

Tools For Solidarity

Relative Poverty

Education For Sustainable
Development Session 5



Objectives

- Revise what poverty means

N.B. For an introduction to the topic of poverty see session 2 which is available to download from the Tools For Solidarity (TFS) website.

- Foster an understanding of the causes of relative poverty
- Introduce the notions of equality and equity and the difference between them
- Encourage empathy and problem solving

Materials Required

- Learning about Relative Poverty (Session 5) Slideshow - available to download from the TFS website
- Walking Debate Statements and Maria's Birthday Scenario - available to download from TFS website under Session 5: Materials
- cups / containers and beans / counters for the vote activity
- scrap paper

Session 5 Outline

Revision (Slides 1-2)

Slide 1: Learning about Relative Poverty

- ask pupils what they can remember about TFS

Slide 2: 2 Types of Poverty

- revise poverty: "Can you give us a definition for poverty? What are the 2 types of poverty we learned about before? *Extreme* and *relative*. What are the four basic needs? Food, water, shelter and something to keep us warm."

"Does everyone have all the basic needs? No. We can say that those who don't have the 4 basics are in extreme poverty.

If we have all the basic needs but can't afford much more we are in relative poverty."

Walking Debate (Slide 3)

Slide 3: Decision Making...

- You will need the Walking Debate Statements and the Maria's Birthday Scenario. You will also need space for the children to move from one side of the room to the other.
- Set up the walking debate activity: "Everyone stand up and come into the middle of the room. I will read a sentence. If you agree move over to the right side of the room. If you don't agree move over to the left side of the room. If you are unsure you can stay in the middle."
- Read statements and ask for reasons for some of the opinions indicated.



- Introduce Maria's Birthday: "Listen carefully to the last part of the decision making activity. You'll hear a short story."

"If you think everyone should bring in a little extra money, move to the right. If you think everyone should contribute the same amount, move to the left."

Problem Tree Activity (Slides 4 and 5)

Slide 4: Reasons

- Divide the class into 4/5 groups. Give each group a scrap piece of paper. "In your groups, think about some reasons why Orla's parents can't afford the money for the birthday present. Write the different reasons on your group's piece of paper."
- Monitor each group. At the end of the group discussion time, take an answer from each group and add it to slide 4.
- Elicit reasons / causes for relative poverty such as: low paid job, debt, cost of living and necessary expenses, no savings, poor health, disability, illness, bereavement in the family, robbery / fraud, fire, natural disaster, addiction.

"Do you think it's Orla's fault that she doesn't have the money for the present?"

Concentration Game

- Play a 5 minute concentration game of your choice.

Problem Tree Activity (Slides 4 and 5)

Slide 5: Solutions

- For this step children can work in the same groups they were in for the previous 'Reasons' step. They can use the other side of their scrap paper.

"You are going to work in the same groups, but this time write some solutions to the problem. What could the rest of the class do to help Orla? What solutions can you think of?" N.B. At this point you can prepare the cups and counters for the vote concerning why people are poor.

- Monitor each group. At the end of the group discussion time, take an answer from each group and add it to slide 5.
- Elicit ideas such as the following: make a present or a birthday card, have a fundraiser, e.g. lemonade stand, buy a cheaper present (in a charity shop for example), organise a party, others pay extra, sing happy birthday, do some artwork / drawing.

"Do you think this scenario could happen here in Belfast? Remember the roots of the tree – do you think many other people have some of these problems?"



Why are People Poor? (Slides 6 and 7)

Slide 6: Why are People Poor Vote

- The 7 cups should be lined up at the front of the class with their respective labels from slide 7, e.g. 'they are not very intelligent', 'they are unlucky' and so on. Explain that on the next slide there are some statements about people in poverty. Pupils should think about which statements they agree with. They'll have 2 votes. They can vote for 2 different statements using their counters / beans or they can put 2 counters in 1 cup if they feel strongly about a statement.

Equality and Equity (Slide 8)

- Discuss slide 8: "What are the differences between the two images? Which do you think is fairer?"

"In the left hand picture they all receive the same thing. Do you think it is usually fair when everyone receives the same thing? Why / why not?"

"In the right hand picture they are receiving what they need instead of all receiving the same thing. This is a bit like if the classmates decide to bring in a bit of extra money for Orla. Do you think it seems fair?"

Results of the Vote

- Go back to slide 7. Read out the results of the vote. Ask for opinions about some of the statements. Ask the pupils to remember what they voted for in case they change their mind at the end of Session 6 (the next session).

Where in the World are People Poor? (Slide 9)

- Show slide 9: "Look at the map. Where in the world are people poor? What about in Northern Ireland / in Ireland? What about in Belfast? Remember we talked about Maria's birthday."

"Can anyone tell me the two types of poverty we talked about? What is the difference between them?"

What are the four basic needs?"

Would you Survive in India? (Slides 10 and 11)

- Slide 10: "There are poor people everywhere in the world but we are going to imagine that we live in India, in a city called Kolkata. Could anyone point out India on the map?"
- Slide 11: "What do you think children in India would be doing at the moment? They'd be at school. They'd be working."

"Next week you're going to imagine that you are all working in India, but we'll talk about it more then. For next week – find out what currency (money) people use in India."

Conclusion (Slide 12)