

ENGLISH SESSION: EQUAL OR UNEQUAL LIVES?

Age range: 9–14 years

<p>Outline Learners will play the game <i>Know your place</i> to help them to understand what inequality means and how it affects people in different parts of society. They will then play a “vulnerability game” which illustrates some of the inequalities that exist among people living in Rio de Janeiro, the host city of the 2016 Olympic Games. Finally learners will carry out a role-play activity and discuss whether or not Rio de Janeiro should host the Olympics, using a series of role cards based on the views of different imaginary people living in the city.</p>		
<p>Learning objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop discussion skills. To understand what the basic needs and rights of all people are and to recognise that in Rio de Janeiro, as in many cities around the world, these needs are sometimes not met. To act in role and develop empathy for those who are not able to fulfil their basic needs and claim their rights. To consider the implications of a city (or a country) spending large amounts of money on a big sporting event such as the Olympic Games. 	<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will play a game, <i>Know your place</i>, to start to understand what inequality means and how it affects people living in a society. Learners will play a “vulnerability game” to develop their understanding of how in Rio de Janeiro, as in many cities around the world, there are inequalities between people’s lives which in turn affect how vulnerable people are. Learners will use a role-play activity to consider and explore the arguments for and against Rio de Janeiro hosting the Olympic Games. 	
<p>Key questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What inequalities are there between people living in Rio de Janeiro? How do these inequalities affect the vulnerability of different people living in the city? Are the Olympic Games good or bad for Rio de Janeiro and Brazil? 	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A Sporting Chance?</i> English slideshow: slides 1–12 Approximately 30 counters or stickers Sticky notes, enough for one per learner Activity sheets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Inequality game role cards</i> <i>For the Olympics role cards</i> <i>Against the Olympics role cards</i> 	
<p>Curriculum links</p>		
<p>England <i>Pupils should be taught to:</i> KS2 English Spoken English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in discussions and role play. Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others. <p>KS3 English Spoken English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speak confidently and effectively through participating in formal debates and structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said. Justify ideas with reasons and ask questions to check understanding. 	<p>Wales KS2 and KS3 English Oracy: Developing and presenting information and ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaking, listening, collaboration and discussion Express opinions clearly about topics and written texts and include supporting reasons <p>Literacy Framework ESDGC</p>	<p>Scotland Literacy and English Listening and talking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion. I can respond in ways appropriate to my role and use contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking. <p style="text-align: right;">LIT 2 and 3-02a</p>

Note: For this session, learners will need an understanding of the term “inequality”, introduced in the Introductory slideshow. You might also like to consult the Teachers’ Overview.

Activity 1 (30 min)

Know your place

Note: You will need sticky notes for this activity, enough for one per learner. Each sticky note should have a number between one and ten written on it. This activity needs at least 20 people to work well.

- Distribute some items, such as counters or stickers, unevenly around the class. Keep the majority of the counters or stickers for yourself.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - *Do you think this distribution is fair? Why/Why not?*
 - *How do you feel about the number of counters/stickers that you have?*
 - *Do you think there is a fairer way of distributing the counters/stickers? If so, what is it and why do you think it would be fairer?*
 - *Do you think it would be fair if everyone had exactly the same number of counters/stickers or do you think some groups of people should have more?*
- Show slide 3 and explain that we can think of inequality as the difference between the things some groups of people have compared with other groups of people. It is a bit like looking at how big a slice of cake one person has compared with another.
- Show slide 4 and explain that there is inequality between countries; for example some countries are wealthy while others are extremely poor.
- Show slide 5 and explain that there is also often inequality within countries, where some people have only a little and others have a lot.
- Show slide 6 and say that inequality isn’t just about how money is shared out between or within countries. Inequality also affects the opportunities that people have. For example in sport, some athletes have access to better facilities and training than others. Ask learners to think about other ways in which people’s lives might be unequal, such as access to water, education and healthcare.
- Tell learners that they are going to be playing a game to help them appreciate the inequalities that can exist within societies.
- Place a sticky note on the forehead or the back of each learner without letting them see their number.
- Explain that the learners are now in a hierarchical society. Each person’s number reflects their position in society. The higher the number, the higher their position; the lower the number, the lower their position. Each person should treat “lower” people with disrespect and “higher” people with respect.
- Learners should wander around the space and interact with each other according to what they think their position is in relation to each other. Explain that they are not allowed to talk. All interactions should be non-verbal. The purpose of the game is for each learner to find his or her place in society.
- Allow learners to play the game for 10 minutes. After this time, ask learners to line up in order of

where they think their place is in the hierarchy. Then allow them to look at their own numbers.

- Discuss with learners how they felt about the activity. Possible questions to ask are provided on slide 7.

Activity 2 (30 min)

The game of inequality

*Note: For this activity, you will need a large space for learners to move around in. If this is not available, see below for a suggested adaptation of the activity.**

- Show slide 8 and ask learners to spend a few minutes thinking about the photograph. Possible questions to guide their thinking include:
 - *Where do you think this photograph was taken? Why do you think this?*
 - *Would you like to live here? Where in the photograph would you prefer to live and why?*
 - *What words would you use to describe this photograph?*
 - *What similarities do you think there might be between life on the opposite sides of the photograph?*
 - *What differences do you think there might be between life on the opposite sides of the photograph?*
 - *How does this photograph make you feel?*
 - *What questions would you like to ask about this photograph?*
- Explain that this photograph was taken in São Paulo, Brazil's largest city. On one side is the Paraisópolis *favela*, on the other is the affluent district of Morumbi. You may need to explain that a *favela* is a slum area or shanty town; there are many *favelas* in cities and towns across Brazil. Say that life in Brazil, as in many other countries around the world, is unequal, with some people having much more wealth and life opportunities than others.
- Explain that the Olympic Games in 2016 will be taking place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil's second-largest city. Say that learners are going to play a game to explore some of the inequalities that exist between the lives of people living in this city. Learners will also be considering the potential effects of these inequalities.
- Organise learners into pairs or groups of three and ask all the learners to stand in a line at one end of the room, with the pairs or groups together. Give each pair or group one of the *Inequality game role cards* (Activity sheet 1).
- Explain that the role cards represent fictional people living in Rio de Janeiro. Ask learners to spend a few minutes imagining the daily life of the person described on their card and to think of a name for their character. Encourage learners to ask for help if they don't understand any of the information about their character.
- Read out the list of statements below and ask those learners whose character can agree with the statement to take a step forward (give them time in their groups to decide if they would agree with the statement). Explain that there are no right or wrong answers and it is up to learners to make a decision based on the information in their role card. Encourage any groups who are unsure how to answer to ask you for advice.
- Eventually the learners will be spaced out across the room according to how many steps forward they have taken.

Inequality statements

1. You receive or received a primary school education.
2. You receive or received a secondary education.
3. You are never short of food or water.
4. You can afford to see a doctor and buy medicine when you have health problems.
5. You have the power to influence people in your community.
6. You have people who care about you and protect you.
7. You don't have to do dangerous things in order to survive.
8. You can afford a place to live.
9. You have good enough reading and writing skills to get a job that provides a regular salary.
10. If you lose your way of making an income, you can probably find another.

Note: These inequality statements are also provided on slides 9 and 10.

- Once you have read out all the statements, ask the groups to stay where they are and to introduce their character to the other groups. Encourage learners to give reasons for their decisions about how many steps they took.
- Ask the other learners if they think that each character is correctly placed in relation to others, for example: *Do you think the xxx should be further forward than the xxx?* Encourage discussions where there is disagreement.
- Draw out the point that in the same way that different people in the room were able to take different numbers of steps, inequalities in people's lives can affect the life chances and opportunities that they have. Inequalities also affect how vulnerable people are when they experience unpredictable life events. For example, if some people lose their home or job they will have savings or insurance to help them to get back on their feet. People who don't have these things won't be able to.
- Finish by discussing the following questions:
 - *Why do you think inequalities exist between people's lives?*
 - *Do you think these inequalities are fair? Why/why not?*

**If a large space isn't available*

- *Instead of taking steps forward across the room, ask learners to remain seated and to fill in the circles on their role card. They should fill in a circle for each inequality statement their character could agree with.*
- *Allow time at the end of activity for learners to circulate and talk to other pairs or groups about their characters and the number of circles they filled in.*

Activity 3 (30 min)

For or against the Olympics?

- Explain that in this activity learners are going to be finding out about some of the reasons why some Brazilians are in favour of having the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro and some of the reasons why others are against it.

- Show slide 11 and explain that some people are very happy about the Olympic Games coming to Rio de Janeiro in 2016. Briefly discuss learners' ideas about the possible benefits of hosting the Olympic Games; for example some people think that it will promote the city and Brazil around the world as well as bringing in lots of money.
- Explain that other people are very unhappy about the Olympic Games taking place in their country. Briefly discuss learners' ideas about the potential problems with hosting the Olympic Games.
- Show slide 12 and say that many people in Brazil took part in protests against the Olympics and the World Cup, which took place in Brazil in 2014. Click on the link on slide 12 to show a news report about these protests.
- Organise learners into pairs. Give one learner in each pair a copy of one of the *For the Olympics role cards* (Activity sheet 2) and the other learner a copy of one of the *Against the Olympics role cards* (Activity sheet 3).
- Explain that these role cards represent the views of imaginary people living in the city of Rio de Janeiro. *Note: Although these characters are imaginary, they are based on the experiences and opinions of some actual people living in the city.*
- Ask learners to read their role cards individually and to think about how they would introduce their character to their partner. They should not show their role card to anyone else. *Is their character for or against the Olympics taking place in Rio de Janeiro? What reasons does their character give for his/her view?*
- Now ask learners to act in role as their characters. They should have a discussion with their partner about whether the Olympic Games should take place in Rio. Ask learners to think about what language they could use to persuade their partner to change their mind. *What reasons will you give to justify your opinion?*
- Encourage learners to listen closely to the opinions of the other person in their pair and to try and respond to their arguments.
 - *What solutions can you think of to the issue(s) raised by the character against the Rio 2016 Olympic Games?*
 - *Do you think the benefits suggested by the character in favour of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games will help all Brazilians?*
- As an extension, each pair could join with another one or two pairs (ideally with different role cards) and learners could have a discussion as a group of four or six.
- Finish the discussion by asking each pair (or group) whether or not they have come to a conclusion. Explain that it doesn't matter if they haven't reached a decision but that you hope that the activity will have made learners aware of some of the reasons for and against holding the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.
- Finally, as a class discuss whether or not learners think the Rio 2016 Olympics will help to reduce or increase inequality in the city.

Differentiation

- *Make it easier: Learners could work in pairs to act in role as the same character.*

Further ideas

- Organise a class debate of the motion: *This house believes that the Olympic Games should take place in Rio de Janeiro.*
- Find out where the Olympic Torch will go on its way from the Greek city of Olympia (the home of the ancient Olympic Games) to the 2016 host city, Rio de Janeiro, and write a day in the life of one of the torch bearers.
 - For further information, see: www.rio2016.com/tochaolimpica/en
- Explore media coverage of the 2016 Olympic Games, both in Brazil and in other countries around the world. *Is the coverage generally positive or negative? What sorts of issues are being covered? Are any of the issues raised being addressed? Does it seem that the Olympics are helping to make the host city a fairer place? Compare the media coverage of the Rio 2016 Olympics with that of other Olympic Games, such as London in 2012 or Beijing in 2008. What similarities and differences are there in the coverage? What might be the reasons for any differences?*
- Research and write profiles of sporting heroes and heroines who have had to overcome obstacles in their lives to achieve sporting success. For example, Mo Farah (athletics) and Luol Deng (basketball) both moved to the UK as children, the former a migrant and the latter a refugee. Tanni Grey-Thompson was born with spina bifida but went on to become one of the UK's most successful disabled athletes, competing in five Paralympic Games.
 - See: *Olympics 30 – Great Olympic Stories*: www.olympics30.com
 - Try *Heroes and Heroines – Carrying the torch for a fairer world* by Bridges and Oxfam: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/heroes-and-heroines

Note: This resource, published in 2012, includes Oscar Pistorius as an example of a hero.
- Write the story of a sports item used at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, such as a football. Think about where in the world the product was made, how it was made and the people involved in the supply chain. Describe the working conditions and profits of the different people involved, from the factory where it was produced to the consumer at the end of the chain.
 - See Playfair 2012's *Fair's Fair – Life and rights in the global sports industry* to find out more about some of the people who make these goods in poorer countries, often working with few rights, and for very low wages: www.playfair2012.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TUC_Fairs-fair_booklet.pdf
 - Try Oxfam's *The Clothes Line* to explore cotton production and the textile industry in India: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/the-clothes-line
- Learn more about the causes of inequality and explore potential consequences for the lives of young people in different parts of the world, including the UK.
 - See Oxfam's *More or Less Equal?* English resource for learners aged 11–16: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/more-or-less-equal-english

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For the Olympics role cards

Activity sheet 2

<p>I am the chief executive of a large construction company. We are one of the main companies working on the building of the new Olympic sites in the city. We have invested a lot of money in this project but we should make a lot of money afterwards. Most of the apartments in the athletes' village have already been sold; lots of people want to move here after the Olympic Games have finished.</p>	<p>I work for the city government. We have been very busy with getting ready for the Olympic Games. I think the Olympics will be a life-changing experience for the Brazilian people. Although Brazil is known as a peaceful country, there are many killings here. I hope that the Olympics will bring everyone together, whatever their background or culture.</p>
<p>I have represented Brazil in the Paralympic Games. I am looking forward to the Rio 2016 Olympics and Paralympics. I love sport and I hope that the Olympics will encourage other people to love it too. I also think it will help to change attitudes towards disabled people in Brazil. I hope that people will realise that Paralympic athletes train as hard as Olympic athletes.</p>	<p>I am a taxi driver working in the city. The traffic here is very bad. I spend a lot of my time sitting in traffic jams. In preparation for the Olympic Games the government has been spending money to improve our transport system, with new bus routes, highways and an extension of the underground. Once this work is finished, transport around the city will hopefully be much better.</p>
<p>I work as a tourist guide in the centre of the city. I am very excited about the Olympic Games. People from all over the world will be travelling to our city. These visitors will bring a lot of money into the country. The Olympics will help to promote Brazil and Rio as some of the best travel destinations in the world.</p>	<p>I live with my parents in an apartment near the centre of the city. Some of the Olympic sporting events will be taking place just down the road from where we live! I am looking forward to watching the Olympics on television and we have also bought tickets to go to the opening ceremony and some of the athletics events. I think the Olympics will bring prosperity to our city and Brazil. I can't wait!</p>

Against the Olympics role cards

Activity sheet 3

<p>I work as a cleaner in one of the richer neighbourhoods of Rio de Janeiro. The Olympics are not really for people like me. When you don't have much money you can't go to things like this. I live on the outskirts of the city and it takes me three hours to commute to work each day because the traffic is so bad. The government should be spending more money on transport not the Olympics Games.</p>	<p>I am a biologist working and living in the city. The new golf course being built for the Olympic Games will damage a nature reserve which is home to rare butterflies, pine trees and other species not found anywhere else in the world.</p>
<p>I have lived in a <i>favela</i> in the city all my life. I love it here but in the past year many of my neighbours' homes have been bulldozed and I have been told that I need to leave. The government wants to use our land to build an Olympic site. I have been offered compensation and alternative housing but I don't want to go. The stress has made me ill, the Olympics has brought about the destruction of my home.</p>	<p>I am a nurse and I joined many other people in a demonstration against the 2016 Olympics. We are angry that billions of dollars' worth of public money is being spent to host the 2016 Olympics. It would be better to spend this money on improving education, transport and healthcare. The Olympic Games will make money for a few businessmen while poor people are being forced to leave their homes and everyone is being made to pay higher taxes.</p>
<p>I am a teacher and all of the children in my class are looking forward to the Olympics. I wish the money could have been spent on things to help teachers teach better, such as new school buildings and extra teacher training courses. I think Brazil should host the Olympics in the future, once it becomes a more equal country, but not now.</p>	<p>I have been working as a builder on the Olympic sites. I am from a small, rural village and moved to the city to find work. I was pleased to get this job so that I could earn money for my family. But I am worried that the work is dangerous, and some of my friends have been injured. Once the building is finished, I will be out of a job. I am not sure what I will do after that.</p>