

Global Perspectives

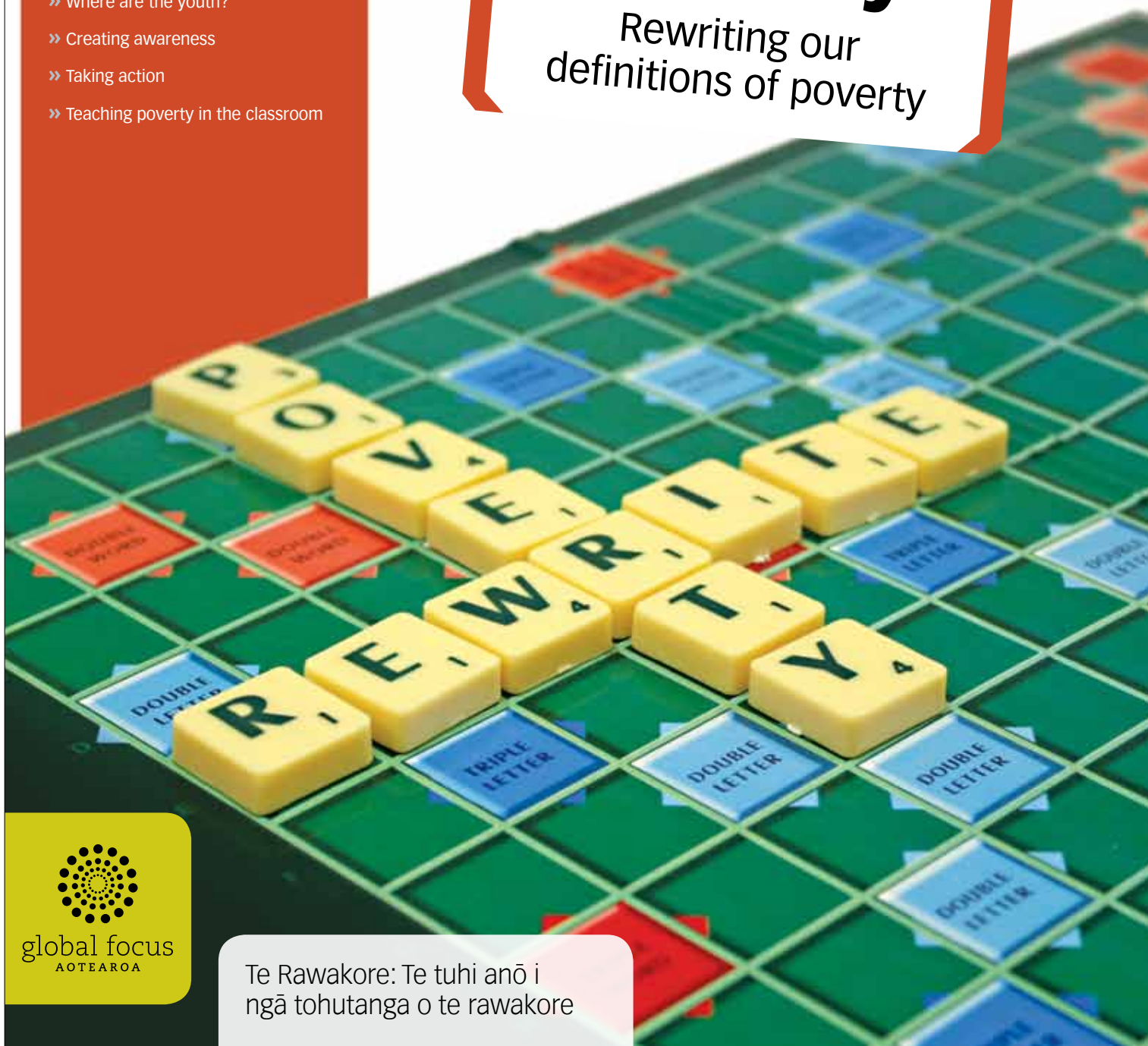
HANDBOOKS FOR GLOBAL EDUCATORS

POVERTY

In this issue:

- » Defining poverty
- » Building definitions
- » Who does the defining?
- » What makes people poor?
- » Where are the youth?
- » Creating awareness
- » Taking action
- » Teaching poverty in the classroom

Poverty
Rewriting our
definitions of poverty





From the Writer's Desk



Were the 1980s really that great? As we move further into the 21st Century, I find myself wondering why people are so obsessed with objects of a decade now extinct: movie remakes, skinny jeans, canvas sneakers, stone-wash patterns and the key-tar.

For me the 1980s weren't that great. I lived in mining country on the West Coast. My mum was on a benefit. She wasn't a bludger. She had escaped an abusive relationship to bring us up in her home town.

I remember life being happy until the town's biggest employer Coal Corp fired (what seemed to me as a child) millions of people, and the PDL plastics factory closed down.

The world was changing fast; recession had hit. My class at Westport South dropped overnight as families fled the Coast for jobs elsewhere. From that point on, the biggest 'shop' in Westport was Social Welfare.

I remember my mum's struggle as she tried to make sure we had food in our stomachs. I didn't think about the pain she must have felt when I refused to eat my vegetables or the real meaning in her words: 'Children in Africa are starving. They would be thankful for a piece of your [compost-grown] turnip!' I didn't realise the difficulty I put her in when I put lollies on her account at the dairy.

For me, the 1980s did have elements of fun, but it was also a struggle. I would not choose to return to that decade; but I will, and have, chosen to learn from it. Today, as we emerge from another recession, we need to reach back in history and out to our young people.

In amongst my childhood, many adults (some teachers) gave me hope. They believed in me and they told me 'Don't let your circumstances define who you are.' I can't help but think how empowered I would have been if I really knew that my experiences were shared by children all over the world and that some of them were finding ways out.

Dr Fi

fiona@globalfocus.org.nz

Defining poverty: The power of a definition

Te Rawakore: Te mana o tētahi kupu tautohu

Imagine the extraordinary, you find yourself uplifted from your normal workplace and placed into an early childhood centre with a group of four-year-olds keen to learn about the world and you.

Your morning goes well but then the questions start. In reading a story, you mention the word 'poor' and a little boy asks 'what makes you poor?' Another girl squawks out 'what is poor?' And, then one yells out 'my daddy says politicians are poor. My daddy's right. My daddy drives a truck!' You breathe a sigh of relief, the mention of 'trucks' has moved the conversation away from the tricky. You pull out the paintbrushes in the hope that poverty won't get mentioned again.

The tricky word 'poverty' is avoided by many educators working with young people. When it is taught as a topic, it is often associated with geographical areas outside of Aotearoa New Zealand. It happens to *them* not *us*. If poverty does exist here, it is something very different from what happens elsewhere – where people are really poor because they don't have the same choices as we do?

Poverty is a tricky concept to define. When we try to define it, we often find ourselves creating images in our heads – images that have a particular colour, gender, class, smell, sight and sound. Many of us know (even if it is subconscious) the power of speaking, or revealing, our definitions to others. The instant our definition of poverty leaves our head, we create a story of power and, in a way,

'Poverty is like heat: you cannot see it, you can only feel it; so to know poverty you have to go through it.' (Adaboya, speaking of his life in Ghana)

judgement. We cluster different groups into, and out of, our definitions.

When we share our definitions with others, we even risk clustering those to whom we speak of in our words. And, at times, in the action of our words, people might resist and argue against our speaking. They may feel offended at being labelled or being left out of a label. After all, what gives us the right to define others?

As a reality, poverty is one of those issues that creates barriers to development. It can hinder young people achieving their potential, and prevent communities and countries having an equal place in the world today. As a concept, poverty is a powerful topic to explore, especially when educators work with young people to create a critical understanding of the concept.

This edition of *Global Perspectives* will assist you in working with young people as you explore a variety of conceptual understandings around poverty. By pulling apart the concept of poverty and learning from some of the youth-focused responses to poverty, you will be able to create opportunities for young people to transform their lives and the lives of others. It is not about learning about others living in 'poverty', but rather, learning from those living in difficult situations.

Global Perspectives is a guide for educators engaging classrooms and young people with global issues. It is produced by Global Focus Aotearoa three times a year and is free to download from our website or can be subscribed to by contacting Global Focus Aotearoa.

If you have any enquires or would like information on development issues, contact us:

- » **Phone:** 04 472 9549
- » **Fax:** 04 496 9599
- » **Email:** education@globalfocus.org.nz
- » **Web:** www.globalfocus.org.nz

Fiona Beals (Dr) wrote the text for this issue unless otherwise noted.

Many thanks to the activity developers, Miranda Lees, Beth Thomas, Piripi Walker and the editorial team; a special thanks to all those photographers who have made their work

available through Creative Commons on the internet: to check out the photo on the net click on the artist's profile name on our electronic version.

Copyright has been acknowledged where possible. If you have any concerns, please contact us.

This publication may be copied or downloaded from our website and distributed for educational and information purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged and the material is not altered. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form for commercial purposes without the prior permission of Global Focus Aotearoa.

© Global Focus Aotearoa 2010

ISSN 1179-5093 (Print) ISSN 1179-5107 (Online)

Printing: The Print Room
Design: Global Focus Aotearoa

Poverty myths

One of the difficult things when it comes to teaching about poverty is the reality that everyone (including educators and young people) has their own definition of poverty to begin with. Often these definitions are shrouded in mythologies of what it is to be poor and what it is to be rich. However, it is because of these myths that poverty is a brilliant concept to explore. Every poverty myth is driven by particular values and perspectives; furthermore, every poverty myth influences the ways in which individuals, families, communities and governments respond to it as an issue.

So what are these myths? In this *Global Perspectives*, we will explore six key poverty myths:

1. Poverty is only an economic concept.

2. Poverty does not exist in developed countries like Aotearoa NZ.

3. Poverty is a choice.

6. The only contribution young people make in addressing poverty is posing in photos as the faces of NGO charity adverts.

5. Poor people can only get out of poverty with the help of rich people.

4. Poverty is an isolated issue.



Is there a simple definition to poverty?

In the 1960s, a famous French philosopher Michael Foucault stirred up the halls of philosophy with his challenge to the nature of truth. Foucault argued that the truths of the human sciences are all human constructions. He claimed that they were not truths at all but fictions that had won the battle in the lecture theatres of universities, palace halls of kingdoms and debating chambers of parliaments. He then went a step further to argue that these 'truths' were not just human constructions but their application helped to enforce social inequalities. Foucault basically argued that what was accepted as truth included, or excluded, people from positions of power and influence.

So what does this all have to do with the facts around poverty? We would all agree that extreme poverty is a fact. It is a fundamental reality for 45% of the world's youth who live on less than US\$2 per day, for six million children who die under the age of five from malnutrition and for 100 million under ten-year-olds who are too poor to go to school or find themselves forced into child labour. However, the definitions of poverty are disputed by many people. Researchers Federica Misturelli and Claire Hefferman have found 179 formal definitions to poverty constructed between 1970 and 2000. That equates to six new definitions a year!



Today, economic definitions may help us gauge the global reality of poverty and target international aid to countries in need, but, in truth, economic needs and living conditions change depending upon where you live. The reality is people do live in poverty in affluent societies. These faces of poverty are not the faces of poverty we see, or read about, in the international 'poverty' statistics.

Economic definitions can also be problematic for one of the most affected groups – children and young people.

Added to this, major economic definitions are set in place by powerful institutions (such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)). These institutions have been accused by poorer countries, development workers and academics as

enforcing policies that push people into debt. However, even James Wolfenson, the former president of the World Bank, has argued that the 'issue of poverty is not a statistical issue. It is a human issue.' For these institutions, defining poverty has allowed for some focus and targeting of resources.

Finally, the clustering of people in poverty categories and statistics is not something that everyone agrees with. For example, many people in the Pacific may be living below the extreme poverty line; however, if we were to call these people poor, we would not only be labelling them but offending them. For many, there are times that the label of 'poor' is not just disempowering but it shows a lack of personal relationship and engagement with the communities concerned. It is as if someone, walking past a noisy classroom of a local school, exclaimed 'There's no education happening there', without even talking to the students, teachers, parents and administration staff.

The facts around poverty are both complex and simple. They are complex because they are shrouded behind the myths of poverty. But, they are simple because poverty can be seen daily in the inequalities that exist in society. It is the ultimate manifestation of both cause and effect in that it hinders progress and feeds into prejudices. No wonder people are nervous to get into the nitty-gritty of poverty conversations.

Building definitions: So what is poverty?

Te Rawakore: He aha tēnei mea te rawakore?

In any formalised definition of poverty there is complexity around who is actually being talked about. Is it a poor individual, or an individual living in a poor country?

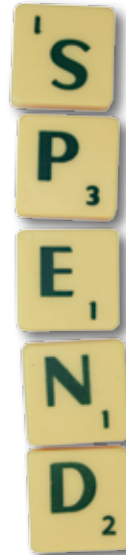
Whilst *economic* based definitions may be used to talk about individuals living in poverty, the reality is that these definitions are generated from national statistics and are used to compare countries. They are typically what defines, and labels, a country as 'less developed', 'developing' and 'developed'. They actually don't give us an idea of the complexity of poverty within a country. Even in the poorest of countries, you can find the rich. And, in reality, three quarters of people living in poverty come from middle-income countries.

In terms of *relative poverty*, we may connect our understanding to individuals. But, then find that in justifying it, we draw upon national household statistics to help us understand what it is like living in a household earning

a particular income in a particular country.

Multi-dimensional definitions are typically based on the conditions within a home or household. However, even these have been worked on to allow for national averages and international comparisons.

Rights-based and *subjective* definitions tend to focus on the individual and their perception of poverty. With rights-based definitions, statistics can be gathered that can allow comparisons to be made between countries. However, subjective definitions need to include the perspectives of the poor.



Economic poverty: Does it exist here?

Poverty is also evident in developed countries. In these countries, some groups (such as the homeless) may live in extreme poverty, but others live in relative poverty. Those in relative poverty don't have the purchasing power needed to achieve a standard of living considered acceptable in that country. In some countries, this might be more than being able to feed yourself; it may also mean having enough money to purchase petrol, electricity and technology.

Those living in relative poverty are usually considered as having an income which is below the 60% threshold of a population's median income. How this 60% median marker is determined depends on how statistics are gathered and analysed. It is often shaped by the groups trying to do the defining – the median and the threshold may change to suit their needs and motives (rather than the defined). Despite this, measures of relative poverty are useful. Without some form of statistical threshold, we would be unable to determine those in the most need in our communities.

At the moment, the NZ Children's Commissioner believes a high proportion of children in Aotearoa NZ live in conditions of relative poverty. In 2008, 20% of children lived in low income households and, on average, were at a 1.4 times higher risk of dying during birth; and, with a poor start to life, poverty affects both the child's cognitive development and educational outcomes.

Whilst Māori and Pacific communities are disproportionately affected by poverty, the majority of young people living in poverty in Aotearoa NZ are Pākehā. And, most young people living in poverty come from sole parent families.

Economic definitions: It's all about consumption and income

Economic definitions are about both how much money you have (income) and how much money you have to spend (purchasing power). The more money you have the more you can buy; the less you have, the less you have to spend and that puts you in a tricky position when you have to shop for your family – do I buy the \$3.50 bottle of milk or the \$1.99 bottle of Coca Cola?

Economic definitions are prevalent in international and national policy. In part this is because money can be counted, income levels can be monitored and the cost of commodities easily scrutinised. Economic definitions help to provide international statistics which can be used to see the relative position of different countries and drive international response.

In 1990, the World Bank, IMF and United Nations (UN) agreed that living under US\$1.00 per day would put an individual into conditions of extreme poverty (the World Bank changed this to US\$1.25 per day in 2008 to account for inflation).

Living in extreme poverty means that individuals are unable to generate enough income to

purchase basic needs such as food and shelter. In the mid 2000s, a billion people lived on less than US\$1 per day; and, 18% of all young people lived in conditions of extreme poverty.

Development expert, David Woodward argues that using economic thresholds like the \$US1 per day don't work because they don't tell us the point at which an individual's life changes for the better. He points out that the \$US1 threshold was developed by averaging the Gross Domestic Incomes of ten developing countries. He argues that lifting it to \$2, \$3 or \$4 would have no effect because extreme poverty is determined through looking at the purchasing power of countries not individuals.

However, the reality is, if an average income within a country is below \$1.25 per day, then something has to be done. Increasingly, even organisations like the World Bank are arguing that this can only happen through talking to the poor rather than forcing an answer on them.





Rights definitions: It's about voice

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) outlines the basic expectations that anyone can have of society and their Government. It clearly states everyone is born free and equal and that everyone has a right to life.

In terms of economic poverty, this means that if life is dependent upon money (ie. you need money in order to eat and have shelter) then you have a right to have an income that can meet your needs. It also means you have the right to expect access to the basic resources that will ensure that your needs are met and you have an opportunity to participate in society.

When it comes to the rights of children and young people, the Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) enforces much of the UDHR. However, it is written with the understanding that after birth, we have only one chance to get it right – one chance for healthy development.

Children's rights are often contentious because of the fear that these rights give children too much power. In fact, this is a

misconception. Child rights are actually about protection, opportunity and responsibility.

The Convention clearly establishes that children have a right to have their *basic needs* met. These needs (food, life, love, shelter, etc.) ensure that the child has a healthy living environment. UNCRC also works to ensure that the *social needs* (education, welfare and justice) of children and young people are met. These needs allow children to participate and contribute positively in society. They are rights of opportunity. Both *basic* and *social needs* are connected to poverty.

Rights definitions are also about empowering communities. They recognise that the poor have a voice. They need to be given opportunities to speak. And, they also have the right to be heard.

Seeing poverty in terms of rights and participation frames the voice of those affected as the key to addressing poverty and the conditions related to it. It allows for *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination). It empowers people living in poverty to hold those in power to account. Addressing poverty then becomes not only a moral obligation but a legal obligation.

Multidimensional definitions: It's really quite complex

When the poor are asked to define poverty, the answer is a lot more complex than the power to purchase with money. For many of these people, poverty is a lack of access to water, sanitation, healthcare and education. Poverty is connected to economic means, but it has connections to the resources and services a person can access and the voice that they have in their community. Poverty is, therefore, multidimensional.

Multidimensional definitions build upon concepts of poverty as economic and rights-focused. The central argument is that poverty is not just about income and consumption

but the overall quality of life. Multidimensional definitions can look at:

- the specific vulnerability of individuals
- where they live
- any factors of social isolation
- the access they have to institutions and information
- the overall conditions of power/lessness felt by the individual.

In 2010, an index was created to measure multidimensional poverty across some of the world's poorest regions. Whilst it has received much praise for deepening an understanding

Subjective definitions: It's really a matter of opinion

Reflecting rights-based definitions, subjective definitions of poverty allow the voice of the poor to define their own understandings of poverty. In this definition, poverty is an individual feeling not an objective status that can be pushed onto people (although people could feel pushed into poverty). Poverty can be defined in many ways, but it is not so much the right of the powerful to define the world, but the right of everyone to define themselves and their place in the world.

The recognition that poverty has a subjective definition has even led powerful organisations like the World Bank into examining how the poor define their lives. In the late 1990s, the World Bank commissioned research titled *Voices of the poor* identified the multidimensional reality of poverty.



of the complexity of poverty, some have criticised it for broadening the definition too much and making it much too complex. However, no definition is perfect; there is even criticism of economic definitions which have been argued to have narrow, defined lines of measurement.

When it comes to young people, many organisations find multidimensional definitions of poverty to be the most helpful as they do not limit poverty to economic aspects but recognise the conditions and environment in which an individual is developing. They also acknowledge that children and young people have rights.

Who does the defining: Dictionary power!

Mā wai e tautohu: Te mana o te papakupu!

Foucault was not the only thinker shaking up the halls of philosophy in the 1960s. Another French philosopher Jacques Derrida would make the Oxford Dictionary redundant to critical thinkers wanting to find meaning. Derrida argued that words can never have fully complete meanings. Our words can

never give a complete rational understanding of the world – they can only give an interpretation.

Derrida and Foucault are postmodern philosophers. As a philosophy, postmodernism rests on grounds of uncertainty. We cannot be certain that we know everything. Both knowledge and language are political and open (contested). Derrida and Foucault challenge those of us who want certainty – simplistic answers to complex questions.

However, Foucault and Derrida help us understand why concepts like poverty have many definitions (or conceptual understandings) – definitions that bring about social division. We can also have some understanding that

if people construct knowledge, and words never have complete meaning, then change is possible. We see that words are the tools we use to construct meaning and understanding.

In all this, issues of power remain. Whilst we can all construct our own meaning of poverty, the meanings that are predominant in society are the ones that are often accepted and reflective of the dominant ideology (worldview). Other worldviews are left out altogether or just treated as an alternative perspective to the truth to which 'the world' agrees.

The problem is, young people are often exposed to dominant definitions as 'truths'. These definitions can shape how they see themselves and their world. They can even exclude them from participating positively and effectively in society.



Image: Pablo Secca

Poverty definers: The media and charities

'I always see little Tanzanian kids, [that's] the first image that's in my mind.' (Young NZer)

Interested in what shapes the responses of young people to charities, researchers from Massey University interviewed tertiary students about their poverty awareness and responses to charity adverts. They found that all the students saw poverty as only a problem for developing countries. They learnt about the reality of poverty from charity advertisements, particularly TV adverts.

The students had very little knowledge about the factors that led, or contributed, to the

conditions of poverty. They even felt cheated by charity adverts because the adverts did not tell them what they needed to know. When it came to Aotearoa NZ, the students felt that poverty wasn't an issue here or an issue needing charity, because New Zealanders are self-reliant and don't need the help of others.

Whilst the use of images for fundraising may be considered by charities a necessity to generate a financial response, defining poverty through charity advertisements is problematic. Adverts create *us* and *them* pictures. Young people see the developing world as dependent upon the developed. Advertisements tend to only show the faces of women and children. Disability is used to raise funds when the child is young as charities tend to avoid using

images of adults who have incurred a physical disability due to conflict and war.

Charity photos also portray power. Those with power are the observers of photos (the ones with money); the powerless are the subjects of the photos. They are powerless to both the lens of the camera and the conditions of poverty. This camera, more often than not, ignores the stories throughout the world of people in poverty *taking action*. These stories include young people.

Added to this, the charity portrayal of poverty helps to create and enforce a relationship of dependence. Because the only issue being addressed is economic poverty (even if this is through providing resources), communities may find they are not empowered to address the issues that led to, or are connected with, poverty.

Poverty definers: Institutions, religion, science and politics

So, if the media creates a problematic picture, surely the truth is better when it comes to the institutional conceptual understandings? If anything, institutional understandings complicate the understanding of poverty even more. Institutional understandings (even if based in science or religion) have a political edge to them.

Critics such as Noam Chomsky and Michel Chossudovsky argue that official definers of poverty, such as the World Bank and IMF, actually have an agenda of entrenching economic difference and inequalities. They argue that this occurs through the forcing of a

global market agenda on developing countries. Rather than moving these countries out of poverty, this agenda sees these countries being the providers of cheap labour to richer countries and corporations. While providing useful insights, Chomsky's and Chossudovsky's opinion also need to be examined in light of their world views and perspectives.

If anything, the key questions we should pose are:

- Who is doing the defining?
- Who are they defining?
- Whose voice is left out?

We should also ask about the role of power in the defining process. Often the ones doing the defining are the ones with money and they often represent an Anglo-American (western) point-of-view which tends to be white, middleclass, adult and, predominately, male. This point-of-view often leaves out indigenous and gendered perspectives. It even leaves out the perspectives of the very young and very old.

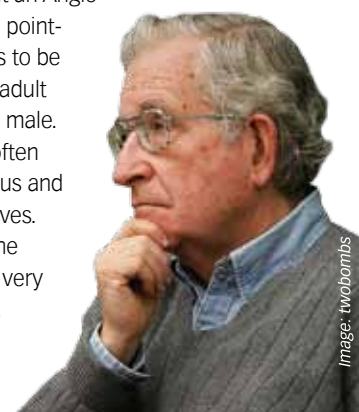


Image: twobombus



'Poverty is...going to school but schools not understanding difficulties families are having – shame and embarrassment for kids. Kids playing up at school and get in trouble because of family issues. Schools reacting to kids' behaviour and not why they are acting that way and maybe kicked out of school.' (Young NZers in OCC's Photovoice)



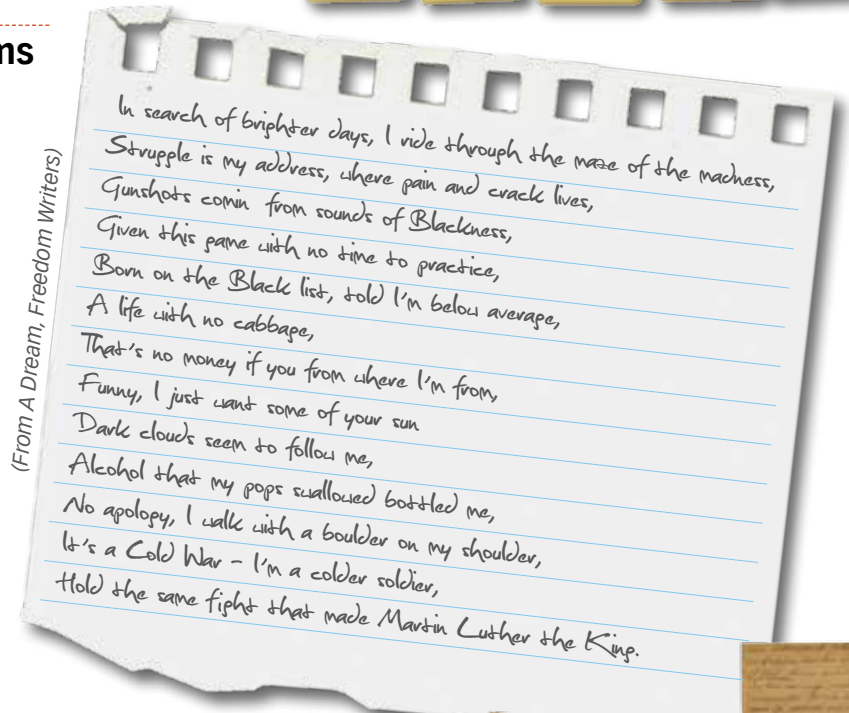
Definition mediators: Classrooms and communities

In understanding poverty, learning environments play a pivotal role. If the concept of poverty is viewed as an onion with many layers, the classroom is the place where the interpretative layers of poverty can be stripped back and analysed. However, the classroom can also be a place that reinforces inequalities through silence and acceptance of the status quo.

Educationalist Pierre Bourdieu talked about this in his work on inequalities in the school system. He wondered why the equal opportunity of education did not produce equal outcomes. He found that schools are often established to teach institutionally-accepted knowledge.

For children living in poverty, this knowledge instantly means that they are seen as different – as an 'other' in the classroom. Because their experiences at home and at school would be completely different, these students would leave school with lower grades and outcomes. They are the faces that often see themselves as 'cabbage' students when they are really so much more.

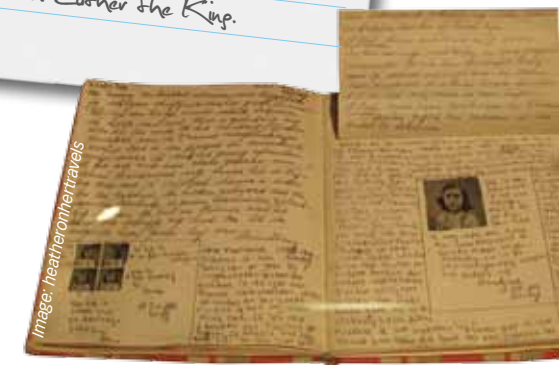
Researcher Allison Jones found the same thing with Pacific Island female students in the 1980s. These students were raised in homes which esteemed service jobs and Pacific culture. The teachers did their job well, but at the end of the day, the cultural tools in the girls' bags did not prepare them for success in the cultural environment of the classroom. And, it wasn't the fault of the girls, their culture, families or their teachers but the fault of school culture and curriculum.



It was this sort of disjuncture between knowledge and education that Paulo Freire tried to address with adults living in poverty in Brazil. He said that in order to create change in society, the poor need to see how society sees them. They need to see how they are positioned. This involves a critical and cultural reading of texts (books and other media), followed by their own rewritten versions.

Rather than reading interpretations of poverty for answers, Freire would say that teachers need to sit alongside their students and pose questions of interpretations – peel back the onion and then create a completely different metaphor for understanding poverty.

An example of this happened in the US after a teacher observed gang conflict in her classroom. Her initial reaction was to bring in American hip hop so that she could speak the language of her students. It didn't work – the students simply reminded her that a middle-



class white chick could never understand the hood. She changed tack and set about starting a class project on the *Diary of Anne Frank*.

Through using the genre of diary writing, she got her students to diary their own lives – to write their worlds on paper and bring them into the classroom. Her students ended up rewriting their worlds and challenging the stereotypes and definitions of poverty they had been pushed into both by society and the very school of which they were a part. The story was made into a movie *Freedom Writers*, which has now turned into an international movement.

What makes people poor?

He aha e rawakore ai te tangata?

'It's a really hard night's sleep. It's normal. It's better than listening to my parents fighting and drinking all the time ... I'm hungry, I'm cold and I don't want to go home ... I'm alright here!! [under a bridge].'

(Young NZer in OCC's Photovoice)

Answering questions around the causes of poverty turns out to be just as difficult as defining poverty itself. The causes of, and conditions that lead to, poverty are so intertwined that it is hard to separate one from another. The causes of poverty are also very political. Some, like the UK's provider of development education (the DEA) argue that the global story of poverty starts in a deep and dark history.

Could history really be connected to poverty?

Most people have an opinion about what causes poverty and factors that contribute to it, from access to resources, urbanisation, war, famine, to colonisation, everyone has an opinion; but what about colonisation? The DEA argues that global issues like poverty are connected to histories of colonisation, imperialism and slavery. They argue that colonisation may have happened years ago but it threw the completely new concept of wealth on countries where 'money' simply wasn't a currency and land wasn't owned. In fact, the DEA has argued that colonisation was global racism.

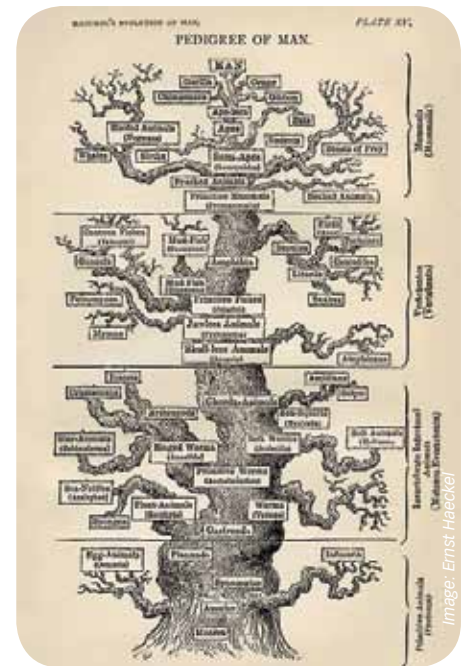
Their basic argument is that through colonisation, European (western) values and perspectives were forced on indigenous cultures. New systems of economics were introduced and lands exploited for the benefits of the colonisers. Those with access to money and the economic system had the power and they openly used policies to reduce the chances of indigenous peoples having a say in

the system. The European system created an uneven playing field, forcing cultures to play catch-up right from the beginning.

Many Postcolonial thinkers argue that the key theory that drove concepts of economic development during the 1800s was Darwin's evolutionary theory and the 'great chain of being' – a metaphoric tree or staircase which defined how survival of the fittest privileged European cultures. In this tree, society was illustrated as developing (or growing) from the uncivilised savage (colonised) at the base to the civilised culture at the top (the coloniser). Often the Australian Aboriginal was seen as the most savage of cultures, Polynesian cultures were near the centre of the tree, Asian near the top and European right at the peak.

The great chain of being did not just see indigenous peoples as below the civilised coloniser. It was also used in early psychological research to describe how females and youth were all lesser to the civilised adult male. Females were emotive and children in touch with nature; in contrast adult males were rational, and in touch with culture and technology.

When Darwin combined this with evolutionary theory, it was thought if 'lesser' races and societal groups could not be assimilated (changed, transformed and absorbed) into European culture and values they would perish. Across the world, anthropologists and artists like Goldie rushed to capture images of 'dying races' so that the future colonies would have an idea of the peoples who once walked



Ernst Haeckel's Tree of Life – on which Darwin based the theory of Evolution.

the lands on which they stood. Whilst, many of these groups did not perish, colonisation did have an effect in ways that would mean that they would never be the same again.

Within educational history and sociology there is even evidence that political policies, school curriculum and education were used from the 1800s to assimilate colonised peoples into European ways of thinking. Furthermore, education, in particular, was also used to control the growing working class populations throughout Europe and the colonies. In its early days, mass schooling was a tool used to control outcomes, problems in society and produce a future workforce. From the academic to technical trades, schools were factories of production.

When it comes to poverty, colonisation and education show us that many societies were not built on foundations of equality to begin with. This resonates today when we look at the reality of poverty and disadvantage – those that were once seen as being at the base of the 'great chain of being' are disproportionately represented in statistics of poverty, imprisonment and poor health.

When we use a language of equality to describe society as it is now, we effectively put strain on some groups to catch up to an ideal that was set, in the beginning, by others. This strain may push some into learning the rules of the game, but it can push others into crime. It can push families into dysfunction and abuse. And, it can feed into feelings of hopelessness rather than choice.



Where are the young people?

Kei whea te rangatahi?

In newspapers, magazines and on television the face of poverty is often a child looking directly at the camera asking the world to give them a chance to live. This isn't the only way young people are contributing to addressing poverty and the conditions in which it is surrounded. Around the world, young people are taking direct action.

'Poverty is everyone's problem. I don't see how some of us can live so comfortably while others in this same world live with nothing. We need to stand up for each other.'
(Tamara, Y10 Aranui High School)

Youth participation: It has a place

Here in Aotearoa NZ, we like to think that we take youth participation seriously. Most government policies addressing youth issues involve consultation with young people, and most youth workers would be able to recite Hart's *Ladder of Participation* to you if you asked. Boards of Trustees have students on them and local councils often have a youth 'wing'. Youth participation is a part of life.

In 2010, Collin Williams and Jessica Edlin (from Wainuiomatia) were asked to reflect upon a number of chapters in an international book on youth participation. Colin and Jess were both at high school and had experience participating in community initiatives. Colin was even involved in a national youth consultation network.

The chapters were a combination of stories from the UK, India, Colombia, Bolivia, the Philippines and Turkey. Colin and Jess both felt that there were real differences between the UK and other countries. In the UK, the initiatives were well-intentioned but the boundaries were determined by adults – they were tokenistic. In the other countries, young people or adults saw a need and young people were seen as the primary group which could provide an answer (even if this was about how

participation should occur). Young people were seen as leaders today, not contributors to an adult-led plan.

Colin and Jess felt that the secret was in tino rangatiratanga (self-determination). The secret of success was when young people were given a space to speak their needs and a place to address those needs with the support and help of the community. Colin and Jess had initially felt that the UK would have a better model and that youth participation wasn't needed in poorer communities because the issues are so much bigger.

They concluded that it was because of the scale of the issues that participation was both necessary and essential. Rather than thinking the developing world would learn from the developed, they felt that for change to happen in Aotearoa NZ, we needed to start learning from initiatives happening in developing countries where youth participation has made a real difference.



Youth resistance: It has a role

Often when we think of resistance, we think about crime and, if positively, about activism. However, resistance is evident in most initiatives involving youth voice and participation. This concept of youth resistance comes from my own research on youth crime and how it is represented in media, government and academic texts. It also comes from a number of media-based initiatives around the world including Digital Underground Storytelling for Youth (DUSTY), Educational Video Center (EVC) and PhotoVoice.

Using Foucault's understanding of knowledge and power, my own research looked at the types of knowledge used to understand youth offending and the effects of its application on young people. I found that youth offenders were often described as youth-at-risk. They would have a number of psychological

variables that would determine their future and unless early intervention occurred, they would be trapped.

It was as if the words 'youth-at-risk' could not be contested. The science acknowledged that only a few people went off the rails, but experts described young offenders as having an inevitable future. These contemporary risk factors were historically apparent in western knowledge – they were often at the base of the tree of colonisation – ethnic (Māori and Pacific), classed (poor) and gendered (whilst it's natural for young men to make mistakes, young female offenders are seen as abnormal).

Psychology really did more harm than good, particularly if it was used to predict if a young person would go 'off the rails', whereas sociology provided an interesting alternative

as it saw crime as a form of resistance.

I concluded that we needed to find ways to allow young people to resist the impact of a definition ('youth-at-risk') or even transform its meaning in positive ways which would allow for change and wider awareness.

Across the world, a number of initiatives are providing spaces for youth resistance. Combining various forms of media and art, these initiatives build on from the work of Paulo Freire to allow young people to convey a story, address an issue and provide a way out. Today, if you look at any initiative in which young people play a part, you will see an element of resistance – and it's not negative. What it needs is the acceptance of communities and the space to develop. Resistance can be the voice of change.





Awareness: Finding out information

Te noho mataara: Te rapu kōrero

When it comes to building awareness around poverty, learning opportunities need to show that poverty is a complex concept. Its definition can be based on arbitrary lines of difference that can, at times, ignore very real inequalities within communities.



Big Mac anyone?

One way to explore economic definitions and the relative nature of poverty lines is to use popular poverty indexes. One that can stimulate discussion is the Big Mac index, which has been used by *The Economist* for over 20 years to illustrate international economic differences.

The Big Mac Index bases all its measurements and findings on the US exchange rate. If the Big Mac is cheaper in US dollars then the currency is undervalued and if it is more expensive it is overvalued. So, when compared to the US dollar, currencies tend to be cheaper in developing countries and more expensive in European countries. When it comes to Aotearoa NZ, the dollar is undervalued and Big Macs are cheaper.

Now using an item like the Big Mac can be quite problematic. Factors that determine the cost of a Big Mac may not be related to the purchasing power of a country's citizens. Instead, it may be related to the demand for fast food, the cultural place of fast food, taxes and market competition.

Furthermore, the Index could lead some to the conclusion that it is cheaper to live in developing countries than it is in Europe. Whilst, this is true, it is also misleading. In reality, living in a cheaper economy may not lead to better living standards. In fact, if this Index tells us anything, it is that American tourists will get more 'bang for their buck' visiting cheaper economies.

However, the index can be used to stimulate discussion with young people on poverty indexes. Particularly if a focused discussion includes questions such as:

1. Why do you think the index has chosen the US dollar as its point of comparison? What does this tell readers about the US? What does it tell readers about other countries like Aotearoa NZ?
2. If the currency being used was considered cheaper than the \$US (such as the Chinese Yuan), what do you think would happen to the picture of poverty? Would it change economically? Would it change the way the world sees itself internationally?
3. What developing countries are included/excluded? Why do you think this is the case?
4. What could be the effect on our understanding of global poverty when we don't know how other countries are placed (eg. Pacific and African countries) because they are not included?

McDonald's not only gives insight into economies but it also gives insight into societies.

5. Do you think Big Macs work as a good way to compare poverty between countries? Why/Why not?
6. Does the Big Mac index show what poverty is like in Aotearoa NZ? Explain your response.
7. Now, take a rights perspective. What sorts of evidence do you think you could measure to get an idea of the extent of poverty between/within countries?
8. What would you use to get an idea of the extent of poverty between/within countries, if you were to focus on particular resources?
9. What sorts of questions would you ask people if you wanted to get a subjective (personal) understanding about poverty and you didn't want to offend them?

McDonald's not only gives insight into economies but it also gives insight into societies. This can lead to questions about the relationship between globalisation and Americanisation. It can also lead to critical discussions involving imperialism, colonisation and slavery in the new Millennium.

Whilst some would argue that large global corporations bring the world together. Others would argue that these very corporations split the world further into those that can access resources and wealth and those that cannot. Global Focus Aotearoa's publication *Global Bits: Daniel's Story* provides background information to a variety of global commodity labels of which many youth are aware. These include, but are not limited to: Sanitarium, Coca Cola, McDonald's, Cadbury, Shell, Levi's, and Apple.

ONLINE The following are links for the Big Mac Index:

www.economist.com/markets/bigmac

www.openheatmap.com/view.html?map=CommentitiousPerjuredRinneite

ONLINE *Daniel's Story* can be downloaded from:

www.globalfocus.org.nz

Just what gap are we talking about?

Professor and development expert Hans Rosling challenges popular myths and stereotypes of the developing world by accessing large reserves of global data (held by organisations such as the UN) and then displaying this data using animated graphs. He has a number of talks on TED Talks which you can use with young people to get them thinking about poverty and the developing world. Two key talks to focus on are: *The best stats you've ever seen* and *New insights on poverty*. Another talk *Global Population Growth* gives a visual demonstration of development.

www.ted.com/speakers/hans_rosling.html

Once you have given young people the opportunity to watch Hans and discuss their reflections on his ideas, provide them with the opportunity to explore *gapminder*. If you leave the X axis on the graph at *income per person*, by adjusting the Y axis, you can get some idea about the factors that influence, and define, poverty and economic development. You can also limit the countries you are exploring by ticking a small number of countries in the country panel. Furthermore, unlike a lot of other global poverty websites, *Gapminder* has information on countries in the Pacific.

www.gapminder.org



Poverty myth-busters *From the desk of Melanie Bell*

This activity encourages young people to reflect on poverty myths; what is truth when it comes to issues of poverty and how influences such as the media can affect our viewpoints.

Resources: paper, balloons, marker pens

Poverty myths:

- Poverty is only an economic concept
- Poverty does not exist in developed countries like Aotearoa NZ
- Poverty is a choice
- Poverty is an isolated issue
- Poor people can only get out of poverty with the help of rich people
- The only contribution young people make in addressing poverty is by posing in photos as the face of NGO charity adverts.

The activity

1. Using these six poverty myths, place participants into groups of three-four and have each group brainstorm and create a series of specific statements related to each myth. Statements might come from mass media, friends and family, personal viewpoints or the work and learning they have already completed in class.
2. Pool the ideas from groups, discuss and select a variety of statements of interest to the entire group. Assign three or four different statements back to each group with a balloon for each statement. Groups inflate balloons, hold the air in, write the statement on the balloon and deflate the balloon.
3. Explain that the challenge for participants will be to develop myth-busting arguments. Each myth-busting argument can be used to gather points. Up to four points can be earned at any one time:
 - Give a different/opposing perspective from the statement (one point)
 - Provide a specific example/case study/statistic as evidence that there are other valid perspectives (two points)
 - Identify powerful players/influences in advocating this statement as truth (one point).

4. Before groups create their own arguments, as a class discuss the following quote from Alysha.

'On TV it seems to focus on a few basic material things that are lacking like water, housing and clothing. The media finds it easier to use these things so we can feel sorry for them and use our money to fix the problem. It is harder for us to fix the other things like women's rights, a good government or equal opportunities.' (Alysha, year 10.)

5. Talk about how effective it is as a myth-buster argument for this statement: 'World poverty can be solved if all wealthy people donate money to organisations that help people in poverty'. How would the class score these comments? How could the score be improved? How would the class score these comments? How could the score be improved?

Play poverty myth-busters

1. Give each group a short period of time to brainstorm their own myth-busting arguments, given the criteria and points outlined in step 3.
2. Each group takes turns to bust their statement verbally within a 30 second time limit. Anyone in the group can speak or a speaker may be chosen. A judge then assigns points to the group as above.
3. Each point counts as a chance to blow into the balloon. Bust the poverty myth by letting the balloon go. The more points, the larger the balloon gets, and the better the mythbuster impact when the balloon deflates. Note: Balloons can be reinflated later and hung in the classroom for reflection purposes.



Analysis

Analysis: Exploring values and perspectives; considering responses and decisions

Te tātari: Te tūhura i ngā uara me ngā whakaaro; te whiriwhiri i ngā urupare me ngā whakatau

In order to create an effective learning environment, educators need to ensure that activities are interesting, build a sense of community, and connect with students' lives and previous learning. So, when it comes to providing a space for deeper awareness and broader analysis it is often necessary to combine them both together.

In our experience, young people often learn best when they experience 'aha' moments. These are not only moments when a light bulb is suddenly switched on in the young person's head, but the

moments when broken wires seem to connect in the mind of the learner as they suddenly become aware of a new fact in a moment of analysis. A fact that doesn't just give knowledge but also shows the young person how the topic they are exploring relates to them.

The following two activities are designed to provide young people with a deeper understanding around the defining process in complex concepts like poverty and the types of issues to which poverty is connected. Alongside the awareness activities, these activities are designed to connect the wires that often hinder both us and young people making sense of the inequalities and complexities connected to the concept, and definition of, poverty.

Players and power *From the desk of Jennie O'Donovan*

This discussion-based activity will get students thinking about how different groups define poverty, what might influence these views, and whose definitions are most powerful and why? Participants will be split into groups and given different definitions of poverty to explore. The room will then be set up like a UN assembly, and each group will try and convince the UN reps that theirs is the best definition and should be adopted by the UN.



Image: Nick Jeffery

Activity

1. Split participants into five groups and give each group a different definition of poverty from *Global Issues* or *Global Perspectives* (economic, resource, rights, multi-dimensional and subjective). Using *Global Issues* and other sources, allow time for each group to do some research. They should consider what indicators are used to measure poverty in their definition, what the strengths and weakness are, who might use this definition and also *why* they might find it a useful way to define poverty.
2. After the groups have done their research, set up a mock UN assembly in the room. Nominate one student from each group to become a UN Development Programme representative (one student could be Helen Clarke!); they sit at the front of the class. The rest of the class sit around the representative group in a semi-circle. They take turns presenting their findings. Their aim is to convince the UN reps to adopt their definition as the official UN definition of poverty. Encourage them to use a presentation method that would best represent the definer (eg. Graphs, images, a personal story, etc.).
3. At the end the UN reps will deliberate and decide on the best definition, based on what they heard. Then the whole class can debrief and discuss whether they made the right decision.

Debrief:

- Did the UN reps make the right decision?
- What are some of the problems or weaknesses of each definition that weren't presented to the UN reps? Would this have affected their decision?
- Which definitions are most dominant in society? Why might this be? And what are the implications of this?
- Who are the powerful and powerless in these definitions?

Optional extension

After this discussion ask students to go back to their small groups and to come up with their own definition of poverty, including what indicators they would use to measure it. What would they include (eg. income, life expectancy, environmental impact, participation, education)? They should think creatively and be prepared to justify their definition to the rest of the class.



Image: Makarios

Poverty twister: Experience the entangling effects of poverty

From the desks of Will Watterson and Sara Tamati

This activity adds a new twist to Twister. You'll need a standard twister mat to start off with, and two sets of *Opportunity/Misfortune* cards (see page 14).

The concept

Divide the group into two teams. Each team picks one person to be the 'Villager' (preferably someone who is flexible and coordinated).

The object of the game is to make the Villager from the other team fall over by sending 'misfortunes' their way, and to keep your Villager standing by sending them 'opportunities'. The first Villager to fall over loses, and the other team wins the game.

How it works

1. Set up the twister mat as you would for a normal game.
You don't need the spinner to play this version.
2. Set up the teams on either side of the mat. The two Villagers face each other from across the Twister mat, with their hands and feet in the usual starting positions, and their teams behind them.
Each team gets a dice and a set of *Opportunity/Misfortune* cards.
3. Both teams roll a dice, and the team that gets the highest number is allowed to take the first turn.
4. The team that starts rolls the dice again. Depending on the number they get, they can perform one of three actions:
 - Roll a 1 or 2 – They pick an **Opportunity** card to read out to their own Villager. After reading out the card, the Villager can then move one of their limbs to a more comfortable or advantageous place, to keep from falling over.
 - Roll a 3 or 4 – They (and their Villager) do nothing.
 - Roll a 5 or 6 – They pick a **Misfortune** card to read out to the opposing team's Villager. After reading out the card, they then direct that Villager to move a particular limb to a particular colour, eg. 'move your right foot to red'. Their aim is to have them fall over. **Note:** they cannot specify exactly which circle the Villager moves to. They can only tell them to move to a specific colour.
5. Once the action has been completed, the other team gets their turn. They roll the dice and follow the corresponding action explained in step 4.
6. This continues until one of the Villagers falls over.

Debriefing the activity

This game is meant to show the interconnectedness of poverty to other issues (environmental sustainability, economic crises, racism, war and conflict, sexism etc.).

It is also meant to show how poverty can be the result of an accumulation of many misfortunes or negative circumstances; not just one. Taking away one negative factor, or adding one positive one, doesn't always solve the problem immediately.

Once the game is over you could ask:

- The Villagers about how they felt.
- The teams whether they understood all of the misfortunes or opportunities.
- The winning Villager how it felt to 'escape' out of poverty, but for the other Villager to still be stuck there.
- The teams whether it was fair or good to use an activity with a competitive element to represent poverty issues.

To finish the activity and draw out key learning points, specifically ask participants:

- Which issues highlighted by the activity are connected to poverty?
- Are these issues included in any of the formal definitions we have around poverty?
- Putting the game aside, how easy do teams feel it is for people to get into and out of poverty?
- Do teams feel, after playing the game, that poverty is a choice for individuals, families, communities or countries?
- This game looked at current events and issues that might affect the chances of a person living in poverty or the possibility of getting out of poverty, do teams feel that there may be historical factors that can contribute to poverty?
- What about personal factors like social class, age, gender, ethnicity and disability?
- Why could some factors be opportunities for some people and misfortunes for others?

Extension

As an extension, you could have participants place cards into groups to represent those factors controlled internationally, those controlled nationally, those controlled by communities and those controlled by families and individuals. Then have participants discuss the aspects of that factor that contributed to poverty or may have helped an individual, community or country to get out of poverty.

Then discuss what aspects participants feel may need to be in place for opportunities to become realities – that is, for assistance given by international governments, international organisations and national governments to actually make a sustainable difference for individuals. You may also want to discuss what aspects could hinder, or stop, an opportunity becoming a reality.



Opportunities

Opportunities	Receive a microloan to start your own business!	Opportunities	The local school changes its policy by allowing girls to study. By getting an education the girls in your family will be able to increase the total family income and will share it wisely across the family.	Opportunities	A local young person designs and builds her own windmill in her backyard by learning from a book in the library. Soon she is holding workshops for everyone in your village teaching them how to make windmills and repair water pumps.
Opportunities	The town elects a new Mayor who builds an affordable childcare centre. Now both your parents can work, bringing in more income.	Opportunities	A youth worker starts a media-production centre which allows young people to tell their stories, learn how to read and develop good self-esteem. You are soon able to read and use a computer. Best of all, people are interested in your story.	Opportunities	An NGO offers training to local farmers. It helps improve the productivity of your farms by almost 50%.
Opportunities	The United States and Europe stop subsidising their farming industries. All of a sudden, you and your fellow farmers can compete on the world market with your cattle and crops, and your income increases dramatically.	Opportunities	An NGO provides the resources for your village to dig and maintain a well. Having clean water so close by means you don't have to walk so far anymore, saving time and energy which you can put into other things. It also means your village is a lot healthier.	Opportunities	You get together with your community and design a sustainable ecotourism attraction in your village. Visitors from overseas get to experience your culture and local scenery, and you get money flowing into the region in a sustainable and environmentally sensitive way.
Opportunities	Your government receives a loan and uses it to support affordable healthcare in your area. For the first time, your whole family can afford to go to the doctor, and to get essential immunisations.	Opportunities	Your country has its debt forgiven by the IMF and World Bank. It now has a lot more money to spend on education, health and infrastructure.	Opportunities	Full internet access is made available in your town, meaning you have access to important news, business and trading information, and websites that could teach you new skills.
Opportunities	You and several other young people form a local group which works with adults to positively address problems that arise in your neighbourhood. It starts off successfully and you find yourself profiled on several international websites, as well as being written about in books and magazines.	Opportunities	A group of mothers has come together to address issues of domestic violence and alcoholism in your small community. An international company supports them so that they can make podcasts to educate the men. After a few months, you notice that village families are a lot happier and more children are going to school.	Opportunities	Rains come early to your village this year and the dry crops get a much-needed drink. They shoot up overnight.
Opportunities	Your government builds roads from your town to the nearest port, so now for the first time you can take your produce there to sell for export.	Opportunities	You form a cooperative with other farmers in your area, and start selling your sugar cane on the Fair Trade market. The extra income lets you build a local school and an improved sanitation system so that people stop getting sick all the time.	Opportunities	Your community gets together and builds a recreation centre where young people can hang out. They no longer spend all their time on the streets, bored out of their minds and getting into trouble.

Misfortunes

<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>Your government starts printing money, causing inflation to go through the roof. You can't afford as many groceries so you drop from eating two meals a day to just one.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>The IMF agrees to give your country a loan as long as it opens its markets to cheap grain imports from the US. The subsidised grain undercuts local farmers who cannot compete (including your family) and you are all driven out of jobs.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>Local police are racist and corrupt, and beat up your mum and dad just for having a different skin colour from them. They throw your parents in jail for a week, by which time the family farm falls into disrepair.</p>
<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>One of the income-earning adults in your family catches malaria and gets very sick. The rest of the family has to work twice as hard, so you pull the kids out of school to work with you.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>The government agrees to privatise your country's water resources. A transnational corporation now owns the local water supply and has tripled rates. You can barely afford the water to cook and drink anymore, and bathing is out of the question, meaning you get sick more often.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>An underground pipe in your town ruptures due to lack of maintenance, causing sewage to flow through the streets. Disease escalates and many people get very sick.</p>
<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>A civil war that has been raging in your country reaches your town. Infrastructure is destroyed, crops burnt, and family members are killed. Your whole way of life is turned upside down.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>Pollution from a timber mill upstream has poisoned the river that runs through your community. Most of the fish have died and those that remain are sick. This was a major source of food and income for your family, and now it is gone.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>An underground pipe in your town ruptures due to lack of maintenance, causing sewage to flow through the streets. Disease escalates and many people get very sick.</p>
<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>An earthquake devastates your village. Infrastructure is destroyed, crops burnt, and family members are killed. You find you have to start and again and you don't know where or how.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>The local childcare centre is closed down due to funding issues. Now one of your parents has to stay home to look after the young children, reducing your family income by half.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>The government forcibly relocates you from your village to a big city, so they can use the land you were living on for coal mining. With no money (you never needed any in your village) you end up in a slum. Cut off from your homeland and traditional ways of living, many of your friends and family members die due to lack of shelter, food, and healthcare.</p>
<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>Your mum has been beaten up by her partner. It gets so bad that you are all forced to leave and go to a shelter, which means that mum loses her job, housing, healthcare, childcare, and all the other things that came from her partner's income.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>The Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) is agreed upon by powerful governments meeting in Tokyo, acting on behalf of transnational corporations. This agreement outlaws cheap generic versions of lifesaving drugs – the kind that treat malaria and HIV and AIDS. Millions of people relying on generic medicines, including some of your family members, can no longer afford the drugs that keep them alive.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>Your local school only educates boys past the age of 12, because you are a girl you can't further your education. You find yourself having to stay at home and help out with domestic chores when your dream was to become a doctor.</p>
<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>The government receives a development loan from the World Bank and uses it to build a new hydroelectric dam upstream from your village. The river shrinks to a trickle, meaning your irrigation systems are affected and your crops begin to wither and die.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>Climate change means that sea levels have slowly risen over the past few decades. Salt water enters the fresh water system in your village, making it impossible to grow crops in your area. You have to move.</p>	<p>Misfortunes</p> <p>Your cellphone breaks and can't be repaired. You can no longer contact the brokers to arrange the best deal for your farm produce. You are five hours walk from any broker so you have to take a risk and hope that you won't be ripped off.</p>



Action

Nowhere is the Hand of Action so relevant than in the addressing of poverty. Through engaging young people into taking action on poverty, you effectively engage young people in taking action over a variety of issues. No matter how poverty is defined, it is connected to issues around health, welfare, conflict, governance, rights, power, access to resources and development. These issues may cause poverty, or be caused by poverty, and they can entrench people into conditions of poverty.

Hence, it is imperative, that we realise that the interconnectedness of poverty means that addressing one factor alone may not take a person or community out of poverty. Rather a number of factors have to be addressed and in all this, opportunities need to be created for voice and self-determination.

When it comes to the communities in poverty in the developing world, this means we should not see action as 'saving others' from poverty but, rather, providing access to the resources and means that will ensure that the communities themselves are empowered to address the conditions they feel have contributed to poverty. When it comes to addressing poverty in Aotearoa NZ, and in the lives of young people, this means creating opportunities that allow young people to have a voice. It also means creating spaces which allow young people to resist the factors that they feel are trapping them in positive and transformative ways.

So, how can we do this within the Hand of Action? Whilst the finger of Critical Engagement (reading between the lines of poverty definitions and creating new definitions) and Citizenship are evident across all forms of action taken on poverty issues and definitions, Crucial Partnerships, Consumerism and Creation each have their own place.

Action: So what? Now what?

Hapainga nga mahi: He aha? Me aha tatou inaianei?

Crucial Partnerships

Whether we are educating young people in the school or community, it is essential that we create opportunities for Crucial Partnerships. This involves connecting with organisations that are addressing poverty globally (eg. UNICEF, Oxfam and World Vision) or locally (eg. Barnardos). These organisations often use media to generate funds for their actions in the communities in which they are focused.

The internationally-focused ones, in particular, are often criticised for the ways in which they represent communities in advertising. And, if events like the 40 hour Famine demonstrate anything, their advertising does have an impact on young people. In 2009 alone 120,000 people participated in the Famine and over NZ\$2.7 million dollars was raised.

Rather than teaching young people to avoid the impact of advertising, we should be working *with* young people to critically engage with representations of poverty in marketing for events like the Famine. We should also work with the organisations involved so that these moments of competition and fun can also be moments of education.

Many organisations using marketing to generate funds also have education resources which take an in-depth look at the issues. Actually working with organisations (or their resources) to make an event an opportunity for education can move the young person from a media-defined concept of poverty to an understanding of how poverty is affecting children and young people, and how resources such as healthcare and education can make a difference.



Consumerism

What we buy ourselves (and what we *can* buy) has a huge impact on the lives of others when it comes to stories of poverty. Today, the world is connected through webs of production and consumerism. A simple MP3 player connects the purchaser to the lives of thousands. Today, a single person cannot make an electronic gadget in the backyard shed without purchasing resources made in other countries. Even our supermarket trolleys are overloaded with international products (both fresh and produced).

Educating young people about the global stories of their products can empower them to make informed decisions. This is particularly because these stories are often connected to issues: chocolate and cotton to child slavery, technology and clothing to sweatshops, and most to human rights. Each story also has sub-stories of resistance and action.

For example, one powerful story of resistance and education comes from New York, where thousands of young people living in the poorer suburbs of the city launched the 'great take-back' campaign. In a single day, they all returned their Nike sneakers to the doorsteps of Nike Town. Their message to Nike: You keep people poor in your out-sourced factories by paying the minimal price for production and you keep us poor by charging us the maximum price at the shop counter. No Fair! You deserve a cross not a swoosh.

ONLINE For a range of stories around products consumed by young people today, check out *Global Bits: Daniel's story* available for download from our website.

www.globalfocus.org.nz



Creation

One of the most powerful ways we can address the issues surrounding poverty, and the definitions of poverty, is to provide young people opportunities to create their own poverty stories.

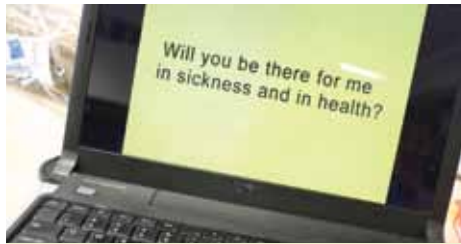
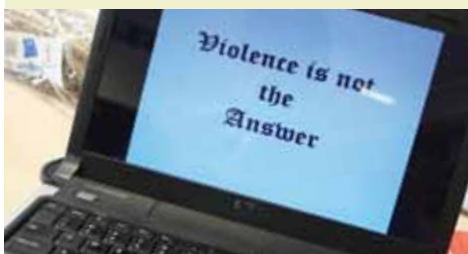
You will need

1. Paper and basic stationary for writing and scripting.
2. A PC or laptop with XP (Windows), OSX (Apple) or more recent Operating System.
3. A microphone that can plug into the computer or, if it has a traditional microphone plug (cannon), a microphone and USB adaptor.
4. Suitable music production programmes. If you are looking for a free good programme then Acid Xpress is fantastic and can be downloaded from the web. Apple computers come with Garage Band which is the equivalent to Acid Xpress.
5. Suitable video production programmes. If you are looking for a free programme then Windows Movie Maker (which comes with XP, Vista and 7) is suitable; however, better alternatives include Roxio Videowave and Sony Vegas which cost around NZ\$200. Apple computers come with iMovie which is the equivalent to the bought version Videowave.
6. Camera and/or internet connection.

Warm up: Poverty metaphors

Metaphors and similes can be powerful ways of describing poverty and a good way to start scripting.

1. Divide participants into groups of around four.
2. Provide some examples of poverty similes:
 - Poverty is like being in jail, because it's so difficult to escape from it
 - Poverty is like a maze because it is difficult to find a way out.
3. Allow participants time to write their own similes.
4. Share similes and allow time for reflection.



Get started: Poverty message

Now provide space for young people to develop their own message. Depending upon your group this could be very easy or very difficult. If it proves difficult, after step 4. move straight to the story making, using the pictures as stimuli.

1. In the same groups, give each a selection of lyrics to reflect on. Examples of young artists who provide songs that address poverty and the issues that are connected to it are 'Waving flag' by K'naan (Somalia), 'Ordinary Life' by Smashproof (NZ), 'I'm a Lucky One' by True Rez Crew (Native American) and Lost Visionz by Nesian Mystik (NZ). All of these artists have videos on YouTube.
2. Have each group brainstorm poverty, the issues it is connected to and what they think needs to happen to address it in the world or in their community.
3. Get each group to select from their brainstorm one key point on which they would like to focus.
4. From that key point have groups come up with four sub-points.
5. Groups then work at using metaphors, similes (it is like), sense verbs (see, hear, feel, think, know, etc.) and their own ideas to create a poverty message. This message might be spoken over a sound track or just read.
6. If aiming to turn this into a digital story, use a scripting guide (counted lines on a piece of paper) which restrict this message to a set amount of lines (12 lines gives around two minutes per story). The scripting guide allows for a pattern of one key point followed by two lines of elaboration. (Three key points with six lines of elaboration in all and a final key message).
7. Have participants use the samples that come with Acid Xpress (or similar program) to create a soundtrack to their message.
8. Plug in microphone and record voice-over.
9. Render track down into a MP3 or WMA file.

Step Three: Digital Story

The final step is to turn this message into a digital story. Examples of these types of stories can be found in the *Hear Our Voices* report which used the process here with groups of children and young people around Aotearoa NZ. The stories themselves can be viewed on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/user/aotearoa12aotearoa

Here's how to get to the final step.

1. In the same groups, have students brainstorm the types of images they will need to tell their message or illustrate their key points.
2. Participants then use cameras to take appropriate pictures or use the internet to find creative commons images (on Google, select advanced image search and filter results for 'images that can be reused with modification').
3. If participants haven't written a script, allow them time to use the images and their key points to write one.
4. Storyboard the story – order of images, type of effect and type of transition.
5. Use a video program to create the story in this order:
 - Import audio track
 - Photos (and colour/text panels)
 - Effects
 - Transitions
 - Text (if not done earlier)
 - Save the file.

Some programs, like Sony Vegas, have very good audio functions which allow you to record and produce your soundtrack easily (and professionally) within the program. If you are using a program like this, you might want to have participants put the soundtrack in as a final step. This involves putting in the voiceover, then the soundtrack samples in the actual video programme.

Finally, now that you have a selection of messages, have a community screening and discussion. If all your images and sounds are Creative Commons (free to use) then consider publishing stories on the internet. Allow the voices of your young people to be heard and seen.

Using Global Perspectives and Global Issues in the Classroom

Te Whakamahi i a Global Perspectives me Global Issues i te akomanga



At Global Focus Aotearoa we have been using a social inquiry method to teaching for some time. In most of our resources teachers are familiar with this being talked about as the three As+R. Here, we expand upon how both poverty in *Global Issues* and *Global Perspectives* is specifically related to the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC).



Effective pedagogy: Connections to the Best Evidence Synthesis (BES)

The BES encourages teachers to ensure that learning experiences are connected to the lives of students (Connection), aligned with their previous knowledge and intended outcomes (Alignment), interactive, fun and exciting (Community) and connect to the interests of students (Interest). We have designed *Global Issues* and the activities in *Global Perspectives* in such a way that all four Mechanisms are drawn upon.

Through **Connection**, we have focused on the ways in which young people are exposed to poverty stories in their own lives through the media. We have also focused on how young people are taking action with regards to poverty. Engaging students in reading media texts and making their own media texts makes this approach to teaching poverty relevant. Furthermore, critical readings of poverty give students opportunities to read for bias and diversity in poverty representations.

Through **Alignment**, *Global Issues* recognises that all students have their own poverty story to begin with (whether it is about themselves or others). From this, the intended learning

outcomes are to have students explore the factors that influence their story and develop a critical understanding of poverty through the stories of others. The activities in *Global Perspectives* build on from *Global Issues* and provide students with an opportunity to recreate their stories and definitions of poverty.

The activities in *Global Perspectives* have been designed to promote dialogue amongst students in a **Community** of inquiry. Through these activities, the teacher takes on the role of facilitator and students are given the responsibility to learn content through participation and discussion in group work.

The activities in *Global Issues* and *Global Perspectives* allow teachers to meet the motivational needs and **Interests** of a variety of students within a diverse classroom context. Depending on the context, teachers can draw upon the firsthand experiences of students in the development of stories and reflection stages. The youth-focused stories in *Global Issues* are designed to engage students in an emotionally-positive manner – they can make a difference.

NZC Principles: Poverty – a Future Focused issue

The NZC principle adhered to in all *Global Focus* resources is **Future Focus**. Poverty is an issue that not only affects the world today but will continue to affect the world tomorrow. Unless we equip students to actively think about this issue and look at different ways to address it, then we risk disempowering students – showing them a locked door but leaving them blind searching for the key.

The reality is, if we are going to prepare our students for a sustainable future, then we need to acknowledge the world in which we live. In order to understand **sustainability** in a complex manner, we need to be working with students to ask – do our current responses and decisions around poverty actually empower people? How can we work together so that change can occur, either in the classroom, in our own lives or in the wider world?

Through looking at the interconnected story of poverty, we are able to work with students to examine **globalisation** and its effects – both positive and negative. A deeper analysis of poverty combined with opportunities for action and voice also allow students to engage in **citizenship** – both at a local and global level. Students can be actively involved in their world now – they don't have to wait until they are 18.

Finally, poverty opens a fresh pedagogical door when it comes to opportunities for **enterprise**. Broadly speaking, enterprise isn't just about money and business opportunities. Enterprise is about thinking outside-the-box in order to present a unique solution to a current problem or opportunity. Enterprise, alongside citizenship, is what underpins the stories in *Global Issues* where young people are using the resources that are made available to them to resist inequality and create possibility.

Key Competencies: Poverty literacy (Languages, Symbols and Texts)

Whilst a critical analysis of poverty in the classroom undeniably involves critical thinking, managing self, relating to others, and participating and contributing, a key focus within *Global Issues* and *Global Perspectives* has been students learning to read the language of poverty and rewrite their own stories and understandings of poverty.

Critical thinking, managing self, relating to others, and participating and contributing are inextricably linked to any discussion around poverty. However, becoming literate about poverty means becoming critically informed about the presentation of poverty in a variety of texts (written, visual, audio and video).

Essentially, through focusing on **language, symbols and texts**, we are able to recognise that poverty, in itself, is a concept with many conceptual understandings. These understandings come to us through written texts, images, videos, the lyrics of songs and everyday discussions. We need to work with students so that they can recognise how the writers of these texts make a variety of choices in the words, symbols and genres they use. Their choice represents a particular conceptual understanding that needs to be critically analysed to find messages of fact, power and, at times, hope.

Finally, through engaging students in the media being used by other young people to resist the inequalities that surround poverty throughout the world, we create moments for students to become competent in their own communication and media creation. We also allow spaces for students to play with language and symbols so that fresh stories can be created and greater community awareness generated.

Learning Areas: Problem posing and Problem solving - Social sciences and the integrated curriculum

At **Secondary** levels poverty has a place in Social Studies, Senior Social Studies, History, Geography and Economics. However, the focus we have taken in *Global Issues* and *Global Perspectives* has been to focus specially on ideologies, ideological conflicts, rights and responsibilities. This firmly entrenches the two magazines within **Social Studies** and **Senior Social Studies**. You will find links to Achievement Objectives from Level Four right through to Level Eight.

The focus on economic poverty, and responses and decisions towards poverty also connect the content of these resources to **Economics** and **Geography**. In particular, students are able to look at the factors that can impact on economic decisions made by individuals, households and countries. Students are also able to see how economies are inextricably linked together within a global market – the decisions they make about their consumption connects them to other communities in other countries.

Within **Geography**, students are able to see how poverty is linked to complex issues such as climate change, changing populations, urbanisation, conflict, globalisation and sustainability. Students are able to look specifically at the ways in which people interact with their social and cultural environment in order to address issues of poverty in their communities.

Through using tools such as *Gapminder* and *Worldometer*, students are able to look at the global mapping of poverty. Through engaging with New Zealand Statistics provided by organisations such as *The Child Poverty Action Group*, students are able to gauge the geographical picture of poverty in New Zealand society. Through mapping poverty, students can then explore the complex factors contributing to, and connected to, poverty.

Teachers in **upper Primary levels** will find that the particular focus taken on poverty in *Global Issues* and *Global Perspectives* connects to Social Studies, English (making

meaning and creating meaning), Health and Physical Education (healthy communities and environments) and, to a lesser extent, Technology (problem solving through technological practice).

Bringing the four areas together, students are able to critically explore the concept and reality of poverty (**Social Studies**), gain an understanding around the language and images used to create poverty definitions (**English**), explore the relationship between poverty and wellbeing (**Health and Physical Education**) and develop enterprising ideas for action (**Technology**). In such an approach, it is essential that both teachers and students understand which Learning Area is being focused on at a particular point and time.

Building Conceptual Understandings in the Social Sciences (BCUSS)

All of Global Focus Aotearoa teaching resources incorporate a Social Inquiry approach to Global Education. Specially, our pedagogy allows for the exploration of a variety of conceptual understanding surrounding a complex concept. Brought together, *Global Issues* and the activities provided in *Global Perspectives* allow for students to Find Out Information (Awareness) on a concept, explore the Values and Perspectives/Responses and Decisions (Analysis) and ask the key questions So What? Now What? (Action).

Reflection is incorporated within both the Social Inquiry approach and Global Education. As you work through the resources and activities with students, give them moments to both reflect on their learning, and reflect on their own responses to their learning.

Poverty can be an overwhelming concept for many students, particularly the stories of extreme poverty and particularly if students, themselves, are experiencing the effects of poverty in their own lives. This is why it is essential that learning does not stop at Awareness and Analysis, but that students are given opportunities to create their own stories around poverty and take action on a specific aspect related to poverty in a way that is meaningful to them. Providing a specific space for Action allows for the type of Reflection that builds compassion for others and hope for the future.



Useful websites and resources

Etahi atu pae tukutuku, rauemi hoki

Books and other reading material

Global Issues: Poverty, *Global Focus Aotearoa, 2010*

This magazine is the youth/student-friendly accompaniment to this issue of *Global Perspectives*.
www.globalfocus.org.nz

Voices of the poor, *Deepa Narayan, Robert Chambers, Kaul Shah & Patti Petesch, 2000*

This interesting book explores poverty through the words of the poor living in a number of developing communities. It's available from our library.

A handbook of children's participation, *Barry Percy-Smith & Nigel Thomas (Eds.), 2010*

This book explores youth participation approaches used in a variety of contexts from developing and developed countries. It includes a commentary from two NZ youth on initiatives used to address poverty and governance. It's available from our library.

'This is how I see it', *Michelle Egan-Bitran, 2010*

This report uses the voices of NZ youth to explore poverty in Aotearoa NZ. It is the final report in the Children's Commissioner's PhotoVoice project.

<http://tinyurl.com/thisishowiseeit>

The digital storytelling cookbook, *Joe Lambert, 2010*

The acclaimed how-to for digital storytelling. Most of this book is based on Apple software but the downloadable chapters give valuable information for scripting and storytelling.

www.storycenter.org/cookbook.html

Global Bits: Daniel's story, *Global Focus Aotearoa, 2010*

This edition of *Global Bits* explores the global stories behind many of the products young people consume daily.

<http://tiny.cc/bfxmm>

Global Perspectives: Global Education, *Global Focus Aotearoa, 2009*

The first issue of *Global Perspectives* explains the approach to teaching and learning adopted in this issue of *Global Perspectives*.

<http://tiny.cc/mh1g4>

Resistance, *Global Focus Aotearoa, 2009*

This teaching resource uses the Social Inquiry model to examine movements of resistance throughout the world. It includes a brilliant case study on the NZ youth campaign *Supersize My Pay*.

Websites

Gapminder provides a space where users can interact with graphing functions to explore global disparities.

www.gapminder.org

Worldometer is a dynamic website providing up to the second global statistics on population growth, economics, consumption, health and the environment.

www.worldometers.info

The **Freedom Writers** site provides information on the movie and the movement. It has links to classroom resources.

www.freedomwriters.com

Wan Smol bag (One Small Bag) is the website to the Vanuatu-based group which uses theatre to create awareness and discussion around a variety of issues connected to poverty.

www.wansmolbag.org

PhotoVoice is the UK-based international initiative which empowers communities through providing education, photography and enterprise initiatives. Its aim is to bring about social change through equipping the most vulnerable groups in society.

www.photovoice.org

The **Educational Video Center** website gives information, teaching resources and case studies of a US initiative which combines video and Social Inquiry learning to address issues in disadvantaged communities.

www.evc.org

The **Big Mac Index** is an interesting site created by *The Economist* that attempts to use the popular Big Mac to illustrate global economics.

www.economist.com/markets/bigmac

Child Poverty Action Group is a good site to start from if you are interested in finding out about child poverty in Aotearoa NZ.

www.cpag.org.nz

Acid Planet is the site to download *Acid Xpress* from, Sony's music creating software.

www.acidplanet.com/downloads/xpress

The **Global Focus Aotearoa** website is a space where you can keep informed about our activities, download our magazines, find suggestions for taking action and activities to use with young people.

www.globalfocus.org.nz

Just Focus is an Aotearoa NZ site for young people interested in global issues.

www.justfocus.org.nz

Go Global is an Aotearoa NZ site for educators looking for resources and information on a variety of global issues.

www.goglobal.org.nz

Videos, web videos and podcasts

Hans Rosling's profile on *TEDTalks* provides a number of interesting videos which look at extreme poverty and *Gapminder*.

www.ted.com/speakers/hans_rosling.html

Aotearoa12Aotearoa's channel on YouTube has links to the Digital Stories created by young New Zealanders about their rights. These stories were sent to the UN in a report *Hear Our Voices*.

www.youtube.com/user/aotearoa12aotearoa

Stories for Change provide a number of digital stories created by young people in the US to raise awareness and address a number of issues related to poverty and their own lives. It also has information for groups wanting to use digital storytelling in communities and classrooms.

<http://storiesforchange.net>

Freedom Writers is available from most video outlets and profiles how one teacher transformed her classroom through allowing students to rewrite their lives and their futures.

The tools of Global Education



Awareness

Finding out information about the issue.



Analysis

Exploring the values and perspectives. Considering responses and decisions.



Action

So what? Now what?

« Reflection Generating hope. Building compassion. »

