

Global issues brainstorming and discussion

Warmer: Personal questions

Ask each other questions from below that you'd particularly like to hear the answers to, using the follow-up questions in brackets afterwards to ask for more information if you like, and remembering at least two interesting things you learn to share with the class later.

- What are you studying at university? (Why did you choose that major?)
- What topics are you studying at the moment (e.g. this week)?
- What parts of your studies do you find particularly interesting?/ Which topics would you like to study more about?
- Why did you choose to take part in this English course? (What do you expect to cover in this course?/ How have you studied English before?)
- Which other countries particularly interest you? (How are the issues in that country different to the issues in this country?)
- How interested are you in global issues?
- Which global issues particularly interest you?
- What does "global issues" mean (to you)?/ How would you define "global issues"? (How is it different from "social issues"?)

Share two interesting things which your partner said with the other groups.

Discuss the last two questions as a class.

Brainstorming a global issues mind map

Discuss possible definitions of “global issues” as a class.

Work in groups of two or three. First of all without looking below, brainstorm as many global issues as you can onto a mind map/ spider diagram, with categories, sub-categories and examples. Write “Global issues” in the middle of a large piece of blank paper or the whiteboard, then brainstorm categories (e.g. “Extremism”), sub-categories (e.g. “Terrorism”) and specific examples (e.g. “Bombings”). To make sure that you only brainstorm global issues (not social issues more generally), think about which issues require transnational solutions/ cooperation among nations. When you run out of ideas, look at the categories, then sub-categories and finally specific examples below to help. When you finish, you will share any categories, sub-categories or specific examples that you brainstormed which are not in the lists below.

Useful phrases for group brainstorming onto a mind map

Useful phrases for smooth brainstorming

“Any (more) ideas?”

“I’m not sure about..., but let’s write it down (for now) anyway”

“Let’s just get all our ideas down and discuss them later”

Useful phrases for putting things in categories

“We can put these together because...”

“I think these two are related.”

“Is there a bigger category which we can put this/ these into?”

“What category can we put these in?”

Useful phrases for brainstorming examples

“What other things fit into this category?”

“Another example of that is...”

“Can we write anything else here?”

Useful phrases for reorganising the mind map

“Maybe we should move this one over here (because...)”

Categories of global issues

Use the categories below to help organise and extend your mind map:

- Borders
- Business/ Economics
- Communication(s)
- Development
- Diplomacy
- Energy
- Environment/ Nature
- Equality/ Inequality
- Exploitation
- Extremism
- Governing systems
- Health
- Human resources
- Human rights
- Hygiene/ Sanitation
- Intellectual property/ IP
- International organisations
- Law/ Justice
- Living standards/ Quality of life
- Migration
- Natural resources
- Nutrition/ Food
- Oceans/ The sea
- Peace/ Security
- Population
- Poverty
- Transport/ Travel

Use the subcategories below in the same way.

Make sure that you have at least one specific example for each subcategory.

Share any extra examples or categories not on these lists, then ask about any of these which you couldn't understand and/ or couldn't add to your mind map.

Sub-categories of global issues

- Agriculture/ Farming
- Air travel
- Brain drain
- Charities/ NPOs/ NGOs
- Child abduction
- Child labour
- Climate change/ Global warming
- Communicable diseases/ Infectious diseases
- Copyright/ Patents
- Corruption
- Debt
- Democracy
- Education/ Training
- Environmental degradation
- Espionage/ Spying
- Ethnic cleansing
- Freedom
- Gender
- Malnutrition
- Modern slavery
- Nationalism
- Natural disasters
- Organised crime
- People smuggling/ People trafficking
- Piracy
- Pollution
- Population growth
- Refugees
- Religious fundamentalism
- Sexual exploitation
- Smuggling
- Space exploration
- Surveillance
- Sustainable development
- Tax
- Terrorism
- The Internet
- The UN
- Trade
- Vaccination
- War
- Water
- Wildlife

More specific examples of global issues

- access to the internet
- air pollution
- arms trade
- bonded labour
- bribery
- censorship
- chemical weapons
- child abuse
- clean water/ potable water
- CO2
- corporate espionage
- cyclones
- the dark web
- debt forgiveness
- deforestation
- desertification
- drought
- drug smuggling
- endangered species
- epidemics/ pandemics
- extinctions
- fair trade
- famine
- fishing
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech
- globalisation
- government debt
- habitat destruction
- IMF
- invasive species
- noise pollution
- nuclear weapons
- online gambling
- outsourcing
- sex industry
- space junk
- space mining
- Sustainable Development Goals/ SDGs
- tax havens
- ultranationalism
- UNHCR
- UNICEF
- water pollution
- World Bank
- yakuza

Global issues ranking and discussion

Work together to find these things from this list in the lists above or your own mind map, trying to be as specific with what you choose as you can. Your teacher will tell you if/ when/ how you should use the optional extra things to classify in brackets ().

- What the top five priorities for international organisations such as the UN should be (and also the bottom five lowest priorities)
- The top five most solvable global issues (and also the bottom five least solvable problems/ impossible problems)
- Five global issues that should be taught about in primary schools/ elementary schools in this country (plus five topics that can be avoided or should be avoided)
- Five global issues which aren't so important in this country (plus five which are as important or more important in this country than in the world overall)
- Five global issues which should have more media coverage in this country (plus five which don't deserve more coverage)
- Five global (not purely domestic) issues which political parties in this country should have clear policies on in their next election manifestos (plus five which they don't need to state in that situation)
- Five global issues which will most increase in importance in the next 30 years (plus five which will decrease in importance, not increase in importance, or not increase much in importance)

Present one list to other groups and see if they agree.

Global issues discussion questions

Choose questions from the list below to discuss with your partner(s), starting with the ones which you'd most like to hear your partner's opinions on:

- Are governments' economic policies more important than their social policies, do you think?
- Do you think it is fair for nuclear-armed countries like the USA to stop other countries getting nuclear weapons?
- How big a problem is online gambling?
- How can governments control dangerous religious fundamentalist and/ or religious cults (without losing freedom of religion)?
- How do you feel about paying ransoms to pirates who kidnap ships and their crews?
- How does the position of women in this country compare to other countries?
- How likely are we to decrease CO2 emissions in the next twenty years?
- How worried are you about epidemics?
- Is democracy increasing or decreasing in the world, do you think?
- Is it ever a good idea to invade foreign countries to stop civil wars?
- Should children be allowed to work in very poor countries?
- Should freedom of speech include people being allowed to spread anti-vaccination stories?
- Should this country accept more refugees?
- What are the reasons for increasing ultranationalism?
- What are your predictions for air travel in the next 25 years?
- What can be done about highly trained people such as doctors moving to richer countries who maybe need them less than their home countries?
- What can governments do about pollution that comes from other countries?
- What do you think about banning nuclear energy?
- What is your opinion on people who only give to domestic charities or only give to animal charities?
- What would you say if someone suggested countries only fishing in their own national waters?
- When should governments restrict freedom of speech?
- Why is it so difficult to stop piracy?
- Would you be more likely to give money to a charity which saves lives or to a charity which improves quality of life for the living?

Ask about any questions which you couldn't answer or aren't sure that you answered correctly.

Use the underlined parts of the questions above to ask each other about other global issues.

As a class, brainstorm questions with the same sentence stems.

Global issues collocations (classwork or homework A)

Without looking above for now, find global issues in the list of collocations below by joining words in the left column and words in the right columns of each section:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. air/ noise/ water | abduction/ abuse/ labour |
| 2. bonded | change |
| 3. brain | debt/ espionage |
| 4. chemical/ nuclear | diseases |
| 5. child | drain |
| 6. clean/ potable | forgiveness |
| 7. (manmade) climate | labour |
| 8. communicable/ infectious | pollution |
| 9. corporate | smuggling |
| 10. the dark | water |
| 11. debt | weapons |
| 12. drug/ people | web |
| 13. endangered/ invasive | cleansing |
| 14. environmental | degradation |
| 15. ethnic | destruction |
| 16. fair | disasters/ resources |
| 17. freedom of | information/ religion/ speech |
| 18. global | property |
| 19. habitat | resources/ rights |
| 20. human | slavery |
| 21. intellectual | species |
| 22. living | standards |
| 23. modern | trade |
| 24. natural | warming |
| 25. non-profit/ non-governmental | crime |
| 26. online | development (goals) |
| 27. organised | exploration/ junk/ mining |
| 28. people | Fund |
| 29. population | fundamentalism |
| 30. religious | gambling |
| 31. space | growth |
| 32. sustainable | havens |
| 33. tax | nationalism |
| 34. International Monetary | Nations (High Commission for Refugees) |
| 35. ultra- | organisations |
| 36. the United | smuggling/ trafficking |

Check above, then compare your answers in the next class.

Homework B – More brainstorming/ Research

For homework, find or think of five more global issues which haven't been mentioned during this lesson such as more specific examples of the things that you talked about.

Homework C – Ranking discussion online

Choose one more of these ranking tasks that you didn't discuss before, then discuss it online before the next lesson in the way that your teacher tells you to. Please comment on other people's ideas as well as posting your own lists and reasons.

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