

EXPLORE THE WORK OF OXFAM

Classroom activities for ages 8-14



OXFAM

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Oxfam is part of a global movement of millions of people who share the belief that, in a world rich in resources, poverty isn't inevitable, and is an injustice that can and must be overcome. Our vision is of a kinder and radically better world, where everyone is able to thrive, not just survive.

These engaging activities explore how Oxfam is working with people around the world to help create a fairer, kinder and more sustainable future for everyone. Learners will find out who Oxfam is, the issues we work on and how we are taking action. This will help them to understand some of the different ways in which individuals, communities and organisations are working together for change.

Learners will discuss what we need to thrive in life, and consider how a person's intersecting identities can affect their opportunities and experiences. They will reflect on what they would like the future to be like and think about what actions are needed to make this a reality. Colourful, evocative photographs, accompanied by background information, will help learners to increase their understanding about Oxfam's work, develop empathy and improve their critical thinking skills.

Cover photo: Abbie Trayler-Smith. See the accompanying photo pack for further information.



OXFAM

Photo: Carlos Zaparolli/Oxfam. See the accompanying slideshow for further information.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THIS RESOURCE?

- Classroom activities and activity sheets to get young people learning and thinking about Oxfam's work to help create a kinder, fairer and better world
- An [accompanying slideshow and photo pack](#) to support learning
- Additional activity ideas to inspire further learning across a range of subjects

LEARNING AIMS

- To think critically about what we all need to thrive in life.
- To consider the different aspects of a person's identity and how these overlapping identities can intersect to affect their opportunities and experiences.
- To work collaboratively to analyse photographs illustrating different aspects of Oxfam's work.
- To investigate some of the ways in which Oxfam works with others to take action on different issues.
- To reflect on what you think the future would ideally be like and identify possible actions that could be taken to help achieve this.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- England: Citizenship; English; Geography; Personal, Social and Health Education
- Northern Ireland: Environment and Society; Language and Literacy; Personal Development and Mutual Understanding; The World Around Us
- Scotland: Health and Well-being; Literacy and English; Social Studies
- Wales: Humanities; Languages, Literacy and Communication

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

- This resource is intended to support your teaching rather than guide it. Additional teaching may be required to develop learners' knowledge and skills, as well as their understanding of some concepts.
- The resource is designed to be flexible and easily adapted. The suggested age range is 8–14 years. However, many of the activities could be modified for use with younger or older learners. Depending on the time available, the activities could either be taught sequentially over a series of lessons or selected and delivered as stand-alone sessions.
- Provisional timings are provided. These are estimates only and do not include any time needed for setting up activities.

Visit our website for ideas, resources and support for active global citizenship in the classroom and beyond!

www.oxfam.org.uk/education



Photo: Arlette Bashizi/Oxfam. See the accompanying slideshow for further information.

ABOUT OXFAM

Oxfam is a confederation of 21 independent charitable organizations — part of a global movement of millions of people working together to end poverty. Since Oxfam first started in 1942, we have challenged the underlying causes of poverty, while supporting people to cope when disaster strikes.

Progress in the fight against poverty is under threat from escalating conflicts, the worsening climate crisis, and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has exposed inequalities – like those based on gender, race, ethnicity, age and physical ability – that trap people in poverty.

These global problems need global solutions. This is how we are making a difference:

- Focusing on where we can make the most radical difference: tackling extreme vulnerability in the toughest places on earth and challenging the global inequalities that push people into poverty.
- Working in partnership with communities and organizations around the world who are driving change, supporting them with the resources they need.
- Standing up for people’s rights by working in solidarity with others, holding governments and other powers to account, and pushing for peaceful solutions that leave no one behind.
- Bringing together people and groups who feel part of an international community, to help raise vital funds and to shape how they take action.

And how we work is as important as what we do as we continue to challenge injustices, both in our own ways of working and in the world.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO THRIVE?

Activity 1

LEARNING AIM

- To think critically about what we all need to thrive in life and whether everyone has access to these things.

TIME

- 30 minutes+

WHAT YOU NEED

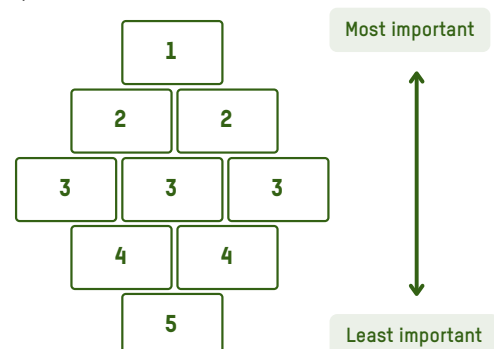
- Copies of the What do we need to thrive? activity sheet; pencils; scissors; PPT (slides 2–12)

WHAT TO DO

1. Discuss learners' existing knowledge and ideas about the work of Oxfam. *Have you heard of Oxfam before? What does Oxfam do?* Learners could also be encouraged to share the names of any other charities they know and to discuss what work these organizations do.
2. Show PPT slide 2. Oxfam is a global organization that was established in 1942 in Oxford, England. It's part of a movement of millions of people around the world who are working together to end poverty.
3. Show PPT slide 3. Oxfam believes that poverty is an injustice that can and must be overcome. Their vision is of a kinder, fairer and better world, where everyone is able to thrive, not just survive.
4. Use PPT slide 4 to prompt discussion about what it means to thrive. Thrive means "to grow or develop very well". What does a plant need to thrive?
5. Show PPT slide 5 and ask learners to think and then talk to a partner about what people need to thrive in life. Invite learners to share their ideas with the rest of the class.
6. Organise learners into groups of three or four. Give each group a copy of the What do we need to thrive? activity sheet and pairs of scissors. Ask learners to work in their groups to cut out and sort the cards into a diamond shape with the things they think are the most important at the top and the least important things at the bottom. Two cards have been left blank in case learners would like to add their own ideas.
7. Explain that there are no right or wrong answers – it is up to learners to decide as a group what ranking they think is best. However, they should be prepared to share some reasons for their choices with the rest of the class. PPT slide 6 could be used as a prompt.

Make it more difficult

Challenge learners to come up with their own cards to sort rather than using those provided.



FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

1. Invite groups to share their rankings with others and explain the reasons for their choices.

2. The questions on PPT slide 7 could be used to support some whole-class discussion:

- Are these all rights or are some of them privileges?
- Which things did you decide were most important, and why?
- Can you think of anything else we need to thrive?
- Do you think everyone has the things they need to thrive in life?

3. Use PPT slides 8–9 to explain that millions of people around the world are still living in poverty without the things they need to thrive.

4. Use PPT slide 10 to explain what inequality means. Our world is also very unequal, for example, some people have a lot of money and some have very little. We call this inequality.

5. Show PPT slide 11 and explain that inequality isn't just about how much money someone has. Encourage learners to suggest other ways in which people's lives and experiences might be unequal. Some examples are provided on PPT slide 12. Learners will explore possible reasons for this inequality in the next activity.

FURTHER ACTIVITY IDEA

Try an activity from Oxfam's [Children's Rights](#) resource for ages 8–11. This resource helps to improve learners' English skills while making the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child relevant and interesting.

Young people visit the [Oxfam Supply Centre](#) in Bicester, UK.



WHAT DO WE NEED TO THRIVE?

Activity sheet

Shelter	Family	Mobile phone
Education	Healthcare	Friends
Play	Food	Water
Internet	Your idea	Your idea

THINKING ABOUT IDENTITY

Activity 2

CREATING SAFE SPACES

When exploring sensitive and complex issues such as identity, it is important to take steps to create a safe, collaborative and respectful space for young people to explore their thinking, where they feel comfortable to share and discuss their thoughts and ideas. Oxfam's [Teaching Controversial Issues guide](#) includes practical suggestions for creating safe spaces to have these important conversations (see p.14). Some other useful links and resources are provided at the end of this pack.

LEARNING AIMS

- To reflect on and discuss the different things that make up a person's identity.
- To develop understanding of how a person's overlapping identities can affect the experiences and opportunities they have, how they are treated by and treat others, and the barriers they face in getting the things they need to thrive.

TIME

- 45 minutes+

WHAT YOU NEED

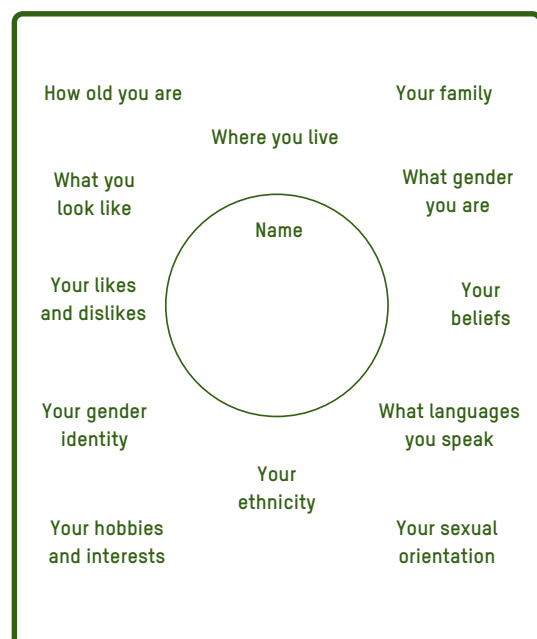
- Sheets of paper or copies of the [Who am I?](#) activity sheet; [PPT slides 13-15](#)
- Before completing this activity, it may be helpful for teachers to draw their own identity poster to share with the class.

WHAT TO DO

1. **What do you think identity means?** Discuss learners' ideas before sharing the explanation on PPT slide 13.
2. **What identities might someone have?** Learners could discuss their ideas in small groups or as a class. Some examples of possible identities are provided on slide 14. Note: This suggested list may need to be amended depending on learners' age and the context in which the resource is being used.
3. Show PPT slide 15. Explain that learners are each going to create an identity poster. First, they should draw a circle in the middle of a sheet of paper. They should write their name and draw a picture of themselves in this circle. In the space outside the circle, learners should write or draw things that describe their identity. Note: Teachers could share the identity poster they have created at this stage.
4. Distribute sheets of paper for learners to create their own identity posters.

Make it easier

Provide copies of the [Who am I?](#) activity sheet for learners to complete.



FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

1. Learners could be invited to share their identity posters in pairs or groups of three. It is important to let learners know in advance if you intend to do this. Any learners who feel uncomfortable sharing with others should be allowed to opt out. Alternatively, learners could share just one or two aspects of their identity but keep their identity posters private.

2. Older learners could be asked to discuss the following questions in pairs or groups of three (see PPT slide 16):

- Which identities do you think about the most? Which identities do you think about the least? Does everyone have the same view about which identities are the most/least important?
- Are any of these identities “labels” given to you by others?
- Do you think your identities stay the same or change during your life?
- Which identities do you think have the most effect on how you treat and are treated by others?

3. Explain that each one of us is made up of multiple identities, which interconnect to make us who we are. Use PPT slide 17 to help explain that a person’s overlapping identities can affect their experiences and opportunities, how they are treated by and treat others, and the barriers they face in getting the things they need to thrive.

4. Ask learners to suggest examples where someone has been treated differently from somebody else because of one or more of their identities. Older learners could be challenged to choose two or more overlapping identities and give an example of how they might lead to someone being treated differently.

FURTHER ACTIVITY IDEAS

- There are many learning resources available to further explore identity and related topics in the classroom. These [primary](#) and [secondary](#) resources from The Linking Network are a useful starting point.
- These [Oxfam education resources](#) for ages 9-16 use stories, film and role play to investigate the unequal human impacts of the climate crisis.

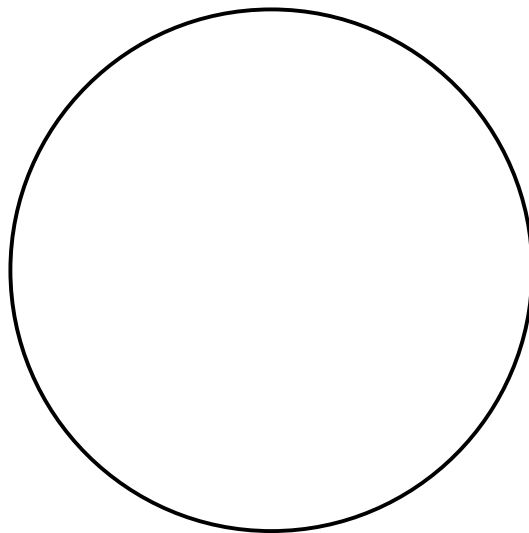


Photo: Andy Aitchison/Oxfam

Young people take part in an inequality game to explore how different factors can intersect to affect people's experiences of climate change.

WHO AM I?

Activity sheet



SEE, THINK, WONDER

Activity 3

LEARNING AIM

- To work with others to analyse, think critically about and discuss photographs.
- To understand some of the ways in which Oxfam works with others to take action on different issues.

TIME

- 20 minutes+

WHAT YOU NEED

- Colour copies of the [Explore the Work of Oxfam photo pack](#) and the [See, Think, Wonder](#) activity sheet; [PPT slides 18-22](#)

WHAT TO DO

1. Use PPT slides 2 and 3 to recap what Oxfam is: a charity that is part of a global movement of millions of people working together to end poverty and create a kinder, fairer and better world where everybody is able to thrive, not just survive.
2. Show PPT slide 18 and explain that Oxfam works in three main ways:
 - **We respond to emergencies**
Oxfam works with others to provide short-term, life-saving support to help people in emergency situations. For example, this could be because of an earthquake, flooding, drought or conflict.
 - **We work with people around the world to help make change happen**
Oxfam works with communities and organisations around the world who are taking action, supporting them with the things they need.
 - **We are speaking out for a kinder, fairer and better world**
Oxfam is joining with others to call for more to be done to change the systems and structures that make it difficult for many people to get the things they need to thrive.
3. Share the examples of these three areas of work on PPT slides 19–21.
4. Organise learners into pairs or groups of three. Give each group one of the pictures from the [Exploring the Work of Oxfam photo pack](#) and a copy of the [See, Think, Wonder](#) activity sheet.
5. Show PPT slide 22 and explain that each of these photographs shows an example of Oxfam's work in partnership with others. Ask learners to talk with others in their group about their picture.
 - See: What can you see in the picture? What do you know for definite?
 - Think: What do you think is happening? Why do you think this? Why do you think Oxfam is doing this work? How do you think these activities are helping to create a kinder, fairer and better world?
 - Wonder: What do you wonder? What questions would you like to ask about the picture? What do you think people in the picture might be thinking or saying?
6. Learners should write their ideas on the [See, Think, Wonder](#) activity sheet.

7. Alternatively, the photographs could be displayed around the classroom and learners could explore and discuss more than one picture. As an extension activity, learners could try and sort the pictures into the three main categories of Oxfam's work listed above.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

1. Match up each pair or group with another and ask learners to take turns at sharing their ideas. Discuss learners' ideas as a class and then the information about the pictures provided at the end of the photo pack.
2. Finish by making the point that Oxfam is just one of many organizations who are helping to create a kinder, fairer and better world. *What other organizations do you know? What work do they do? What issues do you care about the most?*

FURTHER ACTIVITY IDEAS

There are lots of other ways in which the images in the [Explore the Work of Oxfam photo pack](#) could be used to support global learning. Here are a few suggestions:

Put yourself in the picture

Ask learners to choose a person in a photograph and think about what this person might be thinking. Alternatively, learners could select two people in the picture and imagine a conversation that they might be having. Thought and speech bubbles could be drawn on pieces of paper, the words written inside and the bubbles cut out and added to the photograph. Learners could develop this further by working with a partner to take on the roles of the characters and acting out a conversation.

Thinking outside the frame

Crop a photo in a way that will encourage learners to imagine what is happening "outside the frame". Organise learners into groups of three or four. Give each group a small part of a photograph, attached to a large sheet of paper. Learners should work collaboratively to extend the picture by drawing around it. Alternatively, cover a small section of an image and ask learners to think and talk about what might be hidden in the picture. Share and discuss learners' ideas before displaying the "complete" images. Activities like this are a useful way of encouraging learners to think about how stereotypes and assumptions can influence our responses.

What's the link?

Display a photograph of a person, or group of people, from a contrasting locality (in the UK or another country). Ask learners to identify and discuss commonalities and links between their own lives and the lives of the person (or people) in the picture.

Picture detectives

Organise learners into groups of three or four. Give each group a photograph. Ask learners to think about what questions they would like to ask about the image. Encourage them to think about the five W's (What? Why? Where? When? Who?) and How?. Discuss the types of questions they have asked. Are the questions open or closed? Will they lead to answers which are fact or opinion? Will they be easy or difficult to answer? Which do you think is the most interesting question and why? How might you find out the answers to these questions?

SEE, THINK, WONDER

Activity sheet

What can you see?	What do you think?	What do you wonder?

MY IDEAL FUTURE

Activity 4

LEARNING AIM

- To reflect on what your ideal future would be like and think about what changes are needed to make this a reality.

TIME

- 45 minutes+

WHAT YOU NEED

- Paper; scissors; coloured pencils and pens; magazines, newspapers and brochures (optional); copies of the [Making a paper people chain](#) activity sheet (optional); [PPT slides 23-23](#)

WHAT TO DO

1. Remind learners that Oxfam's vision is of a kinder, fairer and better world. What do you think this world would be like? What changes would you like to see happen at school, in your community (the place where you live) and the wider world? Ask learners to think about these questions on their own for a couple of minutes and then share their ideas with a partner.
2. Support learners to each cut out a paper people chain. Some instructions are provided on the [Making a paper people chain](#) activity sheet. Alternatively, you could search online for other ways of making your chain or to find a printable template to use.
3. Ask learners to decorate their paper chain with words and pictures that represent their thoughts and ideas. As well as writing or drawing, learners could find, cut out and stick on pictures or words from magazines, newspapers and brochures. An example is provided on PPT slide 23.
4. Display learners' chains in the classroom or around the school.

Make it easier

Search online for a printable people paper chain template for learners to cut out and decorate.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

1. Discuss learners' ideas as a whole class. Identify any common themes that arise. Depending on the age of your learners, possible discussion questions include:
 - Which changes do we think are most important and why?
 - Do you think other people share your vision for the future?
 - What changes do you think are most likely to happen?
 - What action is needed to create this kinder, fairer and better world?
 - Who needs to make these changes happen?
 - What could you do to help make the world kinder, fairer and better?

2. Finish by showing PPT slide 26 and asking learners to think of one thing that they could do personally do to help make the world kinder, fairer and better. This might be an action to make change at home, at school, in the place where they live or globally.

FURTHER ACTIVITY IDEAS

- ‘Ideal Futures’ is a mind-mapping tool that encourages learners to express their ideas — both positive and negative — about the future. It can be used to explore the future generally or in relation to a specific issue. See p. 18 of Oxfam’s [Global Citizenship in the Classroom teachers’ guide](#).
- Learners could work collaboratively to choose and plan an action they would like to take as a class to help make the world kinder, fairer and better. The [Get Global toolkit](#) has lots of useful teaching ideas and templates to support this planning process. Although this resource is aimed at ages 11–16, many of the activities could be adapted for younger learners.



MAKING A PAPER PEOPLE CHAIN

Activity sheet

1. Cut a rectangular strip of paper. The exact dimensions will depend on how many people you want to have in your chain and how big you want the people in your chain to be.



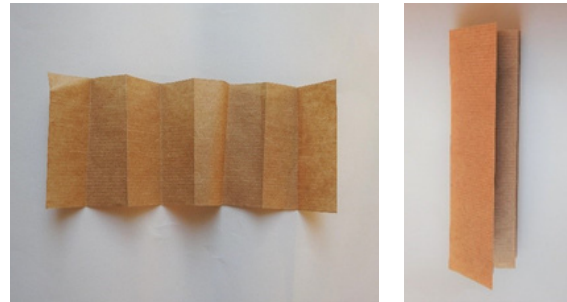
2. Fold the strip in half lengthwise, making sure to match the edges and make a sharp crease.



3. Fold in half again twice, making the folds as even as possible.



4. Then, unfold the paper. Using the creases, refold the paper using accordion folds.



5. Place the folded rectangle in front of you with the uppermost fold to the left and the open edge to the right. Draw half a person on the rectangle with the head and body on the fold and the arm and leg extending out to the open edge. Carefully cut out this person and unfold the paper.



6. Hopefully you will now have a chain of people to decorate!

