



Forming a New Government

IN THIS ACTIVITY, the participants distinguish between wants and needs and understand that basic needs can be considered rights.

TIME REQUIRED: 30 MINUTES | INTENDED FOR GRADES 6-8



language arts



mathematics



economics



government

MATERIALS NEEDED

- » Butcher paper and markers
- » Copies of Resource, “Wants and Needs Cards,” found on page 154. You will need to create one set of cards for each group of four participants. If possible, use different identifying colors for each set.
- » Visit worldvision.org/lp/acsi-teacher-resources for a video you can show to support this lesson. (optional)

Activity Steps

1

INVITE THE PARTICIPANTS to form groups of four. Give each group a set of “Wants and Needs Cards.”

2

ASK THE PARTICIPANTS to imagine that a new government has been elected in their village, town, or city. This government wants to ensure that all young people have the basic things they want and need and has asked for their input. This is a unique opportunity for the young people. Note that the cards represent wants and needs determined by the elected officials. Ask the groups to decide whether anything is missing and write the missing items on the three blank cards.

3

ANNOUNCE that, for political and economic reasons, the new government can provide only 16 of the 24 items listed on the cards. Ask the groups to decide which eight items they are willing to give up and to return those cards to you.

4

ANNOUNCE that because further cuts must be made because of budget constraints, each group must eliminate another four items and return those cards to you.

5

NOW, NOTE that the government has received many petitions from different community groups for other needs and wants. Announce that a maximum of four requests will be considered from each group. The groups must eliminate all but four cards and return the leftover cards to you.

6

ASK FOR TWO VOLUNTEERS to serve as “government leaders.” Then invite one participant from each group to present arguments for their selections and actively petition the government leaders to consider their choices (this can be done as dramatic presentations for all to hear).

7

ONCE ALL THE GROUPS have presented their arguments, ask the two “leaders” to step outside the room to confer. Tell them that must choose just four cards from all those submitted. Meanwhile, involve the rest of the group in a large-group discussion using the following questions:

- » What was difficult about doing this activity? What was easy?
- » Which items were missing from the cards supplied by the government?
- » Which items did you eliminate first? Why?
- » Were some items harder to eliminate than others? Which ones? Why?
- » Do you feel satisfied with the input you are able to give the government?
- » What is the difference between a want and a need?

8

INVITE THE LEADERS to return to the room and announce their top four choices and their reasons for choosing them.

9

AS A FOLLOW-UP, explain that basic needs are sometimes referred to as rights. Have the participants brainstorm, in groups, their own definition of rights. Challenge the participants to form a consensus on their definition of rights. Conclude by offering the following key points:

- » The concept of human rights is based on the belief that we have rights simply because we are human beings.
- » A right is something you are entitled to in order to survive and have a meaningful, satisfying life.

10

CONCLUDE BY INVITING the participants to join you in prayer. Pray for the children in your own community. Pray for the children in your country. Pray for all children of the world, especially those who do not enjoy the rights that young people in the United States enjoy. Pray that one day all children will be treated equally.

(This activity is adapted from Susan Fountain, *It's Only Right: A Practical Guide to Learning about the Convention on the Rights of the Child*; London, England: Hodder and Stoughton Publishing, 1993. © 1993 by Hodder and Stoughton Publishing. All rights reserved. Used with permission.)

RESOURCE

Wants and Needs Cards

Your own bedroom	Candy	Protection from discrimination
Education	Money to spend as you like	Vacations
Nutritious food	A television	Clean water
A bicycle	The opportunity to express your opinion and be listened to	Medical care when you need it
Decent shelter	The opportunity to practice your own religion	A personal computer
Clothes in the latest style	Clean air	Protection from abuse and neglect
A tablet	Playgrounds and recreation centers	

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