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# Critical Literacy in Global Citizenship Education

Professional Development Resource Pack



Those of us who attempt to act and do things for others or for the world without deepening our own self-understanding, freedom, integrity, and capacity to love, will not have anything to give others. We will communicate to them nothing but the contagion of our own obsessions, our aggressivity, our ego-centered ambitions and our delusions about ends and means. - Thomas Merton

## A message from the editors

This set of resources has been designed to be used as a professional development tool by educators who are interested in creating learning spaces where participants can engage critically with a range of global issues and perspectives. Each activity was designed to structure safe spaces of dialogue and enquiry, where how you relate to others is as important as what you learn.

This publication is one of the outcomes of a collective learning process involving educators and academics in 9 countries spanning 4 years. Our starting point was the question:

What are the challenges for global citizenship education in an interdependent, diverse and unequal world?

The central dimension of our response to this question involves building the life skills to deal with complexity, uncertainty and insecurity. For this reason, we believe that at the core of global citizenship education lies the development of critical literacy and independent thinking, which can help learners:

-  to engage with complex local/global processes and diverse perspectives
-  to examine the origins and implications of their own and other people's assumptions
-  to negotiate change, to transform relationships, to think independently and to make responsible and conscious choices about their own lives and how they affect the lives of others
-  to live with and learn from difference and conflict and to prevent conflict from escalating to aggression and violence
-  to establish ethical, responsible and caring relationships beyond their identity groups.

You can use this resource in professional development settings or informally with colleagues. You can also use it for private reflection; however, we strongly recommend that you engage in dialogue with others in your learning journey. You will find more themes like the ones contained here, as well as activities for young people/secondary schools available for free download at: [www.osdemethodology.org.uk](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk).

These activities were piloted in various professional development contexts in the UK, Brazil, USA, Canada, India, Peru and Singapore. However, we feel we are involved in a continuous learning process, so we invite you to engage with the materials and to explore, debate and question them - and then make them your own. We also encourage you to send us your feedback and welcome you to join us in the on-going debate and research in which we are involved.

We hope you gain from and enjoy this process!

**Vanessa Andreotti, Linda Barker  
and Katy Newell-Jones**

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Illustrations by Alexandre Dubiela  
[www.dubiela.com.br](http://www.dubiela.com.br)

# OSDE

OSDE stands for Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry. This educational initiative promotes a methodology for the introduction of global issues and perspectives in educational contexts, such as teacher, adult, higher and secondary education. OSDE has been developed and piloted by a group of educators and researchers in 8 countries and it is hosted by the Centre for the Study of Social and Global Justice at the University of Nottingham.

OSDE offers a methodology for structuring safe spaces for dialogue and enquiry where participants feel comfortable to express themselves and ask any question without feeling embarrassed or unintelligent. In order to create such spaces, the project proposes:

1. The discussion and adoption of **basic principles**
2. a **set of procedures** for structuring an enquiry
3. **facilitation guidelines** for creating an appropriate ethos for the relationships, exchanges and cognitive processes within the group.



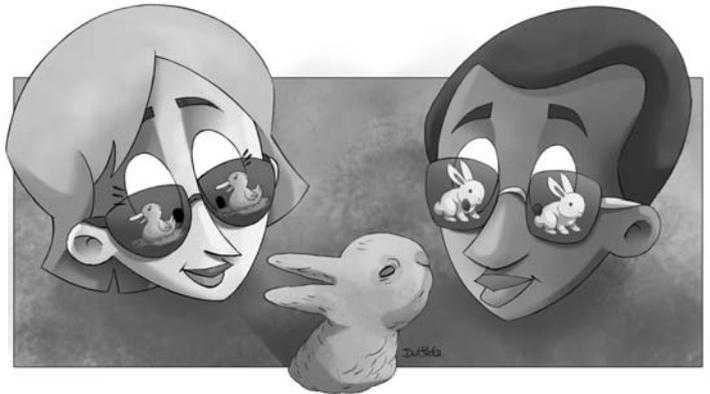
## Proposed Principles

### 1. Every individual brings to the space valid and legitimate knowledge constructed in their own contexts

We look at the world through lenses constructed in a complex web in our contexts, influenced by several external forces (cultures, media, religions, education, upbringing), internal forces (personality, reactions, conflicts) and encounters and relationships. The image these lenses project represent our knowledge of ourselves and of the world and, therefore, whether they are close or far from what is considered 'normal', they have a history and their validity needs to be acknowledged within the space

### 2. All knowledge is partial and incomplete

As our lenses are constructed in specific contexts, we lack the knowledge constructed in other contexts, and, therefore, we need to listen to different perspectives in order to see/imagine beyond the boundaries of our own lenses



### 3. All knowledge can be questioned

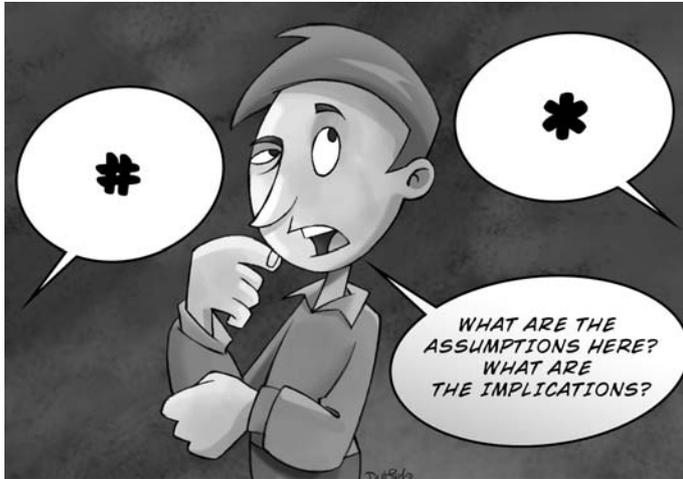
Critical engagement in the project is defined as the attempt to understand where perspectives are coming from and where they are leading to (origins and implications). Therefore, questioning is not an attempt to break the lenses (to destroy or de-legitimise perspectives), but to sharpen and broaden our vision.



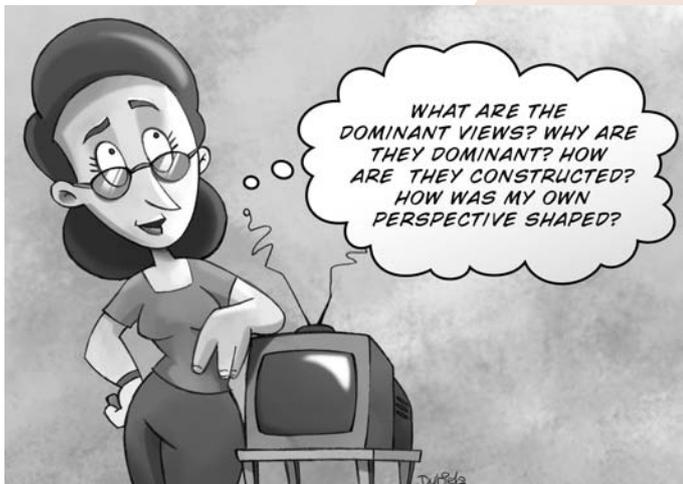
## Procedures for Enquiry

It is important to signal when you open the space in order to create the right atmosphere for the enquiry process. You can do that by pointing back to the basic principles. Remember that a safe space is about experimenting with different/new ways of thinking and relating to one another.

**1. Critical engagement with different perspectives:** what are the limitations/implications of each perspective presented?



**2. Informed thinking:** what are the dominant views? Why are they dominant? Where to find out more?



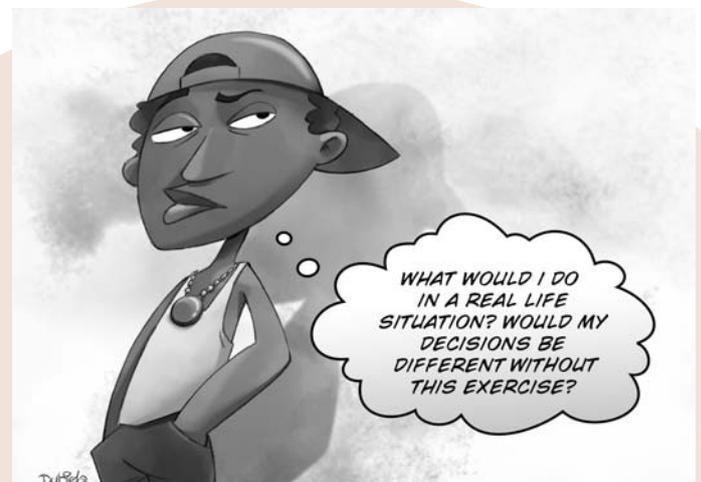
**3. Reflexive questions:** what do I think about this and why?



**4. Group Dialogue questions:** what are the key tensions? What do other people think?



**5. Responsible choices:** what does it have to do with me?



**6. Debriefing:** what have I learned?



For facilitation guidelines visit

[www.osdemethodology.org.uk/facilitation.html](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/facilitation.html)

# Enquiry: Knowledge and Perspectives

These are perspectives from famous thinkers whose names have been strategically omitted to help you engage with their thoughts without prejudice. What do the perspectives tell you about knowledge and the person who knows? Is it possible to agree with all of them? How does your idea of knowledge affect your role as a student, researcher, teacher or colleague?

If I think that only my truth is valid, I'll close myself off to others and will not learn anything new. The right way to improve my perception and capacity to think and to hear with respect is to be open to differences and to refuse the idea that I am absolutely right. And if I am not the 'owner of the truth', I need to be permanently open. I need to be open to approach and being approached, to question and being questioned, to agree and to disagree.

Every age, every generation and every 'culture' has its built-in assumptions about reality that are generally unconscious. These assumptions invariably change with time. So, if history is any guide, much about what we take for granted about the world today simply isn't true. But we're locked into these precepts without even knowing it.

Our brain is wired in a way that we only see what we think is possible. The brain matches patterns that already exists within ourselves through conditioning.

Scientific knowledge is objective and neutral. Everything can be known and tested scientifically to produce a universal truth that is complete in itself and universal (something that anyone could see in the same way). Progress and development can be achieved through the use of science and technology to control the natural environment in order to build the perfect society.

Don't believe anything because it is written in books, because wise men say so or because your religious leader tells you to. Believe it only because you yourself know it to be true.

What we observe (even through scientific experiments) depends on the interpretation of the person who 'sees' it. Like a pair of glasses we wear, each of us has different lenses to look through at the world. These lenses determine what we see as real, ideal, true, good and bad. These lenses are constructed in our contexts - produced collectively in social interactions (in families, education, the media, religion, the government) and they are always changing. Therefore, knowledge is never objective - there is no possibility of complete 'neutrality'.

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the mainstream perspectives available to the public? Where can you find out about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. What makes you think the way you do?
2. How sure are you of what you think? To what extent are you prepared to change your assumptions?
3. Are your ideas of what is good and what is true the same as other people's or do they differ? Why do you think this happens?
4. What are the similarities and differences between what you think and what your parents think? Have you ever questioned why these similarities and differences exist?

## Group Dialogue Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list? Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. Where does our knowledge about the world come from? For example, think about how you conceive differences to rich and poor, powerful and powerless or respect and fear.
2. Who or what shapes our understanding of what is real? For instance, would you say that what the media presents is necessarily true and neutral?
3. Do people in different parts of the world see things in the same way? Do you think there is something that is fundamentally true for everybody, regardless of where they come from or what their background is?
4. Do people relate to pain, hunger, suffering, life and death in exactly the same way? Should they relate in the same way? Who should decide? Are these relationships learned or are they 'natural'?

5. Does anyone control the sources of your knowledge? What are the dangers of this situation?
6. Do you think any group (of 'experts' for example) should have the power to decide for other people (or for everyone) what a good society is? Who should decide what a good society is?
7. Some people believe that there is a better, more developed and universal way of seeing and relating to the world (a more developed culture/set of values) – as there are more backward and underdeveloped ways of seeing as well. Do you agree with that? What are the implications of accepting that as true?
8. What can influence a scientist's analysis? What can influence what they choose to research and how they do it?

## Informed Choices

You are in a seminar room with people who think that they are much cleverer than you are. They tend to agree on every issue. You don't agree with some of the things they are saying, but every time you try to express your point of view they do not listen and try to make you feel inadequate and unintelligent. Discuss: what could be the reasons for their behavior? What could be done to change this situation?

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process today. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? Do you feel you and other participants could express themselves in an open and safe space? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

# Enquiry: Notions of Development

Who is 'us' and who is 'them' in the perspectives below? How is 'development' defined? What are the assumptions informing these perspectives? What are the implications of those assumptions?

We need to learn from them. If they are developed and rich it means that they can teach us. Of course not everyone in this country will be able to catch up, at the end of the day, most people here are uncultured and uneducated. But the best ones can be just like them, if properly taught.

When we say a country is 'underdeveloped' we are implying that it is backward and retarded in some way, that its people have shown little capacity to achieve and evolve. The use of the word 'developing' is less insulting, but still misleading. It still implies that poverty was an original historic condition based on the 'lack' of attributes of its people (in relation to characteristics 'we' have) – a mindset that was dominant in colonial times."

Any action that gives people more control over their own affairs is action for development, even if it does not give them better health or more bread. To us, development means the promotion of our independence and human dignity.

Developed countries are rich because they have exploited us for a long time. First, by colonising us, then with unfair trade rules, debt interests and sweatshops. If we were given a fair chance, we could be even richer than they are.

Developing countries are poor because they lack technology and education. Their systems of governance are not as evolved as ours. We need to help by teaching them. We can give them technology, proper work habits and good education.

They come here and impose their education, their technology and their way of seeing the world. This makes people more competitive and individualistic and breaks our communities. We do not need what they are trying to sell. We need a better distribution of resources and political power so that we can define how we want to live our lives.

They should not come here and think we are going to learn overnight. We are at least 50 years behind. We need much more time to become what they are now. But we do have the potential!

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the mainstream perspectives available to the public? Where can you find out about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. Do you think your country is 'developed'? What are your parameters for evaluating development? Where do those parameters come from?
2. What are the parameters for development (or achievement and merit) within your community (please define community in any way you want)?
3. How does your community see itself in relation to other communities? How do you think other communities see your community and why?
4. How do you think you contribute (or not) for the development of your country or community? Who has established the criteria of this contribution? Are there any groups that would have more difficulties of meeting these criteria?

## Group Dialogue Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list? Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. What are the mainstream definitions of development/underdevelopment? What are the assumptions about the causes of development and underdevelopment according to those definitions? What are the implications of these assumptions?
2. Should all countries be aiming for one (universal) ideal of development? Who should define this ideal? What would be the implications of going in this direction?
3. What do people in societies that are considered to be part of the 'First World' have in common with those of the 'Third World'? Do you know the origins of these terms?
4. What are the connections of the mainstream understandings of development to the processes of colonisation?

5. What are the consequences of economic growth defined as accumulation of wealth? What are the consequences of undergrowth?
6. How do people/companies/governments generate wealth? Is it only a result of hard work and sacrifice? Does it involve the enforced disempowerment of other competitors or workers? How is poverty created?
7. How does the development of one country/community affect the development or underdevelopment of other communities?
8. How do the labels developed/underdeveloped affect social relations?

## Responsible Choices

How does this topic relate to your context of work? To what extent does asking these questions affect your decisions?

Consider the following scenario: You are working with a group of young people who want to make a difference in the world. They believe that underprivileged people are poor because they lack education, so the group has identified a slum in Ethiopia and are fundraising for a trip to enable them to spend some time in the country educating the people in that community. You have been asked to organize a 2-hour workshop to help them reflect about their assumptions, aims and objectives. You do not want them to lose their motivation to act and think independently, but you want them to act in an informed, responsible and ethical way. What would your workshop outline look like?

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process today. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? Do you feel you and other participants could express themselves in an open and safe space? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

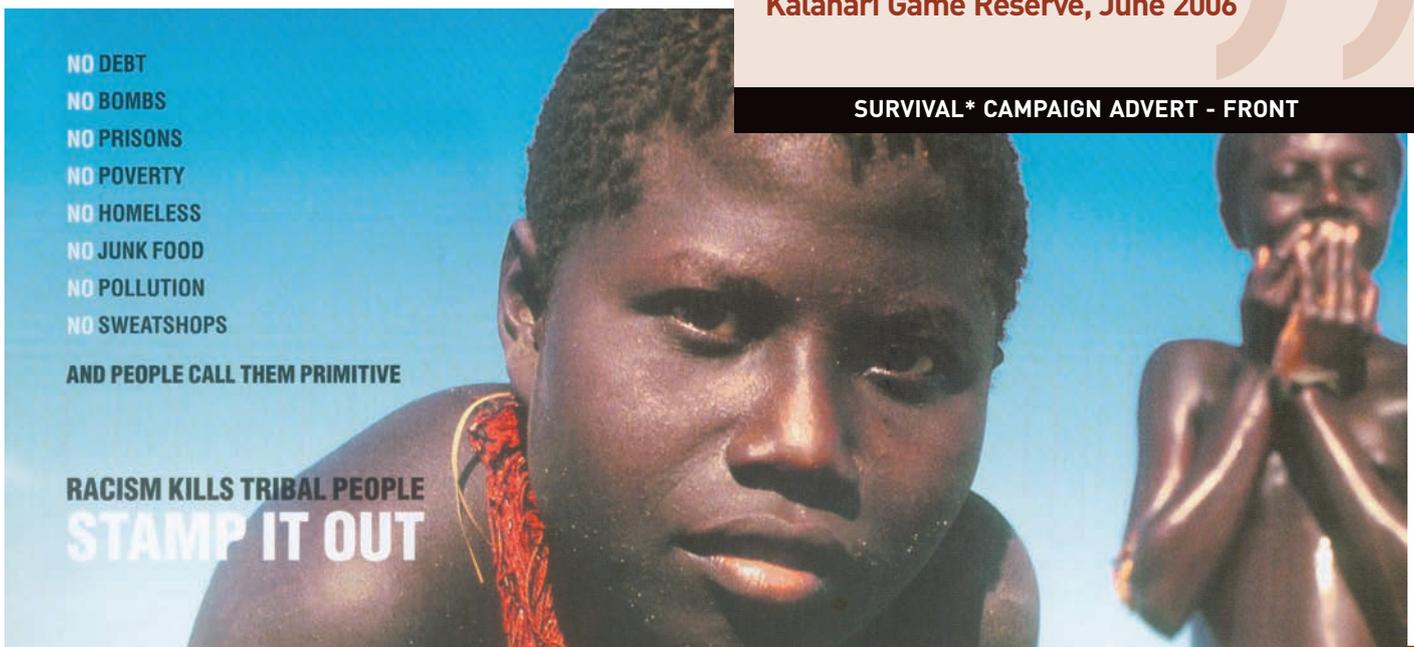
# Enquiry: Progress and Civilisation

The Bushmen of central Kalahari have been forcibly evicted from their lands in Botswana. These evictions started in 1997, following the discovery of diamonds on Bushman land. Read the perspectives and campaign advert below. What are the assumptions in relation to the concept of progress and civilisation from each point of view?

How can we have a stone age creature continue to exist in the age of computers? If the Bushmen want to survive, they must change or otherwise, like the Dodo, they will perish. **Festus Mogae, President of Botswana**

This is our home, the home of our ancestors, which we have inherited from our forefathers. Our ancestors have not told us to move on. This is our ancestral land. Now we are not allowed to hunt and gather food, which we do in order to live. They have prevented us from doing this, therefore, how can we survive? This is our way. This is our culture. We survive off this land that feeds us. The government have stolen our goats and banned our way of life. The government lie, they do not tell the truth, we do not choose to move, we choose to stay and live on our land. **Letter from the residents of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, June 2006**

SURVIVAL\* CAMPAIGN ADVERT - FRONT



SURVIVAL\* CAMPAIGN ADVERT - BACK

## RACISM KILLS TRIBAL PEOPLE

Terms like PRIMITIVE and STONE AGE have been used to describe tribal people since the colonial era. They reinforce the idea that these peoples have not changed for generations. But this is not true. All societies adapt and change – not just ours. Tribal people are no more ‘savage’ than the rest of us.

The idea that tribes are backwards leads directly to their persecution. For example, it is

claimed that forcibly developing tribes is ‘for their own good’, and helps them ‘catch up’ with the ‘civilised’ world. The results are almost catastrophic: poverty, alcoholism, prostitution, disease and death.

Survival is working to ensure tribal ways of life are recognised and the destruction of entire peoples can no longer be justified under the guise of ‘progress’.

\*Survival International is a human rights organisation formed in 1969 that campaigns for the rights of tribal peoples.

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the mainstream perspectives available to the public? Where can you find out about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. How do you define progress? How was your assumption constructed? To what extent are you open to be challenged?
2. Are there people who are considered 'uncivilised' by most people where you live?
3. What would you do if someone thought you were 'uneducated' or 'uncivilised' and tried to help you by imposing a notion of progress that you did not agree with?
4. How does your community see itself in relation to other communities in terms of progress? How do you think other communities see your community and why?
5. Do you feel the society where you live needs to 'catch up' with other societies? Do you feel the society where you live can teach something to other societies? Why? How did you come to think in this way?

## Group Dialogue Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list? Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. What are the mainstream definitions of progress and civilisation? What are the assumptions about how people should live and what they should aspire to according to those definitions?
2. What are the positive and negative implications of the mainstream notion of progress of 'modern' society? What problems can this notion solve? What problems does it create? What are the reasons and implications of trying to impose one notion of progress as universal?
3. How have mainstream assumptions of progress become mainstream?

4. How do mainstream assumptions differ from non-mainstream?
5. What justifications do governments use to force people to change their ways of life?
6. What do you think should happen to tribal peoples? Should they have a right to choose what happens to them? Should they have a right to own their land? Should they own the natural resources that are found in their land?
7. Do you think modern society should compensate for the damage, murder, loss and destruction caused to tribal peoples in the process of colonisation and (later) development?
8. Should people who have benefited from colonialism be educated about the origins of their privilege, property and wealth (e.g. societies living in occupied land and former colonial powers that become rich through slavery and theft)?

## Responsible Choices

How does this topic relate to your context of work? To what extent does asking these questions affect your decisions?

Your school wants to organise a festival about primitive peoples. You know this can reinforce the assumption that they are backwards and uncivilised amongst the students. How can you intervene to make the festival work in the interest of tribal peoples?

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process today. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? Do you feel you and other participants could express themselves in an open and safe space? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

# Enquiry: Culture and Representation

How is culture defined in each of the perspectives below? What assumptions inform these perspectives? What are the educational implications of holding these assumptions?

Culture is the set of traditions (like food, dances and music), ways of thinking and behaviours of specific people that live in a specific place. It needs to be respected and preserved.

Ethnic cultures have interesting and exotic dances, drumming and cookery, but, at the end of the day, they need to learn from us about how to catch up with modernity and civilization - otherwise we will always need to give them aid and support.

What people see as real and ideal for their lives varies with their age, class, gender, religion, the culture of the region they live in, their family background, political orientation, upbringing, etc... The only person I can represent is myself.

When people ask me to speak as a Latin American or a Brazilian, I feel very uncomfortable. They must think we all think the same way. What would they say if I asked them to give me 'the' British perspective?

Culture is universal and timeless. If someone is cultured, he or she can understand the highest expressions of art and music in human history.

Culture is the way groups of people interpret the world. It is dynamic – it changes with time and history.

I feel I can represent my people. I can certainly say what the majority of people in my country would say about a specific issue.

A stereotype is a misinformed and fixed idea about characteristics of cultures. Negative stereotypes reinforce racism. They should be challenged and changed for a positive image of the target culture. We should only promote the good side of cultures.

A stereotype is not only a false image about the other – it is a false idea about the self, as we define our own identities in relation to other people/cultures/groups. Racism is the belief in our own cultural superiority – and this is what needs to be challenged.

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the dominant understanding of culture? Where can you hear about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. What do you identify as 'your culture'? What are the characteristics of your culture? Would everyone from your culture recognize the same characteristics? How is your culture perceived by other people? What are the factors that shape your culture - who constructs it?
2. What characteristics do you share with the people of your family? Of your school/college/university/church/work? Of your city or region? Of the same religion? Of the same gender? Of the same social/economic group? Of the same country? Of the same continent? Of the planet? How different and how similar are these groups?
3. Does your national or regional culture have a hierarchy of inferior/superior cultures? How do you define yourself in relation to other people?
4. What (positive and negative) stereotypes do you have about other cultures? Do you think they say something about your own identity?
5. Have you ever been in a position where you were in the minority? (that is in the minority in any given situation) How did it feel and why do you think you felt that way?

## Group Dialogue Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list? Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. How do you define culture? How are cultures defined?
2. Do cultures change over time? If so, what/who provokes this change? Are cultures fundamentally good? Should cultures be 'preserved'? Should people try to challenge and change them?
3. To what extent differences represent barriers for mutual understanding? To what extent do they represent opportunities for learning?
4. What happens when groups or individuals decide to define themselves or their cultures as superior, or better than the others?

5. How is power distributed amongst different 'cultures'? How is this distribution connected to processes of colonisation and oppression? How have we come to think about cultures and ethnicities in terms of categories of contrast like civilised/uncivilised, developed/underdeveloped, modern/backward, lazy/hard-working, intellectual/physical, winner/loser? Who has defined these categories, in whose name and for whose benefit?
6. Should children of different cultures attend separate schools in a multi-cultural society? What are the implications if children are kept separate from one another? Should children from minority ethnic communities be forced to adhere to the common dress and behaviour of the dominant majority in a school setting? Or should they (and their parents and communities) have the freedom to vary according to their particular traditions? What are the implications of adherence, and of complete freedom?
7. Should differences be respected? If so, how and at what levels? For example, should we respect the difference of groups with common traditions or of individuals? Should we avoid engaging critically with somebody in order to respect her or his culture? How do you define 'respect for difference'?
8. Can any culture be traced back to a 'pure' or 'authentic' origin? Why would some people find such an undertaking important or desirable? What's at stake in wanting to establish the purity or authenticity of cultural/ethnic origins?

## Responsible Choices

How does this topic relate to your context of work? To what extent does asking these questions affect your decisions?

A school is promoting an 'ethnic' evening where some groups of minority cultures are going to present dances and cookery. You have been asked to prepare a workshop for the teachers about how to engage (critically) with this topic in the classroom (before or after the event).

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process today. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

# Enquiry: Social and Global Justice

What is the understanding of justice from each perspective below?

	Perspective A	Perspective B	Perspective C	Perspective D
<b>The problem</b>	There is no problem [or] I only have time to think about the survival of my family [or] The troublemakers are the problem.	If people are poor, that is mainly their fault - they lack education and culture, but certain individuals in power need to change.	Unequal benefits and losses, therefore injustice. Injustice is the problem.	Groups in power who oppress and exploit others (elites, corporations, capitalists, the 'West', etc).
<b>The nature of the problem?</b>	Problems are caused by evil - evil people, evil power, plotting revolution, plotting world domination.	The attitudes and abilities of certain individuals.	The whole network of structures, assumptions and attitudes which we inherit and learn from the past.	People who are in power dictate the rules so that they always win. They will not give up power of their own free will.
<b>What to do?</b>	Evil should at least be resisted and contained. Preferably, it should be eliminated.	Make the present system work well in order to create harmony, tolerance and equality of opportunity (so that rewards are shared according to merit).	Change ourselves and the structures towards greater equality of work, wealth, power, esteem.	Sabotage from the inside or disengage from it altogether!
<b>What for?</b>	Security and order - an absence of threat, anxiety and conflict.	To reach an end to insecurity and anxieties.	For a never ending self-critical development towards new power relations, new identities, new ways of living together, new and unimagined futures.	It is a waste of time to speculate about utopia. We need to destroy the oppressive system first.
<b>What about me?</b>	If there is a problem, the State or the police should do something. This has nothing to do with me. The most I can do is give a bit of money, or what I don't need anymore, to charity.	I am not part of the problem. I am part of the solution. I'll support the State, I'll support education for all, I'll give to charity, I'll do my bit.	If I support and benefit from unjust and exploitative systems, I am part of the problem...and can be part of the solution. I don't want to conform, to reform, to sabotage or to disengage. I want to transform structures and relations so that we are able to decide with others what is best for all.	I am not part of the problem. I am part of the solution. I have the answers and I'm at the forefront of the revolution.
<b>What is justice?</b>	???	???	???	???

Adapted from: "Perspectives amongst the Powerful" - Robin Richardson (1990) Daring to be a Teacher. Trentham Books

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the mainstream perspectives available to the public? Where can you find out about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. How would you define the problem, the nature of the problem, what to do about it, what for and your own role in relation to it? How do these assumptions affect your choices (of content/approach) as a teacher?
2. How do you understand social and global justice?
3. How certain/clear are you about what you think in relation to this topic?
4. How was your perspective constructed? How often has it changed in recent years?
5. To what extent are you open to share your perspective with others and to have your assumptions questioned/challenged?

## Group Dialogue Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list?

Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. How do you define fairness and justice? What is the greatest threat to justice? Can you think of different responses to this question?
2. What binds us to people who we have never met? How do we affect/are affected by them?
3. Do you think justice and peace are related concepts (i.e. do we need peace to have justice or justice to have peace)?
4. Is violence ever justified in the struggle for justice (group/individual or military/terrorist)?

5. Is there a universal concept of justice? Whose concept is it? What assumptions about reality influence the dominant understanding of justice in your context? How do people understand justice in other contexts?
6. Should educators prepare learners to be outraged in the face of injustice? What are the potential implications of this strategy?
7. Should we do to others what we expect to be done to us? Do we all want the same thing? In which circumstances, can we make assumptions about other people's wants without asking them?
8. What is the purpose of civil society in the struggle for justice? Will civil society disappear when justice is achieved? What is the purpose of education for justice? How can this concept be defined according to diverse principles?

## Responsible Choices

How does this topic relate to your context of work? To what extent does asking these questions affect your decisions?

Imagine you have not been born yet – but will soon be. You do not know the characteristics of the system of the world you will be born into (what is valued and what is not) and you do not know your own characteristics and the context of your family (skin colour, gender, class, health, status, ability, geographical positioning, etc). What would you expect from a just world?

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process in this session. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? Do you feel you and other participants could express themselves in an open and safe space? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

# Enquiry: Poverty and Wealth

Do the perspectives below raise any question that you have not thought about before? What are the assumptions informing these perspectives? What are the implications of those assumptions?

The connection between the generation of poverty and the generation of wealth is often forgotten. Exploitation – both past and present – is the central root of poverty. The privilege the so-called ‘first world’ enjoys today does not come from a superior mind or culture, but from their capacity to exploit and bully through colonisation, militarisation, unfair trade rules and a good partnership with the elites of ‘Third World’ countries.

Poverty is natural. When babies are born, they have nothing. Nature gives us a mind with which to think and a body with which to labour. If we use both wisely, the result will be wealth. Wealth is what happens when people think and work hard. People take the things they find on earth, things which have no inherent value at all, and turn them into resources which they can use to sustain their lives. People create wealth. In this sense wealth, not poverty, is man-made. The best way for poor nations to become rich is to see how rich nations became rich.\*

Poverty and exploitation will always exist because human nature is self-interested. We are natural competitors like the other animals and only the fittest will survive. If people can choose between what they feel is good for themselves, or for their family, and what seems good for other people – or even for everybody, everyone will choose to safeguard their interests. After all, other people would not make a choice that would favour them anyway.\*

Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. And overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom.\*

They say we are poor because we have little money and no development. Well, I visited their land and saw their roads and houses and computers and airplanes and their way to educate their children, but I did not see how these things made them closer to one another. I saw a lot of waste and disrespect for the forests and rivers, and for the generations to come. I saw that even those who have a lot can be depressed and without hope. They only seem to be happy when they are drinking, or eating or buying. They live to compete. They send their elders away and teach their children that they will only be useful if they can make money when they grow up. Some are destroying themselves and others, for their lack of hope, of love and of guidance. They are very poor people. Our problems are nothing in comparison to theirs.

To be honest, I know we have more than our fair share and that this is kept at the expense of your people. But this is the economic game and, although we are ahead in the game, we cannot change the rules without putting our own advantage at risk – which would create lots of problems back home. I am sorry, but the only thing we can do is alleviate your problem, but we cannot solve it as it would jeopardise our privilege.

\*the authors of these perspectives have been strategically omitted, but if you google the text you will be able to find them.

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the mainstream perspectives available to the public? Where can you find out about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. Do you feel you have enough in life? What are your aspirations? Do you feel you hold any kind of responsibility towards other people outside your family or towards future generations?
2. Do you think poverty, hunger, war and disease in other contexts have anything to do with your life and the choices you make, or are these things unrelated?
3. What changes do you think other people need to make (in your country and in other countries) to make the world fairer for all? What would you be prepared to change in your life, if this change was necessary for this to happen?
4. How was your perspective constructed? How often has it changed in recent years?
5. To what extent are you open to share your perspective with others and to have your assumptions questioned/challenged?

## Open Space Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list? Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. How do you define poverty and wealth?
2. Is the problem of inequality in the world (as concentration of wealth and resources) getting better or worse? How can this be measured?
3. Is there poverty in the 'First World'? If so, how is it different from poverty in the 'Third World'?
4. How are people who are rich and who are poor interconnected? What are the consequences of poverty for rich people? What are the consequences of a high concentration of wealth in a few hands for poor people?

5. How has wealth been generated and maintained in the world and in your country? How has poverty been generated and maintained in the world, and in your country?
6. Has economic growth in First World countries eradicated poverty 'at home'? Can economic growth in 'Third World' countries eradicate poverty? Can free trade eradicate poverty?
7. If a capitalist society depends on people competing with one another for consumption and accumulation of material goods (like land, houses, cars, clothes) and symbolic goods (like education, 'culture', designer labels), is there a possibility that we will have a situation where the common good is achieved and everyone wins (there are no 'losers')? Does the existence of 'winners' depend on the existence of 'losers'? What are the implications of this kind of consumption?
8. Does the excitement of being rich depend on the differentiation in relation to those who are 'poorer'? Does the power of developed countries depend on the disempowerment of developing countries?

## Responsible Choices

How does this topic relate to your context of work? To what extent does asking these questions affect your decisions?

You need to plan a workshop on the MAKE POVERTY HISTORY campaign. You want to use the campaign as a starting point to explore issues related to poverty and (global) North-South relations, but you also want pupils to engage critically with the campaign itself (i.e. examining its message and understanding limitations and implications of what is proposed) in order to develop independent thinking and to enable informed decision making. What would the outline of your workshop look like?

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process today. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? Do you feel you and other participants could express themselves in an open and safe space? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

# Enquiry: Consumerism and Anti-consumerism

Do the perspectives below raise any question that you have not thought about before? What are the assumptions informing these perspectives? What are the implications of those assumptions?

We consume a variety of resources and products today, having moved beyond basic needs, to include luxury items and technological innovations, to try to improve efficiency. Such consumption beyond minimal and basic needs is not necessarily a bad thing in and of itself, as throughout history we have always sought to find ways to make our lives a bit easier to live.

The pressure to buy and measure our success in life through the things we acquire is overwhelming. Education should offer a way for students to seek a good life that means more than just wealth. It saddens me to see our schools become part of this marketing machinery. State schools should be a respite from the constant onslaught of advertisers.

Advertising teaches us that buying products can fulfill our deepest needs, at the same time that it hides the conditions under which those products are made, as well as the environmental consequences of endless consumption.

We do not need this luxury and comfort. We can live a simple, happy and healthy life growing our own food and living with very little. If everyone followed my example, the world would be much better.

Inequalities in consumption are stark. Globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures - the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%. More specifically, the richest fifth own 87% of the world's vehicle fleet (the poorest fifth owns less than 1%) and consume: 45% of all meat and fish (the poorest fifth 5%), 58% of total energy (the poorest fifth less than 4%) and 84% of all paper (the poorest fifth 1.1%). Runaway growth in consumption in the past 50 years is putting strains on the environment never before seen.

"I buy, therefore I am" – this is the slogan of our times. To reduce consumption affects the economy. If the economy is affected, there will be less jobs. If there are less jobs, there will be more people in poverty. To be against consumption is contrary to poor people's interests.

Our environmental footprint is huge! If the whole world consumed like the average person in the UK, we would need six planets to live in. In the next 20 years, environmental change and conflicts over diminishing natural resources will make us suffer the consequences of our unsustainable choices.

We cannot reduce consumption; we need to find a way to address its consequences. Through science and technology, we will soon find a way to create clean sources of energy and reduce the impact of waste.

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the mainstream perspectives available to the public? Where can you find out about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. How do you define your priorities for consumption? What most influences your needs and wants?
2. What do you think your clothes, hair-style, shoes, accessories and make-up say about you? How are those interpreted by other people? Can they be interpreted in different ways, in different contexts?
3. Who defines the parameters of what a successful or unsuccessful person should look like in the communities you belong to?
4. What do you think about consumption and consumerism? How was your perspective constructed? How often has it changed in recent years?
5. To what extent are you open to share your perspective with others and to have your assumptions questioned/challenged?

## Open Space Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list? Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. How do material values influence our relationships with other people? What impact does that have on our personal values?
2. Which actors influence our choices of consumption? Which actors influence how and why things are produced or not?
3. How much of what we consume is influenced by the needs of businesses and advertising versus our needs?
4. What is the impact on the demands of the wealthier nations, and people that are able to afford to consume more, on poorer nations and people?
5. How are the products and resources we consume produced? What are the effects of this process of production on the environment, society and individuals?

6. What are the consequences of over-consumption for the environment? How would you define over-consumption? What is a necessity and what is a luxury?
7. How do consumption habits change as societies change?
8. What are the possible consequences (good and bad) of schools being involved in the advertisement of products and services?

## Responsible Choices

How does this topic relate to your context of work? To what extent does asking these questions affect your decisions?

- A primary school pupil reports that she feels excluded from the group. You ask her why and she says that if she could afford the same toys, or have the same hair colour of the English girls, she would be able to fit in. She then adds that she is lucky - at least she is not like the 'Black' girls who will never be accepted. You know she is not an isolated case. You have to prepare a 2-hour intervention with her class, but you want it to be something that really challenges their parameters for social exclusion/inclusion (you don't want something where they just say what you want to hear and then continue to act as usual). What would be your approach? The choice of age group is yours.
- You are working with a group of young people who want to organise a 'label' fashion show to raise funds for a charity to end poverty in Uganda. You have a 2-hour workshop to raise awareness about interdependence (including the implications of consumerism, body image and trade justice). You want to help them reflect about their assumptions, aims and objectives. You do not want them to lose their motivation to do something and think independently, but you want them to act in an informed, responsible and ethical way. What would your workshop outline look like?

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process today. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? Do you feel you and other participants could express themselves in an open and safe space? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

# Enquiry: Notions of Terrorism

The stories below are true examples of violence. The names of the actors/countries involved have been omitted. Each story has a number of possible newspaper headlines. How is terrorism defined in relation to each headline?

## **TERRORIST SOLDIERS - TERRORIST CHILDREN - TERRORIST AID GIVER**

The army of country A receives AID from rich country B to buy weapons. Soldiers of country B surround a refugee camp of poor country C and insult the people who live there. They challenge the boys of the refugee camp (some as young as 11) to come closer to the fence. The boys get angry and go near the fence to throw stones at the soldiers. The soldiers shoot and kill some of them.

## **TERRORIST CORPORATION - TERRORIST COUNTRY B - TERRORIST FARMERS**

Corporation C from rich country A is testing some genetically modified crops in poor country B. The costs of production are rising for small farmers in the region. Many commit suicide because of debt. If their crops get contaminated by genetically modified seeds, they may lose their livelihoods. They decide to get together and threaten to destroy the company's crops and the company's offices.

## **TERRORIST RICH PEOPLE - TERRORIST POLICE - TERRORIST MAN - TERRORIST CHILDREN - TERRORIST POPULATION**

In country A there is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. Rich people generally humiliate and exploit the poor. They say it is poor people's fault they are poor. Sandro, a 5 year old boy from a very poor family sees his mum being murdered. He becomes a street boy. At 12, he watches the police shoot 8 of his friends when they were sleeping outside a church. He spends most of his teens in an institution where he is treated very badly. At 22 he decides to hijack a bus and uses the opportunity to call the attention of the media to his desperation. He threatens to kill the passengers. He is killed by the police. Many people in country A think street children should be killed so they do not become robbers or murderers.

## **TERRORIST FACTORY - TERRORIST EMPLOYEES - TERRORIST POLICY OF COUNTRY B**

There is a leak of a poisonous gas in a chemical factory that belongs to a corporation of rich country A. The factory is located in poor country B, as it is cheaper to run from there. The leaking happened because the factory was trying to cut expenses to have more profit. 6,000 people died that night in nearby towns and many more afterwards because of the contamination. The land and the water in the area are still contaminated. The company gave the families very little money in compensation.

## **TERRORIST COUNTRY B - TERRORIST GUERRILLAS**

A dictator is overthrown by a group in poor country A. Rich country B is not happy with the changes. So, country B funds and trains a guerrilla army to attack country A from its borders. The guerrillas generally try to avoid fighting the army of country A. Instead they attack clinics, schools, cooperative farms. Sometimes they mine the roads. Many, many civilians are killed and maimed by the guerrillas armed and supported by rich country B.

## **TERRORIST BOMBERS - TERRORIST COUNTRY C - TERRORIST COUNTRY A**

Simultaneously, two embassies of rich country A are bombed. 224 people are killed and over 1,000 injured. In retaliation, country A launched missiles at the capital city of country C, destroying a pharmaceutical factory, injuring ten people, and killing one. Country A claims that this factory was manufacturing chemicals that could be used to make poisonous gases - although it offers no substantial proof of this claim. Country C claims the factory produced medicines for malaria and tuberculosis and that more than 500,000 children will die without this medicine. Country A blocks the UN from launching an investigation.

Adapted from: "War, Terrorism and our Classrooms" [www.rethinkingschools.org/special\\_reports/sept11/index.shtml](http://www.rethinkingschools.org/special_reports/sept11/index.shtml)

## Informed Thinking

What informed your current perspective on this topic? What shapes the mainstream perspectives available to the public? Where can you find out about different perspectives? How do you make your decisions about what you think about it?

## Reflective Questions

Take three minutes in silence to reflect about the following:

1. How do you define terrorism? How was your assumption constructed? To what extent are you open to be challenged?
2. Have you, or have any members of your family, or any people you know well, ever experienced state or police repression firsthand? What were your reactions, and what actions, if any, did you/they take? What kind of injustices would you, your family or your community have to suffer to make you feel that violence was your only recourse?
3. At the bottom line, what do you think is worth fighting for – struggling for, resisting for, living (and dying) for?
4. What dangers and sources of violence are evident where you live, and are they in any way connected to global processes?
5. What do you perceive to be the biggest threat to global security? To national security? And to your own personal security?

## Group Dialogue Questions

Read through the list of questions below. Are there any other burning questions you would like to add to this list? Select two 'priority' questions for discussion in your group.

1. How do you define terrorism?
2. Can we classify the destruction of property (with no injuries) as terrorism?
3. Can governments commit acts of terrorism, or is the term reserved only for people who operate outside of governments?
4. Is violence always and absolutely morally wrong? Does it depend on the perspective of the group of people who decide to use it? Does it depend on the situation one is struggling within, or on whether one is facing violence, or on how equal or unequal the situation is, between the two sides in struggle? Is violence justified in self-defence?

5. Under what conditions should a movement consider remaining pacifist or using militant, 'violent' means? In what conditions would you support violent action against people (military or not)?
6. Do you agree with the following statement: "There can be no peace without justice"? In other words, for there to be justice, we must first fight for and achieve justice and equality?
7. Are there double standards in relation to how the law, the media and governments treat the issue of terrorism?
8. When is violence, by one state on another, legitimate? Who decides and how?

## Responsible Choices

How does this topic relate to your context of work? To what extent does asking these questions affect your decisions?

An act of violence against civilians happened in your country last week (choose a real incident). The media and the government portray the act as a terrorist act. Some of the students in the school have the same religion, nationality or social class of the perpetrators of the act of violence. Most students are still shocked and confused – no one in the school has addressed the issue openly. You want to plan a session in which students can address the issue. What content and approach would you use?

## Debriefing

Think about your learning process today. What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about others? What have you learned about knowledge and about learning? Do you feel you and other participants could express themselves in an open and safe space? What could be done to improve the learning process of the group and the relationships within the space?

# Educational Tools

## 🌀 Critical Literacy

Critical literacy is based on the idea that language constructs the lenses we use to make sense of the world. Therefore, it prompts learners to unpack those lenses (their assumptions and how those were constructed) and their implications. The table below shows a representation of the differences between 3 types of reading (the word and the world) in terms of questions prompted:

Traditional Reading	Critical Reading	Critical Literacy
<p><b>Types of questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 Does the text represent the truth?</li> <li>🌀 Is it fact or opinion?</li> <li>🌀 Is it biased or neutral?</li> <li>🌀 Is it well-written/clear?</li> <li>🌀 Who is the author and what level of authority/legitimacy does he/she represent?</li> <li>🌀 What does the author say?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Types of questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 What is the context?</li> <li>🌀 To whom is the text addressed?</li> <li>🌀 What is the intention of the author?</li> <li>🌀 What is the position of the author (his/her political agenda)?</li> <li>🌀 What is the author trying to say and how is he/she trying to convince/manipulate the reader?</li> <li>🌀 What claims are not substantiated?</li> <li>🌀 Why has the text been written in this way?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Types of questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 How can this statement be interpreted differently in different contexts?</li> <li>🌀 What could be the assumptions behind the statements? What are the implications of these assumptions?</li> <li>🌀 What could be shaping the author's understanding of reality?</li> <li>🌀 Who decides (what is real, can be known or needs to be done) in this context? In whose name and for whose benefit?</li> <li>🌀 What are the limitations and contradictions of this perspective?</li> <li>🌀 Whose interests could be represented in this statement?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Focus:</b> content, authority and legitimacy of the speaker and the text.</p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> context, intentions, style of communication.</p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> assumptions, knowledge production, power, representation and implications.</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> de-codification</p>	<p><b>Strategy:</b> interpretation</p>	<p><b>Strategy:</b> critique</p>
<p><b>Aim:</b> to develop an understanding of the content and/or to establish the truth-value of the text.</p>	<p><b>Aim:</b> to develop critical reflection (ability to perceive intentions and reasons).</p>	<p><b>Aim:</b> to develop reflexivity (ability to perceive how assumptions are constructed).</p>
<p><b>Language:</b> is fixed, transparent and gives us access to reality.</p>	<p><b>Language:</b> is fixed and translates reality.</p>	<p><b>Language:</b> is ideological and constructs reality.</p>
<p><b>Reality:</b> exists and is easily accessed through sensory perceptions and objective thinking.</p>	<p><b>Reality:</b> exists and is accessible, but it is often translated into false representations.</p>	<p><b>Reality:</b> exists, but is inaccessible (in absolute terms) – we have only partial interpretations constructed in language.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge:</b> universal, cumulative, linear, right vs wrong, fact vs opinion, neutral vs biased.</p>	<p><b>Knowledge:</b> false versus true interpretation of reality.</p>	<p><b>Knowledge:</b> always partial, context dependent (contingent), complex and dynamic.</p>

Adapted and expanded from: Gina CERVETTI, Michael J. PARDALES, James S. DAMICO, A Tale of Differences: Comparing the Traditions, Perspectives, and Educational Goals of Critical Reading and Critical Literacy, [www.readingonline.com](http://www.readingonline.com), 2001

## 🌀 Critical versus 'soft' global citizenship education

Use the table below as a stimulus for discussion:

Can you think of other sets of assumptions in relation to global citizenship education?

What affects your choice of approach in this area?

Can you think of circumstances that require a soft rather than a critical approach and vice-versa?

What would be the practical implications of adopting a soft or a critical approach to global citizenship education?

How do you imagine a 'global citizen' (it might be useful to think about it in terms of autonomy/conformity, self/other regardness, vertical/horizontal relationships, ideals/drives in life, notions of self/other).

	Soft Global Citizenship Education	Critical Global Citizenship Education
<b>Problem</b>	Poverty, helplessness	Inequality, injustice
<b>Nature of the problem</b>	Lack of 'development', education, resources, skills, culture, technology, etc.	Complex structures, systems, assumptions, power relations and attitudes that create and maintain exploitation and enforced disempowerment and tend to eliminate difference.
<b>Justification for positions of privilege</b>	'Development', 'history', education, harder work, better organisation, better use of resources, technology.	Benefit from and control over unjust and violent systems and structures.
<b>Basis for caring</b>	Common humanity/being good/sharing and caring. Responsibility FOR the other (or to teach the other).	Justice/complicity in harm. Responsibility TOWARDS the other (or to learn/decide with the other) – accountability.
<b>Grounds for acting</b>	Humanitarian/moral (based on normative principles for thought and action).	Political/ethical (based on normative principles for relationships).
<b>What needs to change</b>	Structures, institutions and individuals that are a barrier to development.	Structures, (belief) systems, institutions, assumptions, cultures, individuals, relationships.
<b>What for</b>	So that everyone achieves development, harmony, tolerance and equality.	So that injustices are addressed, more equal grounds for dialogue are created, and people can have more autonomy to define their own development.
<b>What individuals can do</b>	Support campaigns to change structures, donate time, expertise and resources.	Analyse own position/context and participate in changing structures, assumptions, identities, attitudes and power relations in their contexts.
<b>How does change happen</b>	From the outside to the inside (imposed change).	From the inside to the outside (negotiated change).
<b>Goal of global citizenship education</b>	Empower individuals to act (or become active citizens) according to what has been defined for them as a good life or ideal world.	Empower individuals: to reflect critically on the legacies and processes of their cultures and contexts, to imagine different futures and to take responsibility for their decisions and actions.
<b>Potential benefits of Global Citizenship Education</b>	Greater awareness of some of the problems, support for campaigns, greater motivation to help/do something, feel good factor.	Independent/critical thinking and more informed, responsible and ethical action.
<b>Potential problems</b>	Feeling of self-importance or self-righteousness and/or cultural supremacy, reinforcement of colonial assumptions and relations, reinforcement of privilege, partial alienation, uncritical action.	Guilt, internal conflict and paralysis, critical disengagement, feeling of helplessness.

Andreotti, V (2006) 'Soft versus critical global citizenship education' Policy and Practice, Issue 3, Autumn 2006, Centre for Global Education, Belfast.

## Further information and resources

On teacher education [www.osdemethodology.org.uk/teachered.html](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/teachered.html)

On critical literacy [www.osdemethodology.org.uk/criticalliteracy.html](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/criticalliteracy.html)

On facilitation [www.osdemethodology.org.uk/facilitation.html](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/facilitation.html)

For young people and secondary schools [www.osdemethodology.org.uk/secondaryschools.html](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/secondaryschools.html)

Frequently asked questions [www.osdemethodology.org.uk/faq.html](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/faq.html)

## Contact



**OSDE coordinator**  
- Vanessa Andreotti

Training of trainers  
Publications and affiliations  
Theory - practice links

[vanessa@osdemethodology.org.uk](mailto:vanessa@osdemethodology.org.uk)



**OSDE UK network chair**  
- Linda Barker

Teacher education  
Packages for schools  
UK Project affiliations

[linda@osdemethodology.org.uk](mailto:linda@osdemethodology.org.uk)



**OSDE UK research coordinator**  
- Katy Newell-Jones

Pedagogic research  
Facilitator development  
Theory - practice links

[katy@osdemethodology.org.uk](mailto:katy@osdemethodology.org.uk)

List of trainers in the UK  
[www.osdemethodology.org.uk/traininguk](http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/traininguk)

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