



LESSON PLAN #2

Sustainable Development Goal #10 - Reduced Inequalities Ten Chairs

What is this about?

Students will consider the impact of inequalities in society. Inequality threatens long-term social and economic development. It impedes poverty reduction and destroys people's sense of fulfillment and self-worth. In turn, it can create conflict, crime, disease and environmental degradation.

Learning Goals and Objectives:

Students will participate in a demonstration of unequal distribution of resources. Students will discuss the impact of unequal distribution of resources.

Materials:

- 10 chairs
- Graham crackers (or other small crackers)

Preparation:

Graham crackers or other crackers for the class.

Time:

20 minutes

Steps:

(Activity based on simulation from United for a Fair Economy).

1. 10 students will be asked to participate in this simulation. They will line up at the front of the room, seated in 10 chairs facing the rest of the group.
2. Explain that each chair represents 10% of the wealth in the world and each person represents 10% of the people in the world. So, when one person is in each chair the wealth is shared equally.
3. Explain that wealth is what you own:
 - Your “stuff” and your clothes
 - The food in your cupboards
 - Your family’s apartment or house and all the furniture in it
 - Your family’s car
 - Your cash, bank accounts, and savings—in piggy banks or banking institutions.
4. Explain that although there is a lot of wealth in the world, it is not distributed very evenly. Some families, even some countries or continents, have a lot and some families and countries or continents don’t have enough for everyone to have good food to eat, good health care, homes that don’t leak when it rains and are warm in winter, a chance to go to school, a good job, and more. If a disaster strikes, some countries have resources to respond and recover, and others do not.
5. Select two students to represent the richest continents in the world, and eight to represent less wealthy continents. (NOTE! Be mindful of not asking students who may have fewer resources in your class to roleplay the less wealthy continents.)
6. Ask the class to guess how many chairs “belong to” the richest continents of the world. Remind students that the chairs represent wealth and resources.
7. After guesses are registered, tell the other eight students they will have to move over because these two people “require” more space and they get eight chairs. Encourage the two wealthiest continents to stretch out or even lie down on their chairs and make themselves comfortable.
8. Then tell the remaining eight students that they represent the rest of the world. Invite them all to get comfortable on the two chairs that are left for them.
9. Once all are settled (some on laps, some hanging over the back, some on the floor at others’ feet) ask the “less wealthy” members of the class crowded around their two chairs what life is like at their end of the line.
10. Ask the class to describe what might be like to be crowded into the bottom one or two chairs of the world.
11. Ask the “wealthy” representatives what it feels like to be where they are looking over at those who are all jammed together on just two chairs.

Discuss:

"What do you imagine countries say to justify this huge inequality in the distribution of the world's wealth?" (e.g., if you worked harder you could be rich too, if you owned a business that gives others jobs you would deserve to make more for yourself, if your government weren't so corrupt there would be more money for you, etc.).

Optional additional simulation:

1. Present two plates of crackers (one with eight crackers and one with two crackers). Tell the group that this represents the wealth of the world also. Give a plate with eight graham crackers in one high stack to the two persons, seated on the eight chairs. Give the plate with only two graham crackers to the eight persons on two chairs.
2. Ask the two groups to count their crackers. Ask them how many crackers there are for each person
3. Ask the "less wealthy" group how it feels to know they don't even have enough crackers for one each when they can see the rich people at the other end with four crackers each.
4. Ask the "wealthy" persons how it feels to have so much when they see the big group with only a little?
5. Ask the whole group what we could do to make things different—to make more space for those who are crowded? Is it possible to make sure everyone has at least one cracker apiece?

CONSIDER: How can you use this insight into inequity impact your game design to consider SDG #10? What conflicts might arise? What challenges might be difficult to overcome? How can you build equity or overcome inequity with the mechanics of the game play?