



Global Voices Information Sheet

Responsible business leadership



An Occupy protestor in New York (photo by: Amy Sussman/Corbis)

Background Info

- The Occupy movement is an ongoing series of demonstrations that started with Occupy Wall Street on September 17, 2011, in New York's Zuccotti Park. The city erected a fence near the New York Stock Exchange, which prevented the protestors from reaching their target on Wall Street.
- The protestors call themselves "the 99 percent," a reference to the narrow distribution of wealth in America. One percent of the U.S. population owns 40 percent of the nation's wealth.
- Protestors say they want to "end corporate greed." Critics say this is too vague, and that the protestors have not formed manageable political goals.
- The Occupy movement has spread to other cities around the world, including some in Canada: Toronto and Vancouver.
- Some media critics have compared the Occupy protest to the Tea Party movement, which is an American populist movement calling for less government and lower taxes.
- In 2001, Enron, an American energy company, went bankrupt after it was revealed the company was recording false profits in one of the biggest corporate fraud scandals in American history, which led to growing public mistrust of big corporations.
- In 2008, the global economy sharply declined. There was a financial crisis, meaning large financial institutions collapsed and the U.S. government "bailed out" or gave loans to banks to prevent them from failing. The Occupy protestors are also upset by this government bailout.

Key terms

- **Populist/populism**—the principle of any political party that claims to support the power of the lower ranks, or "the people" over the privileged.
- **Disenfranchised**—those people deprived of a franchise, a legal right or some privilege.
- **Foreclosure**—the reclaiming of property by the lender (i.e. bank) when the owner defaults on payments (mortgage payments in the case of a home). Usually involves a forced sale of the property with proceeds going to pay off mortgage debt (i.e. back to the bank).
- **Recession**—a significant decline in economic activity lasting longer than a few months.
- **Alma mater**—a Latin phrase referring to any school, college or university at which one has studied, and usually from which one has graduated.

Global Voices Secondary Educator Resources

Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

Themes and Course Connections

- Themes: protest, ethics, Wall Street, the Occupy movement, business leaders, moral character.
- Course Connections: Business Studies, Canadian and World Studies, English, Social Sciences and Humanities.

Materials

- Chart paper or blackboard
- Computers and internet
- Global Voices column

Specific Expectations and Learning Goals

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in written and spoken language or other forms of expression.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express, and defend a position on an issue and explain how to put the ideas into action.

Reading Comprehension

1. Reading Comprehension: Global Voices Column (estimated time: 15 minutes)
 - a. Pre reading steps:
 - i. Introduce the topic and encourage students to discuss what they already know about the topic, making prediction around what the column is about.
 - b. Reading steps:
 - i. Read: students must read the text independently, highlighting important points throughout the column.
 - ii. Ask: students must ask themselves what the story is about, recording five questions they are unsure of after reading the column.

- iii. Paraphrase: encourage students to write point form notes in their own words around what the column is about.
- c. Post reading discussion:
 - i. What are the main points of the column?
 - ii. What emotions did this column provoke in you?
 - iii. What problem is identified in the column?
 - iv. What questions do you have about the column?

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Discussing the Global Voices Column (estimated time: 10 minutes)
 - a. Ask students the following suggested questions about the column, encourage them to use evidence from the Global Voices column to support their answers:
 - i. What is the message in this column?
 - ii. What perspectives are presented in this column? Which ones are left out?
 - iii. What problem is presented in this column?
 - iv. What is a protest?
 - v. What is Wall Street?
 - vi. What is the Occupy movement, as explained in the Global Voices column.
 - vii. What is being protested?
 - viii. How does the column compare the Occupy movement to the Tea Party?
 - ix. What do they mean by the disenfranchised masses?
 - x. What are ethics?
 - xi. What is presented as a better strategy to protesting?
 - xii. What is meant by socially responsible leadership curriculum? What would this look like in schools?
 - b. Conclude this discussion by clarifying any additional questions students have on the column.

Thinking

1. Business Leaders (estimated time: 15 minutes)
 - a. In this week's Global Voices column, it is stated that having
 - b. It is stated that "faulty systems on Wall Street and in Washington, and the mistakes made by principle players, crashed the world's financial markets, caused the foreclosure of homes and left millions of workers without jobs," and this is attributed to poor moral character of these business leaders.
 - c. Ask students to explain why moral character is important, particularly for business leaders.
 - d. Ask students to write a brief reflection around why a strong moral character is important for business leaders and discuss some of the issues these leaders should care about as they conduct their business.
 - e. Completed reflections will be handed in for grading.

Communication

1. Call to Action (estimated time: 60 minutes)
 - a. The protesters of the Occupy movement have been accused of having no call to action and that it is difficult to translate this protest into tangible political efficacy for change. As a class, discuss why it is important to have clear goals and a call to action when protesting.
 - b. Ask students if they have heard about any other important protests in history, list these movements on the board.
 - c. Divide the class into pairs and ask each pair to research monumental protests in history.

- d. Once they have selected a historical protest, ask students to answer the following suggested questions:
 - i. What is the name of this protest?
 - ii. When did it take place?
 - iii. Who were the protesters?
 - iv. What were they protesting?
 - v. What were the goals of the protesters?
 - vi. How did they choose to protest?
 - vii. What were the protesters hoping would result from their actions?
 - viii. Were the protesters successful?
 - ix. What is your opinion of this protest?
- e. When students have a firm understanding of their selected historical protest, ask students to create a three minute presentation on their research.
- f. Ask students present their findings, discuss each protest and how it compares to the Occupy movement.

Application

1. Protest (estimated time: 20 minutes)
 - a. Ask students to explain the goals of a protest.
 - b. Ask students if there are any current global or local issues they feel strongly about that they would like to protest for or against.
 - c. Once they have discussed these issues, ask students to describe how they would protest for or against this issue.
 - d. Divide the class into groups of four.
 - e. Ask each group to select one issue and plan a protest around this issue. In their plan students must include:
 - i. The issue they are focusing on.
 - ii. What they are protesting.
 - iii. How they are going to protest.
 - iv. How they are going to further spread the message.
 - v. Who they would like to hear their message.
 - vi. The goals of their protest.
 - f. When students have completed their plan, discuss their protests as a class.
 - g. Before concluding this discussion, ensure students have a firm understanding of what makes a successful protest.

Additional Resources

In addition to the above lesson plans, you may want to share some additional resources with your students. Listed below are some links to useful online resources:

Free The Children – www.freethechildren.com

We Day Teach - <http://www.weday.com/teach>



FREE THE CHILDREN
children helping children through education
