

The G8:

Who? What? Where? When? Why?

Activity 1.1: How are issues solved?

You will need:

Images of recent local issues to help prompt memories. Use local newspapers, etc

Aims:

- To reinforce a local issue and its consequences
- To identify and understand how issues are solved

What to do:

Remind the children of any recent issues there have been either within the school or locally. Ask the children to discuss in their groups how they think the issue was solved.

- Who was involved?
- What was done?
- What was the result?

Write down on the whiteboard three headings: 'issue', 'how it was solved' and 'result'. Look at an example of an issue (if you haven't got an example then use one from the list below). Write about the issues under the headings.

Issue	How it was solved	Who was involved?	Result
No books in the school library	Meeting took place to decide what to do and a decision was made to have a sponsored read to raise money	Pupils Librarian Teachers Headteacher Governors Bursar	Books bought

Issue	How it was solved	Who was involved?	Result
No safe place to cross the road outside the school	Meeting took place to decide what to do and it was decided that a crossing patrol warden was to be employed	Pupils Parents Headteacher Local councillor Road safety adviser	Person employed

Ask the children to tell you what they have discussed and write down their findings under the four headings. Point out that in most cases in the 'how it was solved' column it was a discussion/meeting/ a talk that solved the issue.

Explain that:

- a similar thing happens when big global issues need to be solved – people need to come together to make decisions. And if they are all to go away and play their part in solving these issues, then they all need to agree on what they are going to do!
- there are several different ways in which this happens – different groups of countries come together to discuss issues that affect them all. Sometimes this happens as a one-off; sometimes they are part of a group that meets regularly.
- One group that has met regularly since the 1970s is something called the G8 – and for three days this July it will be discussing issues that affect nearly all of the world's people in one way or another. Yet most of the world's people will not have a voice at this meeting – because leaders from only 8 countries are invited.
- we're going to learn more about this group and the issues they will be discussing in Italy between 8th and 10th July – and how we can make sure they make decisions that will benefit everyone, not just a few of the world's people.

Activity 1.2: What is the G8?

You will need:

- World map or atlases
- Blank world map outlines
- Internet access for pupils

Aim:

To learn what the G8 is, its membership and how it works.

What to do:

Ask pupils what they already know about the G8 and record their existing knowledge on the board – maybe in the form of a mind-map. Either ask pupils to find out which countries are members of the G8 or supply this information, and ask pupils to locate them on a map of the world.

Discuss the following questions:

- What do you notice about where the countries are located?
- Why do you think there are no countries from Africa or other parts of the developing world in the G8?

Pupils could then use the websites listed below to find out more about the G8. Ask them to collect what they think are the most useful facts in helping to explain the following:

- What is the G8?
- Which countries are involved? As members? In a different way?
- How often does it meet?
- How does it work?
- What happens at a G8 summit?
- Why do some people protest at the G8?

Alternatively, pupils could research the G8 with a view to preparing a quiz to test their fellow pupils' understanding of what the G8 is all about.

Websites:

A very accessible guide for younger pupils can be found on the BBC Newsround website:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_4070000/newsid_4073500/4073516.stm

Further, more in-depth information can be found at:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/3777557.stm

http://www.g8italia2009.it/G8/G8-G8_Layout_locale-1199882116809_Home.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/35th_G8_summit

Activity 1.3: Who should be in the G8?

You will need:

Nothing other than pre-prepared board work to aid the discussion.

Aim:

To consider appropriate criteria for membership of an international decision-making body.

What to do:

In debriefing the preceding activity you may be able to tease out the controversy surrounding membership of the G8. Explain that there are many critics who say that the G8 excludes so many countries – some powerful, some with very little power on the global stage. Economically powerful countries such as China and India are not included; and there are no countries from Africa or Latin America at the table either.

Then ask pupils to consider which countries should be represented at the G8. Ask pupils to imagine that they were given the job of deciding who should be in the G8. What criteria would they use in choosing those eight nations? For example, would they give priority to ensuring that the G8 is made up of the:

- Richest countries?
 - Countries from all continents?
 - Countries with the best records for looking after the environment?
 - Countries which have the best human rights records?
 - Countries with the best sporting records?
 - Countries with the best records on giving aid to other countries?
- etc...

Ask pupils: Who should decide which countries make up the G8? Would the membership change as the countries improved or deteriorated against the chosen criteria?

Compare pupils views with the reality – the G8 is a self-appointed group of the world's richest countries, and the existing members alone decide who else may join the G8 club. What do pupils feel about the G8 and the power that it has?

Explain that although the G8 countries are the only one with decision-making powers at the summit, there will be other representatives there. Alongside the leaders of the European countries (UK, Germany, France and Italy), the Head of the European Union is also invited. Also explain that the G8 has created a group called the 'plus 5' countries. The plus 5 countries are Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, India and China. This group will be invited to take part in parts of the G8 summit but they are not full members. Italy, Germany and France have all said that they would like the G8 to become the G13 so that it includes these countries.

Ask the pupils: why might the G8 be looking to include these countries?

Activity 1.4: The G8 agenda for Italy 2009

You will need:

Pre-prepared issue cards (see below) if you think these will be needed to facilitate discussion with your pupils.

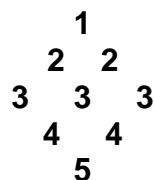
Aim:

To consider the issues that the G8 should address in Italy, and to compare this to the reality.

What to do:

Give pupils the issue cards printed on the next page (one set per group) and ask them to identify which ones they feel are the most important ones in need of the G8's attention. Better still, instead of handing out the issue cards at the outset, ask the pupils to brainstorm what global issues the G8 leaders might discuss, and ask them to write these down on sticky-notes (one issue per sticky note).

Pupils could rank the issues in a diamond nine, for example



The purpose of a 'diamond 9' is to provoke discussion and reflection about the relative importance of the different issues. In groups students focus on the single most important issue, then the next two, the next three and so on.

Students should feed back their choices and reasons to the rest of the class. Sometimes ranking in the shape of a diamond isn't useful. If this is the case students should be encouraged to adopt whatever shape suits their thinking – and to explain it!

You might like to ask pupils if how they might change their rankings if they were:

- A person in the UK who has recently lost their job as a result of the economic recession.
- The leader of a G8 country worried about not being elected by their country's people at the next national election.
- A farmer in Mali who is struggling to grow enough food to survive because of worsening drought.

You could then compare your pupils' views with the actual agenda for the G8 summit in Italy. This can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/35th_G8_summit - but you may need to paraphrase it for your pupils.

Issue cards for use with Activity 1.4

<p>Poverty</p> <p>Reduce the number of people in the world who do not have what they need to live a happy, healthy life.</p>	<p>Jobs and wealth</p> <p>Get countries to work together to create more wealth and jobs.</p>	<p>Climate change</p> <p>Stop the planet getting warmer and help poor countries cope with the changes in the weather.</p>
<p>Conflict and war</p> <p>Decide how to work together to stop wars and to protect people where there is fighting.</p>	<p>Food and water</p> <p>Make sure that everyone in the world has clean water and good food to help them keep healthy.</p>	<p>Education for all</p> <p>Decide how to give all children around the world have the chance to go to school.</p>
<p>Dangerous weapons</p> <p>Stop countries (and other groups) building and using dangerous weapons.</p>	<p>Health care for all</p> <p>Make sure that all the world's people can see a doctor and get the medicines they need.</p>	<p>Environment</p> <p>Decide how to take better care of the planet.</p>