INTRODUCTION

Wealth is not always distributed equitably. It can vary widely from country to country and even within countries themselves. The World Bank categorizes countries as either high-income, middle-income, or low-income by computing the average wealth of each nation's residents. Countries with greater wealth often have greater access to resources such as food, water, and medical care, while countries with less wealth have less access to these resources and face issues such as poor health and higher mortality rates.

As the next generation of leaders, it is important for students to understand some of the inequities in resource distribution around the world and some of the feelings of helplessness and frustration that result from these inequities.

MATERIALS

• Envelopes
• Role Identity Cards
• Menu (provided)
• Colored paper
• Food* (see menu for items needed)
• Tables and chairs
• Tablecloths
• Index cards
*Feel free to adapt the menu.

PROCEDURE

Preparation, before class:
1. Decide if you’d like to provide equitable wealth to all students within an income group, or have the group members divide the group’s wealth among themselves. If the former, prepare envelopes for each student that include a Role Identity card and the proper number of chips according to the table on the next page. If the latter, create three envelopes, one for each income group, and fill them with the appropriate number of chips as indicated in the chart.
Make “chips” by cutting small squares of colored paper into single squares and \( \frac{1}{2} \) squares. Write VISA on five index cards to serve as travel visas during the simulation.

**Notes:**

- You may also want to include a menu in each envelope.
- Use the figures in the table below when proportioning your players and chips. The table below outlines the proportions for 30 students but the simulation can be done with any number of people. For example, for a group of 100 students, 17 would be assigned to high-income countries, 35 to middle-income countries and 48 to low-income countries, and the number chips would have to increase to 666.
- There should be at least two people available for selling food and visas. Extra chips can be used by the food and visa sellers for change.
- You will need approximately five visa cards for every 30 students playing the game.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Distribution</th>
<th>Number of Players (for a class of 30)</th>
<th>Wealth Distribution</th>
<th>Chips per Player</th>
<th>Chips per Income Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-Income Countries</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-Income Countries</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income Countries</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All GNI amounts are calculated using the World Bank Atlas method and current as of 1 July 2016.\(^1\) For the purposes of this game, lower-middle income countries are included in the low-income category. In this game, low-income countries are defined as those with a GNI per capita of $4,035 or less in 2015; middle-income countries are those with a GNI per capita between $4,036 and $12,475; high-income countries are those with a GNI per capita of $12,476 or more. The number chips per player has been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2. Purchase the food for the luncheon. You will need larger quantities of the less expensive items because most students will only be able to afford those.

3. Set up the food table to look as attractive as possible and create three distinct seating areas. Beautifully furnished tables with chairs should be placed in one area for the high-income country players. Provide a set of modest tables and chairs for the middle-income country players. The low-income country players should be confined to a small unfurnished section of the room, with only chairs or sitting room on the floor. There should be a clear difference in the three settings. Extra chips can be used by the food and visa sellers for change.
Facilitating the Activity:
1. Give each player his or her materials and direct them to their table. If you know the students, it might be a good idea to place a vocal individual in each of the three income groups.

2. Tell the participants that:
   a. This is a simulation game approximating the distribution of wealth, population, and food as it is in the real world.
   b. They are to deal with the presented situation as they see it and enjoy the meal.
   c. There are no rules other than those on their Role Identity Card.

3. The dilemma of how to deal with the inequities of the food and wealth distribution may take various forms. The group may immediately take on a “just and humane” style and work toward providing every player with an equal or adequate share of food. It might happen that the game results in “confrontation” or “revolution.” In that case, it should be resolved by having the sides draw up a statement of “grievance” or “justification,” etc. This should express both their feelings and their plan to resolve the situation.

4. Keep an eye on the students as they move through the meal and when you judge the simulation has been played out, declare it over. At the finish, it is important to invite the players to drop the rules and share the food.

5. Go over the Discussion Questions as a class.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. What was your emotional reaction to your rules? To the rules of the other groups?
2. How did you feel toward the people in the other groups?
3. Did you agree with the manner in which your group resolved problems? Do you think it was realistic?
4. Did your feelings change significantly during the experience? If so, when? Why?
5. How does this activity make you think about your own community and its make up?
6. Is the distribution of resources in the United States equal? What about in other countries?

No. While much of the world’s wealth and resources are located in North America and Europe, there are still disparities in resource distribution within those regions and certainly within its countries.
ASSESSMENT

Students write a journal reflection about their personal experience and response to their situation. They should identify which income group they belonged to and describe their experience from that perspective.

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

1. Have students list three things they can do as individuals to work toward more equitable food and resource distribution worldwide. Have students extend this list to three additional things they can do as individuals within their own communities, such as volunteer at a food bank, soup kitchen or with other community service projects.

2. Share the book, Hungry Planet: What the World Eats, by photojournalist Peter Menzel and writer Faith D’Aluisio (Ten Speed Press, 2005). The authors visited 30 families in 24 countries and chronicled their weekly food purchases with photos and information that allow readers to witness the amazing disparity in eating habits around the globe. Among the families profiled, we meet the Mellanders, a German household of five who enjoy cinnamon rolls, chocolate croissants, and beef roulades, and whose weekly food expenses amount to $500. We also encounter the Natomos of Mali, a family of one husband, his two wives, and their nine children, whose corn- and millet-based diet costs $26.39 weekly. It’s an eye-opening book that can spark interesting classroom discussions. Photos from the book with descriptions can be viewed here:

http://menzelphoto.photoshelter.com/gallery/Hungry-Planet-Family-Food-Portraits/G0000zmgWvU6SiKM/C0000k7JgEHhEq0w

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## DINNER FOR THE WORLD

### MENU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>SIZE</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lunch meat</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>4 chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>4 chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>1/2 chip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot sticks</td>
<td>1 portion</td>
<td>6 chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad</td>
<td>1 portion</td>
<td>3 chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condiments</td>
<td>1 packet or portion</td>
<td>1/2 chip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chips or pretzels</td>
<td>1 portion</td>
<td>10 chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granola bar</td>
<td>1 bar</td>
<td>10 chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice dish</td>
<td>1 portion</td>
<td>1 chip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raisins</td>
<td>1 portion</td>
<td>1/2 chip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crackers</td>
<td>1 portion</td>
<td>1/2 chip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>1 piece or portion</td>
<td>3 chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>1 chip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juice</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>2 1/2 chips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DINNER FOR THE WORLD
ROLE IDENTITY CARDS

High-Income Country Citizen
You are a privileged citizen of a “developed” country such as Japan, Germany, Australia, Canada, and the United States. You are part of the 17% of the world’s population that lives in a high-income country and you have an almost unlimited access to the Earth’s resources.

You are invited to enjoy the luncheon we have prepared for you by purchasing whatever you can from the luncheon table. You and your fellow high-income country citizens have been given 130 chips to share, or 26 chips per citizen if divided equally. This entitles you and your fellow citizens to enjoy most of what is being served because as a citizen of a high-income nation, you have control of 65% of the world’s wealth.

Because you enjoy a high level of well being, health, literacy, and wealth, you are granted an unconditional visa to travel anywhere you choose. However, each time you visit a middle-income country, you must donate two chips to the country, and each time you visit a low-income country, you must donate one chip to that country.

Middle-Income Country Citizen
You are a member of a middle-income country that is part of the rapidly “developing” world. You are part of the 35% of the world’s population that lives in countries classified as “upper middle income” by the World Bank and includes progressing industrialized countries such as Mexico, Romania, Malaysia, and Brazil. Citizens of middle-income countries enjoy 27% of the world’s wealth. You are part of the 35% of the world’s people that have been given a relative buying power of 54 chips to share amongst the middle-income country citizens, or 5 chips per citizen if divided equally. Please feel free to purchase whatever you can from the luncheon table.

Because you enjoy a growing level of literacy, health, and wealth, you are free to travel to high- and low-income countries under these conditions:

1) You must travel in pairs.
2) Visas must be purchased at the luncheon table and will cost one chip. No more than two people may be issued visas at a time.

Low-Income Country Citizen
You are a citizen of one of the “least developed” countries in the world such as Afghanistan, Rwanda, and Cambodia. This group is made up of countries classified as either lower-middle income or low-income by the World Bank. Unfortunately, that will be of some disadvantage to your participation in this luncheon, for your group has only 8% of the world’s wealth.

Since you hold only 8% of the world’s wealth, it is not quite possible for you to have full freedom in consumption of the Earth’s resources, or in fact, of our luncheon. You are entitled to a small fraction of the Earth’s goods. Your low-income citizens group has been given 16 chips to share, or 1 chip per citizen if divided equally. We encourage you to be creative in your efforts to increase your buying power, perhaps by combining your chips.

Due to the high level of disease and illiteracy as well as the lack of wealth in your country, we regret to inform you that your ability to travel is restricted. A visa will be required for any travel and may be purchased at the luncheon table.

Cost:  Visa to high-income country - 9 chips
       Visa to middle-income country - 7 chips