

Understanding the Problem

The first challenge that any concerned citizen or world leader must face when tackling global challenges or controversial issues is to have as close to a complete understanding of a problem as possible before evaluating solutions. Understanding a problem begins by studying statistics, opinions, emotions and impacts. Use this handout to shape your understanding of the global challenge or controversial issue we are studying in class.

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Type of Evidence to Collect	Evidence that You Find <i>Remember to evaluate the sources that you are studying for reliability and bias.</i>	Sources You've Used <i>Remember to use http://snipurl.com to shorten web addresses.</i>
<p>Statistics</p> <p>Statistics are often the most convincing bit of evidence that you can find when evaluating global challenges or controversial issues.</p> <p>By finding numbers that describe your problem as it is today, as it has developed over time or as it is likely to be in the future, you'll get a better sense for just how big an issue you are dealing with.</p>		
<p>Opinions</p> <p>In a world that is increasingly connected and where people can publish their thoughts easily, there are going to be TONS of different people expressing TONS of different opinions about any global challenge or controversial issue that you choose to study.</p> <p>Some will try to explain the source of the issue or challenge you're studying. Others will detail potential consequences if your global challenge goes unaddressed. Reading through these opinions will turn you on to potential starting points for your solution planning.</p>		

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<p>Emotions</p> <p>While statistics can be convincing and opinions can serve as starting points for your solution planning, emotions will always influence just how important your problem really is and should always influence the choices you make when crafting solutions. After all, solutions are useless if they are wildly unpopular!</p> <p>As you work through your research, pay attention to passions. What do people feel strongly about? Why? Are passions different depending on locations? How might this change your solution planning?</p>		
<p>Impacts</p> <p>In the end, the global challenge or controversial issue that you are studying is impacting life on our planet in some significant way—otherwise it wouldn't be a global issue at all!</p> <p>While it is likely that you'll be able to find evidence of the impact that your global challenge is having on the world in the statistics, opinions and emotions that you are collecting, it is important to create a clear, prioritized list of impacts before designing solutions. Otherwise, your work will be unfocused and careless.</p>		
<p>Summarizing Statement: <i>After collecting statistics, opinions, emotions and impacts related to the global challenge or controversial issue that you are studying, write a paragraph summarizing important points to remember about your problem. Check with your group mates to see if you've left anything important out of your summary. Resolve any group disagreements by coming to consensus about what is most important to consider when developing potential solutions.</i></p>		

