



Trickle or Tackle?

TEACHER NOTES

These activities help pupils think about disparities in wealth and development by considering the role and influence of billionaires. Pupils will consider whether billionaires are a positive or negative influence on the world and the poor.

SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Show pupils images of people like the Zhang Yin (richest Asian woman), Sultan of Brunei, Bill Gates and Roman Abramovich (in that order) and ask pupils what they have in common (they should guess by the last image) and use these to introduce the idea of a billionaire and what a billion is.
2. Copy and cut up the cards (see below). Put pupils into groups and give each group a set of the cards. Ask them to sort them into two piles; one pile for the heading '**the problems with billionaires**' and another under the heading '**why billionaires are great**'.
3. Groups should then be allocated one of the following statements:

'STATEMENT 1

Billionaires already do enough to help the poor as their wealth trickles down to the poor and benefits a lot of people

OR

'STATEMENT 2

Billionaires need to do more to help the poor, they hold on to too much of their wealth and they don't need it all

Pupils should then use the information on the cards and their own knowledge to formulate an argument to support their statement (Explain to pupils that they are exploring the issue and they do not have to personally agree with the points they are making at this stage). Some will argue that money will get to the poor in the end if billionaires are left alone to get on with their work, and others will argue that they need to tackle the issue and give more to charitable causes. These arguments can be presented in written or oral formats.

4. Pupils should then come out of their groups and pair up (one pupil for statement 1 and one for statement 2) and then argue 'their' case against one another. These pairs can pair up to form larger and larger argument groups until the class are in two teams arguing against each other.
5. The class should then come out of role and vote for whether they think billionaires are 'Givers of wealth' or 'Guardians of fortunes'.
6. The 'Things Everyone Should Know' sheet could then be distributed or displayed



and used to inform a plenary discussion of the lesson and the outcome of the vote.

7. Finally, and individually, pupils could explain what they would do if they grew up to be billionaires. Ask pupils to consider the fact that, even without being billionaires, we are very rich in comparison to most people on the planet - what do they think about this? What are we doing about this? Should we do anything?

THE CARDS

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| <p>Billionaires can make the investment necessary to start new businesses, sometimes in poor regions or countries. That way they bring jobs to people and spread wealth around.</p> | <p>Billionaires are only so rich because they have paid their workers so little money. They could easily have increased wages in their Chinese factories, but they like to keep all the profits for themselves.</p> |
| <p>Billionaires deserve their wealth. People like Bill Gates have invented things no-one else could have thought of.</p> | <p>People who work hard at checkouts or in factories all day should get to keep more of the money they helped create – but instead it all ends up in the pockets of a few people.</p> |
| <p>Some billionaires pay a lot of tax – 40% in the UK –which all goes to pay for health and education for everyone else.</p> | <p>Billionaires couldn't have got where they are without having lots of people to help them. They were trained at schools and colleges paid for by other people. So the money they now have should be shared out more.</p> |
| <p>All the people who work for them pay taxes and government can have this money.</p> | <p>Some billionaires avoid paying tax – some of them even go and live in countries like Monaco where you get to keep all your money to yourself.</p> |
| <p>Many billionaires already give money to charity and it is better to let people give because they want to, rather than force them to do it.</p> | <p>Billionaires have too much power – politicians are frightened to offend them by asking them to do more.</p> |
| <p>Billionaires can be a real force for good. Everyone has heard of them and when they set a good example by giving to charity it makes other people give too. So more wealth gets to the poorest people.</p> | <p>When millions of people go hungry everyday it seems wrong for so few to have people to have so much. One billion dollars is enough to give the million poorest people a thousand dollars each to help them out.</p> |



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| <p>Billionaires are not the problem – the way the world economy works is unfair and must change if the lives of the poorest are to improve.</p> | <p>The very poor people of the world may not be able to afford the goods that billionaires produce and so don't benefit.</p> |
| <p>Billionaires own companies that make products and provide jobs for people that improve people's lives so many people benefit from them even if the billionaires don't just give their money away.</p> | <p>Billionaires exploit poor regions and poor people to make money – like paying poor farmers low prices for raw materials.</p> |

THINGS EVERYBODY SHOULD KNOW...

The wealth of the world's three richest people is more than the combined wealth of all less developed countries.

The wealth of the world's 200 richest people is more than the combined incomes of 41% of the world's people. By making an annual contribution of just 1% of their wealth, those 200 people could provide primary education for every child on the world (currently 72 million children of primary school age do not go to school).

The gap between the world's richest countries and the world's poorest countries is widening rapidly.