

NAME:

What is Poverty?

Read the 'What is Poverty?' (page 4) section of the fact book and complete the following activities.

ACTIVITY 1 – COMPREHENSION AND ANALYSIS

1. What is the difference between relative and absolute poverty?

2. What aspects does 'overall poverty' add to its definition?

ACTIVITY 2 – QUOTES

In your own words, explain the meaning of each of the quotes below.

"Poverty is like punishment for a crime you didn't commit." – Eli Khamarov, writer

"In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of." – Confucius, Chinese teacher and philosopher

"Poverty does not belong in civilized human society. Its proper place is in a museum." – Muhammad Yunus, entrepreneur

"Foreign Assistance is not an end in itself. The purpose of aid must be to create the conditions where it is no longer needed." – Barack Obama

NAME:

What is Poverty?

“I believe that, as long as there is plenty, poverty is evil.” – Robert Kennedy

“Extreme poverty anywhere is a threat to human security everywhere.” – Kofi Annan

“Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime.” – Aristotle

“You can’t get rid of poverty by giving people money.” – P.J. O’Rourke



NAME:

What is Poverty?

Answer the questions below.

1. How are the quotes by Barack Obama and P.J. O'Rourke similar?

2. What is the common theme in the quotes from Aristotle and Kofi Annan?

3. Complete some further research on Aristotle and Kofi Annan. During what time period did each of them live and what was their role in their society?

4. What can you conclude about the nature of poverty, given these two people lived over 2000 years apart, yet they have such similar views?

Based on everything you have read, write your own definition of poverty

Teacher Guide – What is Poverty?

Read the ‘What is Poverty?’(page 4) section of the fact book and complete the following activities.

ACTIVITY 1 – COMPREHENSION AND ANALYSIS

1. What is the difference between relative and absolute poverty?

Relative poverty is dependent on which country a person lives in, as it is measured against the average standard of living in that country. Absolute poverty is the severe deprivation of basic human needs including food, water, sanitation, health, education and information.

2. What aspects does ‘overall poverty’ add to its definition?

Overall poverty takes a wider viewpoint of poverty. It includes additional things such as social discrimination and exclusion, and lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and cultural life.

ACTIVITY 2 – QUOTES

In your own words, explain the meaning of each of the quotes below.

“Poverty is like punishment for a crime you didn’t commit.” – Eli Khamarov, writer
Eli Khamarov was saying that most of the time, people who are living in poverty haven’t done anything wrong. Many people are living in poverty through no fault of their own, and thus it is like they are being punished for a crime they didn’t commit.

”In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of.” – Confucius, Chinese teacher and philosopher

Confucius was presenting two different sides of the story in his quote. First of all, he was saying that in a country with good government and living standards, poverty is something the government and society as a whole should be ashamed of. Alternatively, if the country has poor government and living standards, being wealthy is something to be ashamed of (probably because they are corrupt).

”Poverty does not belong in civilized human society. Its proper place is in a museum.” – Muhammad Yunus, entrepreneur

When Muhammad Yunus said that poverty’s “proper place is in a museum,” he was saying that poverty should be a thing of the past.

“Foreign Assistance is not an end in itself. The purpose of aid must be to create the conditions where it is no longer needed.” – Barack Obama

Barack Obama was stating that while providing foreign assistance to developing countries is important, simply providing money will not solve the problem of poverty. He believed the money must be used to create the conditions for that country to become self-sufficient.

Teacher Guide – What is Poverty?

“I believe that, as long as there is plenty, poverty is evil.” – Robert Kennedy

Robert Kennedy was saying that as long as money, resources etc. are plentiful, it is evil to have some people living in poverty. This is likely based on the fact that the top 1% of wealthy people own an obscene amount of the world's wealth.

“Extreme poverty anywhere is a threat to human security everywhere.” – Kofi Annan

Kofi Annan revealed his belief that extreme poverty (those living on less than US\$1.90 a day) is a threat to human security globally. He likely said this because those who are living in extreme poverty are more likely to join militant groups, which poses significant security threats.

“Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime.” – Aristotle

Aristotle used an analogy of a parent and their children to describe poverty. He stated that poverty is the parent and revolution and crime are the children. Thus, he was saying that crime and revolution exist in large part because poverty exists. Without poverty, revolution and crime would disappear (or be significantly reduced).

“You can't get rid of poverty by giving people money.” – P.J. O'Rourke

P.J. O'Rourke was saying that it takes more than just money to overcome poverty. Changes must be made to social and economic structures that entrench people in poverty.)

Teacher Guide – What is Poverty?

Answer the questions below.

1. How are the quotes by Barack Obama and P.J. O'Rourke similar?

The quotes by both Barack Obama and P.J. O'Rourke reveal the belief that it takes more than just money to overcome poverty.

2. What is the common theme in the quotes from Aristotle and Kofi Annan?

Aristotle and Kofi Annan both believed that poverty threatened the safety and security of people.

3. Complete some further research on Aristotle and Kofi Annan. During what time period did each of them live and what was their role in their society?

Aristotle lived in Ancient Greece, from 384-322BC. He was a philosopher and scientist and is today considered one of the fathers of western philosophy. Kofi Annan was born in 1938 and served as Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1997 to 2006.

4. What can you conclude about the nature of poverty, given these two people lived over 2000 years apart, yet they have such similar views?

The fact that these two people had such similar views of poverty shows that poverty has been a societal problem for thousands of years, with the same causes and same effects. It shows that poverty has had negative impacts on society for a long time.