



Solidarity to fight injustice



Difficulty

Challenging



Age of students



13 - 16 years old



Length



1 month

Goals

- **Inspire** students with a portrait of a committed young person. It will broaden their understanding of societal issues and the potential of youth to address them.
- **Support** students to make concrete commitments, at their own level, in order to make a difference.

Supplies Needed

Depending on the possibilities :

- A video projector
- A screen
- A printer

Description

This sheet was co-written with our partner GEMMES and their SPARKS program. The four minutes video opposite shows the injustice experienced by Leo, a 17 years old boy living in Brooklyn (NY-USA). Above all, he explains the idea he had to remedy the situation.

As the video is protected by copyright, we have agreed with GEMMES that you ask them for free access by email:

melanie.sambuis@gemmes.org



Step 1: after watching the video, make the students think about these 2 questions:

- **Have you ever experienced a similar situation of injustice in real life?**
- **Have you ever noticed other injustices in your environment or in society?**

First, let your students take some time to think about each question, individually. Then create groups of four people to give participants the opportunity to share their respective experiences and observations.

End with a large group, in order to exchange collectively and draw up a typology of social injustices.

* Help with the debrief :

In democratic societies, human beings are officially born equal with fundamental rights (and duties). However, we are not born in equal situations: some people have more resources and advantages (natural and social ones) than others. The possibility to change these situations is called equality of opportunity.

There are several types of inequalities :

- ~ natural inequalities : strength and other physical characteristics, health, talents, etc;
- ~ social inequalities : wealth, education, networks, etc;
- ~ inequalities in effort/motivation.

Inequalities of situations are due to chance (natural inequalities, 'inherited' social inequalities). Sometimes there are due to our choices (motivation, strategies). Most of the time, there are due to both of them (example : I worked harder to get a good grade on this exam but I also had a better environment to succeed and motivate myself : supportive and highly qualified parents, quiet place to work, minimal mental burdens, great laptop and wifi access, etc.).

Natural differences between human beings can be positive: it is the complementary diversity of our physiques, intelligences, aptitudes and cravings which contributes to the wealth of a society. These differences must be respected, cultivated and used to create positive synergies.

Social inequalities and inequalities of opportunities are created by the society. They can be amplified or reduced according to the choices and aspirations of citizens. When social inequalities are based on our natural differences (gender, physical appearance, ethnic origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, etc.) or cultural differences (beliefs), this is called **discrimination**. In many countries, discriminatory situations are punished by law as they are considered to be contrary to equal rights.

Step 2 : now make your students think about these 2 questions :

- **What does solidarity mean to you ?**
- **What do you understand from these quotes ?**

"If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your fate is linked to mine, then let us work together."

Lila Watson (Australian Indigenous artist, activist and academic)

"What gives me hope is to give back to the community that has given me so much."

Leo (SPARKS video)

* Help with the debrief :

Solidarity is the feeling of responsibility and mutual dependance within a group of people. It is the awareness of belonging to the same community of interests whose members are linked to each other, and of committing oneself to the well-being of this community.

It is important to be aware of our **interdependance** and not to consider ourselves as 'saviours' or 'victims', but as 'partners'. **In this vision, the giver or helper benefits as much from the situation as the receiver.**

Step 3 :

Like Leo and his friends, build a solidarity fridge project with your class in your village/town. Use the project sheet in the appendix (available **HERE**).

A partnership can also be created with the school canteen (e.g. collection of food) and associated with a campaign to reduce or raise awareness of food insecurity (posters in the canteen, broadcasting of videos made by the students, etc.).

Other possibilities requiring less resources :

- ~ a 'solidarity cupboard' (for non-perishable foods only),
- ~ a 'solidarity library' in the school (books and manuals),
- ~ a collection of clothes that can then be deposited with a local association.

Step 4 :

Highlight your action by posting on United Schools ! Some ideas :

- ~ video of the steps of its realization and the final result
- ~ A photo report of the action
- ~ An article combining different media... etc.

Don't hesitate to challenge other students on their solidarity actions, in order to discover other initiatives!

Need some Help ?



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Sheet co-created with :

