

Social Justice Sunday Statement

Student Activities

A Rich Young Nation: The challenge of affluence and poverty in Australia.

The following student activities have been written to support the 2008 Social Justice Sunday Statement: *A Rich Young Nation: The Challenge of affluence and poverty in Australia.*

The activities are based on Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats which require students to extend their way of **thinking** about a topic by 'wearing' a range of different 'thinking' hats.

Other activities are based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy of cognitive processes.

The writers of the student activities, Di Brown, Member of the Bishop's Commission for Justice Development and Peace in the Armidale Diocese, Beverley O'Keefe, St Michael's School, Mittagong and Lesleigh Altmann, St Mary's School Bowraville and St Joseph's School, Kempsey have designed the activities to enable teachers to use tools for differentiating curriculum tasks to address the diverse learning needs of students. The activities do not focus on specific year levels, but have a wide range of strategies suitable for students in Primary and Secondary school settings. The activities can be adapted to address the learning outcomes for the various year levels.

Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

REMEMBERING

1. Using the Bishops' Social Justice Sunday Statement for 2008, define the word 'Affluenza'.
2. The Bishops' Social Justice Sunday Statement 2008 states "*When people see wants as needs, it is not surprising that two thirds say they cannot afford everything they need*". Write a list or create a PowerPoint of your needs and wants. Discuss with a friend whether your wants have become needs.
3. Complete a 'Facts Chart' showing how Indigenous people are disadvantaged in Australia's affluent society.

UNDERSTANDING

1. Read the scripture passage Luke 4: 16-19. Jesus showed by his words and deeds a special concern for the least powerful in the society of his time. Choose one of the organisations that help those who are disadvantaged. Explain in written format or use a digital presentation (eg PhotoStory) to present your findings.
2. Affluence can bring great benefits, depending on how we use it. Form groups and discuss what is meant by the words 'affluent' and 'consumerist mentality'. Provide examples and share your understandings with other groups in your class.
3. The disparity between the wealthiest and poorest in our community is growing with many Australians experiencing an ongoing cycle of poverty. Form groups and prepare a flow chart that illustrates how this cycle is often perpetuated across generations.

APPLYING

1. Read the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:35-40 when He said, whenever we do something for someone in need, we also do it for Him. Paint a wall frieze illustrating these words of Jesus. Alternatively, use the free software PhotoStory3 or experiment with Green Screen Video effect <http://www.mediacollege.com/video/special-effects/green-screen/>
2. Make a sculpture depicting the plight of Refugees and Asylum seekers who are waiting for permission to build a new life in Australia.
3. Write a Haiku poem on 'Consumerism'. (A Haiku poem is a Japanese poem consisting of three lines. The first and third lines have 5 syllables in each line and the second line has 7 syllables.)

ANALYSING

1. Compare the positive and negative aspects of the prosperity flowing from 15 years of economic growth in Australia. Discuss the changes to family life and our environments as a result of the spectacular growth. Present your discussion in a hardcopy or use PhotoStory3 or Movie Maker or iMovie to present your ideas.
2. One of the best known statements of Blessed Mary MacKillop is, "*Never see a need without trying to do something about it.*" Write a biography of her life detailing how she initiated projects that showed how she and members of her Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart acted on this statement. If you are using an Interactive White Board in your class, create a lesson on the biography of Blessed Mary MacKillop using web links and historical photos (eg <http://www.sosj.org.au/mary/index.html>)

3. There are many causes of poverty in our society. It is the responsibility of all of us as a nation, to ensure that the basic conditions and opportunities exist for families to provide for themselves, to be freed from poverty traps and not be welfare dependent. Analyse the causes of poverty and examine ways in which it can be overcome. Share your ideas with your local State and Federal Members of Parliament. Your ideas may take the form of a Word Document, a Power Point Presentation or a PhotoStory.

EVALUATING

1. Conduct a Debate using the following statement from the 1996 Bishops' Conference, *"In the main, people are poor not because they are lazy or lacking in ability or because they are unlucky. They are poor because of the way society, including its economic system, is organised"*.

2. Form a panel to discuss the following words of Pope John Paul II, *"It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being' and which wants to have more, not in order to be more but in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end in itself."*

3. Read the 'Ideas for Action' section of the Bishops' Social Justice Sunday Statement for 2008 and write a personal reflection or create a Reflective Movie using Movie Maker, iMovie or PhotoStory considering the ideas to which you could personally commit your time and resources over the next twelve months.

CREATING

1. According to the teachings of the Gospel, Jesus calls us to build a just society and to work together to ensure that poverty is eradicated and that all are able to live a full life. Those with means have a special responsibility to ensure that those who are vulnerable are clothed, housed and looked after. Devise ways in which your school and Parish communities can contribute to the work of addressing and preventing poverty. Create a timeline for implementing and assessing the effectiveness of your projects.

2. Visit the websites of:

Catholic Social Services Australia: www.catholicsocialservices.org.au

Australian Catholic Social Justice Council: www.acsjc.org.au

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office: www.acmro.catholic.org.au

Catholic Earthcare Australia: www.catholicearthcare.org.au

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council: www.natsicc.org.au

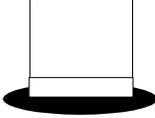
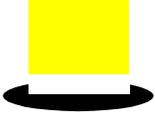
Using coordinates, (grid) design a Floor Game or an Interactive Whiteboard Game about the work the above organisations do to improve the lives of those on whom they focus.

3. By living life more in terms of what we need, rather than what we want, we will be less concerned with material acquisition and freed from the clutter of consumerism. Most importantly, we will be in a better position to recognise the needs of others. Visit www.livesimply.org.uk and devise ways you can live more simply. Encourage others to join you in making a promise. Use your Mac with GarageBand or your PC with Audacity software and Podsafe Music to create a Podcast to encourage others to make your promise. As an alternative to GarageBand or Podsafe Music, create your own music.

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 <p>Information and Data</p>	<p>Lists the facts related to the treatment of Refugees and Asylum seekers arriving in Australia over the past 10 years.</p>
 <p>Values and Benefits</p>	<p>In a small group, discuss the positive policies introduced by Australian Governments over recent years which have helped the poor and disadvantaged members of our society.</p>
 <p>Caution, Difficulties, Problems and Risks</p>	<p>In 1992 a statement called “<i>Common Wealth for the Common Good</i>” was released by the Bishops of Australia. They called on political parties and community leaders to ensure the common wealth of Australia be dedicated to the common good, especially to the poor. The conditions noted at that time still exist in Australia. What are the problems and risks involved if Australian society does not address the needs of our most vulnerable citizens?</p>
 <p>Alternatives, Creativity, Growth</p>	<p>Imagine if poverty could be eradicated from Australia. Write a description or paint a picture depicting what our country would be like.</p>
 <p>Facilitating, Organising, Thinking about thinking</p>	<p>Professor Tony Vinson in an article in <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i> [2/2/08] wrote of Australia’s social Bermuda Triangle. “<i>The three tips of the Triangle are crime, social disadvantage and limited education. The shell of the lives afloat within the Triangle more or less drift to their journey’s conclusion.</i>” Outline a proposal that you can present to community leaders that will assist in reducing the effects of ‘Australia’s social Bermuda Triangle.’</p>
 <p>Feelings</p>	<p>Australia has more than 100,000 people who are homeless. Over 10,000 children under the age of 12 are among this number. Write how you feel about this situation. Explain the reasons for your feelings.</p>