

Name ___________________________________ Date _____________________

Cluster/Word Web 3

Write details about your topic in the circles.
**Critical Thinking Worksheet**  
*(Facts, Conclusions, and Reasoning)*

**IMPORTANT** – Students must First Read the Lesson on Facts, Conclusions, and Reasoning.

**Assignment** – from an article or website, write down one of their conclusions and related fact(s), then make an attempt to explain their reasoning. Do this as best you can, because the author may not have explicitly stated their connective reasoning. Then, think of and write down a different possible conclusion – based on these same facts.

In the narrow columns, write down your 'rating' [a, b, c, or d] (see back-page for what a 'rating' is)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conclusion or inference, implication</th>
<th>Fact (or facts) to support the conclusion</th>
<th>Connective Reasoning how does this conclusion follow from the facts? OR explain how it does not follow from the given facts</th>
<th>Alternative Conclusion give a different possible conclusion – based on these same facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion 1 –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusion 2 –</td>
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Facts, Conclusions, and Reasoning

In articles, news, or in other media communications the author will state a number of conclusions, or inferences, which can appear to be facts, but these statements are only the author's opinion, or what they believe is true, as based upon certain facts or evidence. So in critical thinking the reader needs to distinguish between facts and the author's conclusions (or their opinions about what is true). The reader needs to identify each stated fact and also identify each stated conclusion that the author believes is 'true' (or is telling you 'this is true'). Then, once the reader has separated facts and conclusions, the next step is to critically examine the reasoning of each conclusion (i.e., 'this is true'), to see if the stated facts reasonably lead to the author's conclusion, or see if the author's conclusion is truly based on the stated facts.

Thus, the reader is asked to identify and distinguish **three basic parts** in any article or webpage of information: (1) facts/evidence (2) conclusions/beliefs (3) reasoning/logic which connects these facts with these conclusions.

Also, the reader must remember that the connective-reasoning (between facts and conclusions) is often hidden or unstated, and this is sometimes because there is no connective reasoning or the conclusion is deceptive. The critical reader needs to think about whether a certain conclusion is reasonable (and based on the facts) or not, and this is the most difficult part of critical thinking.

The reader will need to decide (or judge) whether a stated conclusion (or implication, or prediction, or inference) is either: *(in the worksheet one of the following [a, b, c, or d] will be your 'rating' for the reasoning behind any stated conclusion)*

(a) reasonable and sufficiently supported by the facts, (b) unreasonable (not sufficiently supported by the facts), (c) partially plausible (or possible) but not very probable, or (d) not necessarily true; because an alternative conclusion is equally plausible or more plausible. Note that in critical thinking it is useful to think of 'plausible alternative conclusions' based on the stated facts, for these alternatives will prove that a conclusion is not necessarily true.

Also remember that a stated fact might not be a real fact; for it could be false, made-up, or hearsay. Thus, the stated 'facts' may need to be verified by checking its source. But in this assignment, students can assume the truth of stated facts.