**CURRENT EVENT UNIT – POVERTY**

**DAY ONE:** Introducing Poverty

*Materials Needed:*

Blank white paper – one sheet per student

Markers

Copies of worksheet #1 – one per student

Copies of worksheet #2 – one per student

The focus today is on understanding what poverty is.

***Sponge Activity*** – have students write the word “Poverty” in the middle of a blank sheet of white paper. Have the students think of images when they hear the word “Poverty”. Have them write down words to describe those images or descriptive words around the word “Poverty” on their sheet. Have the students discuss their images.

***What is Poverty?***

Poverty is defined as a person’s inability to access basic needs for survival.

***Three-Income Groups Activity***– divide the class into three groups – the low-income, middle-income, and high-income groups. The high - income group should have 15% of your students, the middle-income group should have 30% and your low-income group should have 55% of your students. The high-income group should stand at one end of the class. The middle-income group should sit in desks in the middle. The low-income group should sit on the floor in the front of the class.

Once the class is divided into the three income groups read the following to the class:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/poverty2000/space.gif | http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/poverty2000/space.gif | Everyone on this earth has the same basic needs; it is only our circumstances that are different. As we gathered today, you were given your lot in this world that has been created. Look around, as you can see that equality and balance don’t exist here.  It is important to notice that no one section of this room represents one country. Every country around the world has people who fall into the income groups represented today.  Now, I want to introduce the three segments of the world to you.  (Move near the high-income group)  This group represents 15 percent of the world’s population with a per capita income of $8,900 or more. As a group, your income group is able to afford a nutritious daily diet. You have access to the best medical care. You were born destined to go to school; the only uncertainty is how many years will you study after high school.  As part of this income group your family has access to credit and money that most others do not. You and your family live in comfortable and secure housing. Your parents own at least one car, and probably have two televisions. When your family takes their annual two-week vacation, your parents don’t worry about their jobs disappearing.  It’s a good life because you and your family have access to everything you need and security to enjoy it.  (Move near the middle-income group)  This group represents roughly 30 percent of the world’s population. Your parents earn between $725 and $8,900 a year. The levels of access and security you and your family enjoy vary greatly. You are the folks who live on the edge. It would take losing only one harvest to drought, or a serious illness, to throw you and your family into poverty.  Your parents may work as day laborers, domestic help, or perhaps as migrant workers. You may go to school - for a few years anyway - especially if you are a boy. Your parents were born into this harsh life and hope that you will have an opportunity for a better one.  Your family probably owns no land and lives in overcrowded housing with shoddy plumbing. Your village or town offers electricity, but your family must ration their use. If only your parents could get better skills training, they might have a chance at a higher-paying job. Maybe, if your family is lucky, your parents can find a way to join a community credit group to get access to a small loan.  So, like everyone stuck in the middle, your family feels squeezed, and they just hope that the bottom doesn’t fall out from their world.  (Move near the low-income group)  This group represents the majority of the world’s population - roughly 55 percent. The average income is $725 a year - about $2 a day - although many of your family’s earn much less. Most of you are from poor countries such as Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Haiti, or Cambodia.  Every day is a struggle for your family to meet their basic needs. Finding food, water, and shelter can consume your day. For many mothers, it would not be uncommon to walk five to 10 miles to find clean water; spend several more hours working in the fields and of course taking care of the children. School is a luxury few of you will ever experience. Most of you girls don’t even bother to dream about school. Healthcare is out of the question, so for most families death is all too familiar, with families expecting to lose two to three of their children before they turn five.  Many of your family’s are homeless or living in structures so flimsy that a hard rain or strong wind becomes life threatening. Many of you are frequently hungry. It is quite likely that your family doesn’t get the minimum number of calories their hardworking life requires.  If your parents do work, they are probably tenant farmers or landless day workers. They reap few benefits from the crops they work on; they would prefer to grow food for you to eat themselves.  (To the entire group)  No one can choose the circumstances into which they are born.  (Turn to the low-income group and ask any girl to stand.)  You are Jant Omar. You live in Zaire, Africa. You live a hard life. As a girl at the age of 13, you were told you had to quit school to help your mother find clean water and food each day. You don’t think this is fair, because your older brother still attends school, but your mother is sick and needs help with the daily chores to feed the family. You feel hopeless about your situation, and don’t see a bright future ahead for yourself.  (Turn to the low-income group and ask any boy to stand.)  You are Jose Martin. Your dad was hurt today at his job picking coffee, which allowed him to provide the basics for your family in El Salvador. He does not have enough money to go and see a doctor and he is worried about where the money will come if he cannot work while recovering. You are also worried about what will happen to your family if your father cannot work.  (Turn to the low-income group and ask any girl to stand.)  You are Anna Hernandez. You live down the street from Jose and your parents eke out a living selling fruit grown in their yard at a local market each day. Because Jose and many of your parents customers have been laid off from the nearby coffee plantation they are buying less from your parents, and they won’t be able to afford enough corn for your family.  (Turn to the middle-income group and ask any boy to stand.)  You are Sam Baker. You live in a big city in America with your mom who works at a clothing factory. You have all your basic needs met, but your mom never feels quite secure. She would like to buy your own car but can’t seem to save enough money ever and the bank won’t give her a loan.  (Turn to the middle-income group and ask any girl to stand.)  You are Katrina Vaclavkova. You live in the Czech Republic. Your mother is a nurse and father is an accountant. You are able to buy clothes, music and other things that you want. Your family lives in a nice apartment. You attend a good school and all of your needs are met.  (Turn to the high-income group and ask any boy to stand.)  You are Edward Simpson. You live in England with your family. Your parents both have very high-paying jobs and your and your 3 sisters are more than provided for. Your family lives in a big house, has three cars, and a housekeeper. You receive a weekly allowance from your parents.  (Address the entire class)  This is just a brief glimpse at how people live around the world. As we look into the different origins of poverty, I would like you to think about these characters that you have just been introduced to.  *Adapted from Oxfam International - Hunger Banquet* |

***Discussion*** – Have the students discuss some of the following questions: Do we have people living in poverty in Glenview? How do we know? What have been your direct experiences seeing poverty? How does the media portray conditions of poverty? What assumptions or judgments do we often make about individuals living in poverty?

***Activity – Needs/Wants*** – have the class to discuss the difference between needs and wants. Have the class divide up into small groups Have the group make a chart listing their top five “needs” for survival and the top five things they “want” in life. Students should rank order their lists. Have small groups share their lists with the rest of the class.

***Group Work*** – ***Needs/Wants***– have students stay in their small groups and complete Worksheet #1. After student groups have completed the worksheet, have the large group discuss the following: Describe the long-term effects of poverty. What would happen to a family if they lived in poverty for years? Even generations? Is society doing enough to help those living in poverty? What groups are responsible for helping? How many Americans do you think are living in poverty? Have students turn in their group worksheet for credit.

**DAY TWO AND THREE:**

*Materials:*

World map – one per student

Colored Pencils

Copies of narratives – one per student (url below)

Copy of study guide for students – one per student

Copies of Unit Project hand-out – one per student

Copies of the news article (url below) – one per student

Copies of worksheet (url below) – one per student

Copies of the table from Labor of Bureau Statistics (url below) – one per student

***Activity*** – ***World Maps -***  Distribute copies of a world map and some colored pencils. Ask students what parts of the world do they think have the largest poverty rates? Have them quickly color to show their guesses. Distribute Worksheet #2 – statistics on poverty. Have students discuss. Are they surprised by certain areas of the world? There is an optional set of discussion questions included.

***Individual work/homework*** – Hand out the worksheets that give the stories of Jason, Hellen, and Charlotte. – stories can be found here: <http://images.oambassadors.org/system/assets/0000/0082/OAmbassadors_HS_Poverty_WKS.pdf>

Have students read the stories and complete the worksheet for the next day in class. Study guide at bottom of unit.

Collect the worksheets of discussion questions on the three stories on poverty. Have students debrief about their thoughts. What were some of the items that students listed that they wanted to learn more about? (This can be brainstorming for you for extra activities or project ideas).

Assign a unit project – students may work in pairs or alone on this project. They have one week to complete the task. Students should inform you tomorrow of their choice of project and who they are working with (if applicable).

The focus of today’s lesson is to understand the statistics of domestic poverty in the US.

***Newspaper Activity/Discussion****:* Students should individually read the following article: “Rising economic tide lifts all boasts, census report shows.” <http://archives.cnn.com/2000/fyi/news/09/27/census.report/index.html>

Have the students discuss the article. Use some of the following questions as potential starters or develop into a worksheet. Sample worksheet attached.

* Who is reporting the information? How was the information gathered? What, if any variables, are missing? Does the conclusion directly follow the reported information? Does the report make sense? What does the report show regarding the poverty rate? How does the Census Bureau define its annual poverty level for a family of four? What did the 1999 data reveal about median incomes and racial groups? Which states showed an increase in median income level?
* Is the Census Bureau's definition of poverty an acceptable one in your opinion? Explain and give a more reasonable definition, if applicable. What do you think President Bill Clinton meant when he said, "The rising tide of the economy is lifting all boats." Do you believe this statement to be true for the people of the United States? Defend your position.

***Salary Calculation Activity****:* Have students calculate the annual salary of a worker who makes minimum wage and works forty hours a week (current minimum wage is $6.55 per hour – will be raised to $7.25 per hour on July 24, 2009)

**DAY FOUR:**

Have students declare their choices for a Unit project.

Today’s focus is still on domestic poverty – students will be working on understanding the federal poverty line.

*Materials:*

Federal Poverty Line Activity - <http://www.tolerance.org/images/teach/activities/tt_calculating_poverty.pdf> (one per student)

Table from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (either as a hand-out or project on a screen) - <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2007/may/oes_nat.htm#b00-0000>

***Federal Poverty Line Activity****:* Understanding the federal poverty line.

Report to the class: The federal poverty line is used to determine individuals' and families' eligibility for particular kinds of aid and services and also is an important benchmark that helps the nation know how many Americans are struggling financially each year, and over time.

In 2005, the federal government set the poverty line for a family of four at $19,874. The figure is based on food costs — the government identifies how much it should cost to feed a family of four for one year and then multiplies that number by three. The formula has been used for decades.

FYI – The 2009 federal poverty line for a family of four is $22,050. It is $10,830 for a single person.

What it fails to capture is this: In today's America, food expenses represent just one-fifth of the average household budget, not a third. Other costs — housing, health care, childcare and transportation — typically eat up larger portions of a family's budget.

Divide the students into small groups and have them complete the following worksheet based on this information:

<http://www.tolerance.org/images/teach/activities/tt_calculating_poverty.pdf>

The answers are found here:

<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?p=0&ar=875&pa=3>

After going over the answers, remind students that Remind students that the federal poverty line serves two primary purposes: 1) to establish eligibility (or ineligibility) of individuals and families for certain kinds of aid and services, and 2) to help the nation gauge the number of Americans who are struggling financially, in a given year and over time.

***Discussion Questions on the Federal Poverty Line:***

* Based on what we've learned, how likely is it that a family making $25,000 a year — an income above the poverty line — would struggle financially? Why? *(Very likely — we've learned that it could take anywhere from $30,744 to $41,754 for a family of four to make ends meet.)*
* What are some possible effects of the government underestimating the poverty line? *(Answers will vary, but may include: people who need aid and services won't get them; the government won't really know how many people are struggling; it paints a healthier economic picture than there really is.)*
* Why might the government be hesitant to change its formula for calculating the poverty line? *(Answers will vary, but may include: we're running a deficit, and don't have money to provide more aid; it's the way they've always done it; changing it would mean changing lots of government programs, and that would be cumbersome for a big bureaucracy like the federal government.)*
* Do you think the federal government should change the way it calculates the poverty line? Why? *(Answers will vary.)*

***Career and Wage Activity*** *–* Understanding diversity of careers and where salaries fall in comparison to the federal poverty line.

To help students understand that working people with all kinds of jobs can struggle financially or experience poverty, allow time for them to research the median wages of different professions.

Hand out the following table from the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

<http://www.bls.gov/oes/2007/may/oes_nat.htm#b00-0000>

The 2007 federal poverty line was $20,650 for a family of four to help drive discussion. Have student s discussed salaries that surprise them. What salaries can they find that are below the federal poverty line for this year?

**DAY FIVE –**

Continued focus on domestic poverty- how wealth is distributed

*Materials:*

One handout per grou p- <http://www.tolerance.org/images/teach/activities/tt_wealth_tables.pdf>.

White paper

Markers

***Art Activity*:**

Discuss the 1998 wage gap demonstration at the Washington Monument – here is a brief description:

In 1998, hundreds of people from around the country went to Washington, D.C., to lobby Congress about the wage gap — the disparity in wages between workers and corporate executives. While there, to raise public awareness about the issue, they descended on the Washington Monument — which stands 555 feet tall. The Monument, they told onlookers, represented CEO pay.

Organizers then placed a much, much smaller replica of the Washington Monument next to the real thing. The replica represented worker pay. In 2003, it would have stood just 16 inches tall, a ratio of 419 to one; the typical CEO's annual income was equivalent to the incomes of 419 people who worked for him or her.

Income, however, represents only a slice of the picture when it comes to poverty and economic inequality in the United States. To gain a true image, one must also look at other factors like debt, savings and assets.

\*\*\*\*\*Divide the class into small groups. Each group should get one of the hand-outs from the following pdf:

<http://www.tolerance.org/images/teach/activities/tt_wealth_tables.pdf>.

Each small group should analyze the graph/chart that they have been given. The students need to create a visual representation of the percentage represented on their chart. For example, students in NYC may opt to use the Brooklyn Bridge. The Brooklyn Bridge is 6972 feet long. If the Bridge represented stock ownership, the poorest 1% would own just 69.72 feet of it. Ideas for students in Chicago are the number of square feet in Lake Michigan, the height of the Sears Tower, or the number of seats in Wrigley Field. Students may need a computer to find what the mathematical representation of their marker or monument is. The students should attempt to draw their visual representation and “color” in (or somehow denote) the percentage from their chart. Have groups present their models to the class.

**DAY SIX:**

Allow students to finish their Art project from the day before. Have students present the projects to the class.

Have students watch the documentary hosted by Tim Robbins – “What’s Going On? Poverty in America”.

After the video, have students openly discuss their reactions to the film. Hand-out the attached worksheet for thoughts on a couple of key points of the movie (at bottom of lesson plan).

**DAY SEVEN:**

The focus switches today to global poverty. Today’s focus is poverty’s impact uniquely on children.

Today’s focus is on global poverty and its effect on children.

*Activity:* Hand out a copy of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Explanation of treaty:

In 1989, world leaders decided that children under 18 years of age often need special care that adults do not. The Convention is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate a full range of human rights such as civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for children.

The Convention is an international document negotiated by Member States at the United Nations. Every Member State of the United Nations has ratified (or adopted) the treaty except the United States and Somalia, who have only signed it.

The Convention offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development. By recognizing children's rights in this way, the Convention firmly sets the focus on the whole child.

Madeline Albright, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, signed the Convention in 1995. However, the United States Constitution requires that such documents receive a two-thirds approval by the Senate to be adopted. There are some articles in the Convention that the US Senate has yet to come to an agreement on.

Share some of these facts with the students:

 Every 43 seconds a child is born into poverty in the US.

 Every 53 minutes a child dies from causes related to poverty in the US.

 Today, one in ten families in America lives in poverty.

 Since 2000, the number of poor Americans has grown by more than 6 million to a total of 37 million.

 The U.S. Census Bureau defines poor families as those with cash incomes of less than $15,067 a year for a family of three - or $19,307 for a family of four.

 The official poverty rate in 2004 (the most current year for which figures are available) was 12.7 %, up from 12.5 % in 2003.

 On average, more than one out of every three Americans - 37 % of all people in the United States - are officially classified as living in poverty at least 2 months out of the year.

 Atlanta has the highest poverty rate with 48.1% poor people living below the poverty line. The number of Americans living in severe poverty - with incomes below half of the poverty line are estimated at around 15.6 million.

 Texas has the highest percentage (19.9%) of low income and uninsured children.

 The District of Columbia has the highest percentage (33.9%) of children under 18 living in poverty.

 The American Midwest and South saw the greatest numbers of people falling into poverty in 2004.

 In the Midwest and Northeast, 11.6 % of all people live in poverty, compared to 12.6 % for the West, and 14.1 for the South - the highest of all.

 Being homeless makes it extremely difficult to attend school regularly.

 41 % of homeless children attend two or more schools a year.

 Homeless children have higher rates of learning disabilities and emotional and behavioral problems.

 The average homeless family is a 27 year-old single mother with two children under the age of six.

 In 2002, 34.9 million people lived in households experiencing food insecurity - that is, not enough food for basic nourishment - compared to 33.6 million in 2001 and 31 million in 1999.

 Twelve million of the adult residents in the United States have been homeless at least once in their lives.

 Children in America have higher poverty rates than adults, and people 65 and over have higher chronic poverty rates and lower exit rates.

--Show video on the Convention of the Rights of the Child:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhdB2gdICiA&feature=related

--Working with the Convention on the Rights of the Child Treaty:

Hand out highlighters (or have students use their own). Have students highlight what articles of the treaty that are violated when children are living in poverty. Discuss what students highlighted and why.

(Answers: Sections 3, 6, 9, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, and 33)

**DAY EIGHT –**

Focus will continue on children in poverty – focus now turns to the Millenium Development Goals and specifically disease spread.

*Materials:*

--Copies of the “Global Polio Eradication” worksheet

--Butcher paper

--Markers

Child mortality in the developing world is a big concern. Every year, more than 10 million children die before the age of five from causes that are easily prevented in the developed world.

Of the 130 million children born in a year, two to three million will die from diseases that could have been prevented with a simple vaccine. These children lack access to vaccinations against the preventable diseases and illnesses that are killing children by the millions.

*Discussion -* Begin by asking students to share their own experience of immunization as young children. Do they know what they were vaccinated for and why?

Give facts abou t the disease and the North American polio epidemic of the mid-twentieth century. Visit this website for more information: <http://www.polio.com/?fa=learn/polio/conquer>. Use the map on this page to show areas of the world and progress on global polio eradication.

Show the YouTube Video on the interview with Steve Strickland and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmTXi4AmrWI>. Talk about the link between the eradication of polio and the development of the vaccine.

Discuss the availability of polio vaccines in other countries. Talk about the WHO and its role in the vaccine campaigns.

Progress on eradication – Number of cases in 1988 = 350,000. Number of cases in 2003 = 784. There are four polio hot spot countries – only six countries with confirmed cases.

More information: http://wwww.polioeradication.org/disease.asp

Handout the worksheet – “The Global Polio Eradication” worksheet – have students read the handout and individually answer the two discussion questions on the back. http://images.oambassadors.org/system/assets/0000/0062/OAmbassadors\_HS\_Poverty\_Activities.pdf

*Group Activity – Changes to WTO approach.*

Divide the class into groups of 3-4. Have groups identify two changes to the polio campaign that would make it more effective. Have the students write the changes as informal resolutions. Example resolution: The WHO will add an education component to the campaign to help dispel rumours of vaccination contamination. Have students write their group’s resolutions on butcher paper in front of the class. Discuss the resolutions when the groups are finished.

**DAY NINE:**

Today’s focus is on how poverty impacts education.

*Materials:*

Handout – “School Experience” - http://www.freethechildren.com/educator/pdf/LessonPlans.pdf

Handout – “Education Statistics” - http://www.freethechildren.com/educator/pdf/LessonPlans.pdf

Handouts – “Labouring instead of learning…”, “School Spirit in Rural China”, “Easing theHeavy Loads of Kenyan” - <http://www.freethechildren.com/educator/pdf/LessonPlans.pdf>

Worksheet – “Discussion Questions on Poverty’s Impact on Education”

*Discussion:*

Students in our classrooms have already enjoyed more years of formal education than most children in

developing countries. As a society, we understand and value the relationship between years of education

and opportunities for future employment and a fulfilling life.

Since North American students enjoy access to free public education, they may be surprised by the global

statistics, especially as it relates to gender equity. In response, this lesson starts with students’ own

educational experience and guides them to make the connections between school experience and life

skills. From here, they will be able to understand the significance of the Millennium Development Goal

working towards a primary education for all children.

*Activity:*

Have students fill out the “School Experience” worksheet (about 10 minutes). <http://www.freethechildren.com/educator/pdf/LessonPlans.pdf>

Generate a class discussion on the class’ answers. Focus on question #4 by getting student answers – divide the answers into three categories on the board, but don’t announce the categories until all of the answers on the board. Mentally, put the answers into three categories writing three categories – Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes. Reveal the categories after all student answers are on board. Have the class conclude what they think the overarching purpose of education in the US based on the answers and which categories seemed to have the most answers.

*Class Discussion –* Share the handout- “Education Experience” by projecting the statistics to the class.

*Activity/Independent Learning:*

Have students read the three stories about impoverished children and education (Ghana, Kenya, and China – urls above). Students should complete the worksheet - Discussion Questions on Poverty’s Impact on Education (at end of this curriculum).

**DAY TEN:**

Today’s focus is on the actions the global community can take to solve global poverty.

Activity: Snapshot of Solutions – Global Hunger

Divide the students into groups of 4-5 (you will want four groups ideally). Each group will be assigned a potential solution: (1) distribution, (2) education, (3) technology, and (4) debt cancellation. Hand out the corresponding philosophy description hand-out to each group.

<http://images.oambassadors.org/system/assets/0000/0062/OAmbassadors_HS_Poverty_Activities.pdf>

The groups are to read and discuss their individual solution. They are to make a list of five potential advantages from their solution and five potential challenges (or reasons why it can’t be a solution).

Students may do outside research or you may have students in a computer lab to do research on their solution.

The students will be assigned a round-table discussion that will be presented in two days. Each group will have 5-7 minutes to present their solution. ALL members of the group must contribute to their discussion to receive credit. The group should have one visual aid, i.e. poster or power point or YouTube video, to go along with their presentation.

Remind students that they must try to objectively present their solution (both the pros and cons), even if they may not personally agree with it.

**DAY ELEVEN:**

Remind students that the roundtable discussion will occur tomorrow.

Today’s focus is global poverty and its unique impact on women.

Materials:

Handout- <http://www.freethechildren.com/educator/pdf/LessonPlans.pdf>

The movie – “Pennies A Day” from izzit.org

Discussion Questions for “Pennies A Day” (below)

Give students a few minutes to work with their groups to continue collaboration on their “global solutions” presentation for tomorrow.

Show the movie “Pennies A Day” to introduce students to the unique impact that poverty has on women. Have students complete the Discussion Questions (at bottom of this curriculum unit).

Have students complete the NOW Anticipation Guide to prepare for the next two videos: <http://www.pbs.org/now/classroom/anticipation2.pdf>

Show the movie about fighting poverty in Liberia. Have students compare and contrast the approaches in Liberia and Bangladesh. <http://vodpod.com/watch/43170-in-liberia-new-skills-help-women-fight-poverty>

**DAY TWELVE:**

Students will present their roundtable discussions on potential solutions. Once each individual group is finished, have the large group arrange in a circle and discuss all four strategies. Students can discuss some of the following questions: what are the biggest challenges facing the solving of global hunger? Which solution comes the closest to overcoming that challenge?

**OPTIONAL ACTIVITY – “PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS”**

Have students watch the movie “The Pursuit of Happyness”, starring Will Smith. Have students write a five-paragraph essay on the following prompt:

Prompt: The idea of “poverty” is a label that often has stereotypes and stigmas attached to it. Individuals often make judgments about individuals that live below the poverty line. What judgments are made about the main character? Give specific examples from the movie. Does the main character fit those stereotypes? Defend your answer. Discuss times in your life that you may have advanced judgments or stereotypes of people living in poverty. Reflecting from what you have learned from the movie and this unit, do you think those stereotypes were correct?

# UNIT PROJECT CHOICES

PROJECTS DUE ON THURSDAY, APRIL 30

1 – Create a video of your opinions on poverty. Potential ideas: You can interview students (both in and out of the class). You can create an actual student panel to have a more formal student discussion on poverty.

2 – Research about poverty in Glenview/Northbrook. What are the number of people living below the poverty line? Do we have food banks or shelters in the area? Donation areas for clothing and household items? You may present your findings in a few ways – you may write a 2-3 page paper, you may design a Public Service Announcement pamphlet about poverty in the area, or you may create a Power Point with the information.

3 – You may volunteer your time at a food bank or shelter. If this is the project you choose, please see Ms. Tate to make arrangements. You will need to write a 1-2 page reflection paper on your experience.

4- Research what particular bills or resolutions that are pending in the Illinois State legislature or Congress that has to deal with poverty. Choose one of the pieces of legislation that you feel passionate about and write a letter to the senator/representative from our region.

5 – Do a country profile. Choose a country that ranks in the top ten of populations that are living impoverished. Do a profile of that country – research statistics of poverty, what subgroups (age groups, religious groups, racial groups, genders) are most affected by the poverty. What specific diseases in that country are linked to its high level of poverty? What is the government of that country doing to combat poverty? What is the international community doing to combat that poverty? You may do your profile as a report write-up or a PowerPoint presentation.

6 – Create a budget for a family of four – the family should have one wage earner earning just above minimum wage. The wage earner should work 40 hours a week. The family lives in Chicago. Research and draw up a budget that includes housing costs, food, clothing, medical care, vehicle expenses (you are to assume that they already own a vehicle), and incidentals.

7 – Compare/Contrast - Create a chart comparing poverty levels in the United States to three other countries, one being a Scandinavian country. What anti-poverty programs are available in the countries you have chosen? Are they government or privately funded? Include a brief written analysis of your findings.

8 – Read a copy of Stefan Bauschard’s topic paper from the NFL Rostrum and Calum Matheson’s topic analysis from the NDCA Spring newsletter. Choose one of the arguments that Bauschard and/or Matheson discuss (can either be Affirmative or Negative). Create a mini-file on that argument. You must include a minimum of 15 cards. You may utilize the bibliographies that they provide.

**WORKSHEET #1 – EFFECTS OF POVERTY**

Names \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Remembering our definition of poverty, please fill in the following chart with your group members.

**NEEDS CONSEQUENCES** for a family **SUPPORT How does society**

**If lacking the need help (individuals or government)?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| FOOD | --Kids go to school hungry and can’t concentrate | --Food banks  --Food stamps |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**WORKSHEET #2 - STATISTICS ON POVERTY**

***AT GLENBROOK SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL:***

**--**380 students at Glenbrook South HS are on free or reduced lunch. This is 15% of the student population. This number is the highest that it has been in 20 years.

***IN THE UNITED STATES:***

--Nationwide, 17 percent of children live in poverty.

--The highest rates of extreme poverty are concentrated in the south and poverty is especially prevalent among black and Latino children.

--Food insecurity, lack of affordable housing and other economic hardships affect millions of children in the United States.

***IN CANADA:***

*--*About 15 percent of the children in Canada live below the poverty line, which is 1.2 million children.

--In 2005, 40.7 percent of food bank recipients were under 18. Among food bank clients, families with children make up more than 50 percent of the clients. The number of individuals receiving help from a food bank in one month: 823, 856.

***GLOBALLY:***

--One-third of all deaths can be attributed to poverty. That is 18 million people a year or 50,000 a day.

--600 million children globally live in absolute poverty.

--800 million people go to bed hungry every day.

--Almost 10.5 million children each year die before their fifth birthday – 30,000 children a day. Most of these children live in developing nations and die from disease. Malnutrition is the contributor of over half of these deaths.

--With an annual investment of $19 billion, we can end global hunger.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – STATISTICS ON POVERTY**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Look at the statistics in regards to Glenbrook South HS. Does the number of students on free or reduced lunch surprise you? Why do you think the percentage of students that qualify is the highest that it has been in 20 years? Think more than just “bad economy”. Has the demographics of Glenview changed?
2. Now that you know the statistics of the US and Canada, should those areas be colored on your world map. Why or why not?
3. On the statistics sheet, I focused on children living in poverty? Why are they uniquely a vulnerable group to poverty?
4. The last statistic on the page lists the cost that it would take to end global hunger. Considering the number of people in the world and the amount of “revenue”, that actually is a small number. What areas of spending do you think the USFG can cut back on in order to contribute more in this category?

**DEBATE I – QUESTIONS: STORIES ABOUT POVERTY**

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions based on the three stories that you just read. Avoid “lazy-credit”! ☺

1. Using specific examples, describe how these stories helped you understand poverty in Kenya and Sierra Leone.
2. How are these stories different than the ones we see in the media (e.g., textbooks, newspapers, magazines)? Does the age of the writer make a difference to you?
3. What struck you as similar about Benet in Kenya and Hellen in Sierra Leone?
4. What “needs” were not being met in these stories? If we had the chance to ask them, what do you think these children would “want?”
5. In Jason and Charlotte’s stories, how did the writers make a connection with the Kenyan children despite differences in language and culture? What questions would you like to ask about these children? List three.
6. How will these stories change the way you think about poverty?
7. What do you still want to know about poverty? List three.

**DEBATE I – “RISING ECONOMIC TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS”**

**NAMES \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_**

***ANALYZING THE “EVIDENCE”***

1. Who is reporting the information in the article? How was the information gathered? Do you think any “variables” or circumstances are missing?
2. Do you think the author’s conclusion follows from the data reported? Why or why not?
3. What does the report show regarding the poverty rate?

***SPECIFICS FROM THE ARTICLE***

1. How does the Census Bureau define its annual poverty level for a family of four? What did the 1999 data reveal about median incomes and racial groups?
2. Is the Census Bureau’s definition of poverty an acceptable one in your opinion? Explain and give a more reasonable definition if you disagree?
3. What do you think President Bill Clinton meant when he said, “The rising tide of the economy is lifting all boats.” ? Do you believe this statement to be true for the people of the United States? Defend your position.

***CALCULATING A SALARY FROM MINIMUM WAGE***

Get out your calculators! Calculate the annual salary of someone who works for minimum wage. The current minimum wage is $6.55 an hour. Assume the individual works 40 hours a week and works 50 weeks in the year.

The US federal government is increasing minimum wage in July 2009 to $7.25 an hour. Using the above specifications, what will this individual’s salary be in 2009?

Now, figure the difference of the two salaries. Take 63% of the difference (have to take out taxes!!). What is the net difference (“net” means actual take-home pay). Do you believe this is a very large increase? Is this enough to ease the burden of someone living off of a minimum wage income? Do you think this even covers the costs of the rise of standard of living – rising prices of gas, housing, etc.?

“WHAT’S GOING ON? POVERTY IN AMERICA” DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. In at least one paragraph, discuss the challenges that Jessica and JR face. What is your emotional response to these teens in the movie?
2. In at least one paragraph, imagine what your life would be like as Jessica or JR as a Glenbrook South student living in Glenview. What would your challenges and fears be? Be specific in regards to your day-to-day life as a GBS Titan. How would it affect your ability to debate? Participate in sports? Be prepared for your classes?

Discussion Questions on Poverty’s Impact on Education

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please read the stories of “Labouring Instead of Learning in Ghana’s Stone Quarriers”, “School Spirit in Rural China”, and “Easing the Heavy Loads of Kenyan Women and Children.” Please respond to the questions below – avoid lazy credit! ☺

1. Which story/article resonated with you the most? Why?

2. In our discussion and in the stories, which statistic surprised you the most?

3.In the story, “Easing the Heavy Loads of Kenyan Woman and Children”, how does Louise’s North American perspective influence the questions she asks about the situation? How does our perspective influence our assumptions?

4. How will the future of these children be different from your own?

5. How will the building of the school in China change lives?

“PENNIES A DAY” VIDEO – DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What challenges has the young nation of Bangladesh faced?
2. Before Grameen Bank, what options did villagers have for borrowing money?
3. What is microcredit?
4. Why are nearly all Grameen loans given to women? Why were husbands initially opposed to Grameen loans?
5. What are some examples of the types of projects funded by Grameen loans?
6. What were the social effects of financial success, particularly for women?
7. Is microcredit needed in America? If, so would it work?
8. If you could get a microloan, what type of business would you start?
9. Would you have expected that illiterate women with no business experience could have started their own successful ventures with very small loans? Why or why not?
10. Minara said, “In our village, poverty is gone.” Does this statement surprise you? Is the village still poor by our standards? Is poverty relative?
11. According to Muhammad Yunus, women have a longer vision. Explain.