

Going Deeper into Child Poverty

Activity 1: Deepening the research, exploring the ideas

Goal: Students will build on the initial “Poverty, what is it?” research to answer questions about poverty in the areas of food, housing, employment, education and recreation and other regional or cultural issues.

Whole class:

Develop questions in five categories, using one sheet of chart paper for each. Encourage students first to create their own questions in the framework of those indicated below:

#1 Food:

- What did you learn about food banks in your community?
- Are there breakfast clubs in our school?
- Who are the people accessing the food banks the most?
- Why is this issue so important for children?
- How does it impact their day-to-day living?

#2 Housing/ Shelters/Childcare:

- Where do most students go to after school if their parents are working?
- Where are the common places pre-school children go?
- How is childcare paid for?
- Who has access to housing/shelters in your community?
- Are there many special housing arrangements and shelters provided?

#3 Education/Recreation:

- How is a child who is living in poverty affected in school?
- How are the extra costs or materials needed to participate in school activities provided? For example: field trips, sports teams, band- instruments.
- Does everyone in your school community have equal access to technology?
- How can children in your community play a competitive sport?

#4 Employment:

- What is the unemployment rate in your community?
- What are the common reasons why people are without jobs?
- How do their families get by when one or both parents are without work?

#5 Other:

- Is there a very unique concern for your area? What would it be?
- How does your community help support this unique concern?
- Is there any area in which these groups need the most support? Discuss.
- What do we need to do?

Activity 2: Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group one of the five areas. Each group will record the results of their research on chart paper. At the conclusion of their research, each group records their answer to the following question:
Would you consider this a top priority in our area? Why, or why not?

Activity 3: Café style Student Summit Activity

Time Frame: 60 - 90 minutes

The schedule involves a rotation of small group discussion, with presenters from each research group, followed by a large group discussion to develop consensus on priorities.

Goals:

- To give students an opportunity to exchange information and ideas and to develop an understanding of what has an impact on poverty, and about some effects of poverty.
- To give students an opportunity to express their views/concerns about child poverty and to develop ideas about how to share their concerns with decision-makers in the community.

3A: Modified jigsaw activity. Each group has at least one representative from each of the research groups.

Each group will rotate every 10-15 minutes across five stations. Each table is covered with mural paper with the topic written in the middle. The “expert” in that topic will summarize/present the results of the research, which another student can record on the mural paper. Students discuss and record any further ideas. As each group rotates, after hearing the summary and reviewing the input from earlier groups, any further thoughts or ideas are recorded on the mural paper.

Reference: CTF Booklet: Poverty, what is it?

- What more could our governments do to end poverty in Canada? pp.23-24
- What more can we do? You do? pp. 25

Materials Needed: Markers, Chart paper, masking tape, mural paper on tables, chart with questions and results of research

Extension:

Goal: To increase student awareness of child poverty from a national perspective. Have each group choose a different province, territory or region of Canada and do a similar research activity. Have students organize the research results into the five categories. Follow a similar modified jigsaw procedure for sharing research results.