

Judging Quality of Life

This modelling the tools is incorporated into critical challenges at grade 10, however, it can be adapted for use at all grade levels.

Overview

These activities help students explore the factors affecting a person's quality of life. Students consider what constitutes a good or rich life and then read stories about two young people to look for indicators of quality of life. After deciding which young person has the richer life, the class agrees on which indicators are the most important in determining a rich quality of life. Depending on the focus of your study, you will want to assemble a suitable pair of biographies or stories of two people who live in very different situations.

Session One

Explore quality of life.

- Introduce the concept of quality of life by asking students to decide if they have a rich life and to explain their reasons for this opinion. Record the reasons on a chart and retain for later use. Encourage students to go beyond superficial indicators, e.g., lots of money, nice clothes, to consider other important factors:

Indicators of a Rich Life

nice place to live
parents or other adults who care
nutritious food to eat
freedom to act on one's beliefs
sense of purpose in life
access to education
feel safe
affordable health care
treated with respect
clean water
reasonable sanitation
sense of hope
emotional stability

Compare economically developed and economically developing countries.

- Announce that students are about to read profiles of two young people who live in very different situations. One youth lives in an economically developing country and the other lives in an economically developed country. Explain that "economically developing" and

"economically developed" refer to the state of economic advancement in a country. Ask students to speculate on how economically developing and economically developed countries might differ. Create a list of the likely conditions in each kind of country.

Comparing Developing and Developed Countries

Economically developing countries are likely to ...

- have low average incomes
- have few job opportunities
- offer limited access to education
- experience vast amounts of poverty
- develop relatively little manufacturing and industries
- depend heavily on farming and growing own food.

Economically developed countries are likely to ...

- have high average incomes
- provide jobs for most people
- make education widely available
- meet most people's basic needs
- develop lots of manufacturing and industries
- can afford imported food.

Link development to quality of life.

- Draw attention to the connection between level of development and quality of life by discussing two questions:

Is Canada an economically developing or an economically developed country?

Are economically developing or economically developed countries more likely to provide the various factors that contribute to a rich life for its citizens?

Invite students to consult the previously created list of indicators of a rich life to support their answer.

Read profiles.

- Distribute a copy of [José](#) and [Emma](#) to each student or distribute a different story to each half of the class. Suggest that students read their assigned stories and underline phrases in the text that indicate quality of life; e.g., the first sentence in [José](#) suggests that he doesn't have his own room or even his own bed.

Record evidence of quality of life.

- Distribute a copy of [Comparing Quality of Life](#) chart to each student or pair of students if individual students read only one of the stories. Instruct students to use this chart to compile evidence related to factors that contribute to or diminish each young person's quality of life. Invite students to share their ideas with a partner and to contribute new suggestions to the previously created list of indicators of a rich life.

Pose the critical question.

Which person, José or Emma, has the better quality of life (or richer quality life)?

- If using the term "richer life," explain that this term does not refer to monetary wealth as much as it refers to other important aspects of a person's existence. Ask students to review with a partner the evidence recorded on [Comparing Quality of Life](#) chart and to consider which factors are more important than others.

Defend decision on who has richer life.

- Based on this discussion, students are to decide which youth has the richer quality of life. Students are to indicate their decision and offer a short written justification focusing on those factors deemed to be most important in determining quality of life.

Identify most important factors.

- Invite students to share their decisions and supporting evidence. Ask students to explain why their evidence points to a richer life and the importance of the factors they cite. Discuss how being wealthy and having a good quality of life might be connected and how they need not be connected; e.g., Is quality of life determined by having the most up-to-date computer and brand-name clothes? If necessary, revise the class list of indicators of a rich life and place a star beside those factors that students identify as most important. As a class, try to agree on eight to ten most important factors.

Extension

- Encourage discussion on the extent to which quality of life is determined by important needs versus material luxuries. Assign students to write a paragraph explaining what they have learned about the most important factors in determining the quality of their own lives.

Assessment

Assess identification of factors.

- Assess students' ability to identify positive and negative factors affecting quality of life as recorded on [Comparing Quality of Life](#) chart using the rubric [Assessing the Comparison](#). According to this rubric, the assignment is assessed on three criteria:
 - identifies important contributing factors
 - identifies important diminishing factors
 - justifies decision in light of importance of factor

Documents

The following documents are referenced in the above modelling the tools.
They can be adapted for your needs and re-saved.

Graphic Organizers

- [Comparing Quality of Life](#) 

Assessment

- [Assessing the Comparison](#) 

Lesson Material

- [José](#) 
- [Emma](#) 