Skills Section 1

General

The skills in this section are introductory, designed to help students to make a start with a Global Perspectives style of learning. They are aimed at students beginning a two-year learning process.

Difficult issues

Some of the issues raised in Global Perspectives can be difficult for some students. Such difficult issues are often avoided or ignored in the classroom so that students are not upset. However, most important issues in the world have difficult or emotional aspects. The Global Perspectives approach to such issues is to find ways to deal with difficulties, to overcome emotive responses and to foster thoughtful, respectful debate.

The course has been designed to introduce smaller difficulties in earlier chapters, moving towards broader social difficulties in later chapters. Issues in Section 1 that students may find personally or culturally upsetting include:

- sporting success (or lack of it)
- academic success (or lack of it)
- family difficulties
- divorce
- animals and the way we treat other species.

Strategies for helping students to deal with their emotional responses to these or other issues include:

- allowing expression of personal emotional responses
- acknowledging emotional responses (but not emotional attacks on others)
- allowing space for exploration of these responses, in group or private situations as appropriate
  - discussion
  - drawing
  - stories
  - creating distance between the event and the emotion by using the third person, for example, talking about how someone else feels in a painful situation rather than how you feel/the student feels in that painful situation
- distinguishing between emotional responses and reasoned approaches
  - creating tables with columns for emotional approaches and reasoned approaches
  - using different colours to group these
  - moving to different parts of the room
creating diagrams showing complex relationships between emotional and reasoned reactions and responses (it’s not an easy, direct dichotomy)

discussion of the consequences of reactions driven by emotions and reason

**Guidance to activities**

**Activity 1**

(a) Note that this is an activity for students! This is their first opportunity to start being active learners, shaping their own learning environment and negotiating how they will interact. Encourage students to agree on respectful, sensible rules, but allow them to think for themselves and to make mistakes. You might find it useful to have a debrief session after the class discussion to evaluate the class rules and amend them if necessary. Would it be useful to have rules for class discussion displayed by the students?

(b) Remember to help students to focus on what sort of information you need, rather than what the differences are. For instance, information about size of families, family structure, who counts as family, family dynamics, if there is a family head or if family members negotiate – what role children play in the family. The answers to these questions can be factual or opinion based.

(c) Encourage students gently to stick to the class rules they set. Is it worth asking class members to regulate behaviour in class discussions? This question is about prediction and hypothesis, whereas question b) is about factual differences and, to some extent, opinions.

**Activity 2**

For questions (a) and (b) here are no “answers”. Encourage students to focus on what kind of information you might need to help answer a question.

Examples:

| “National sports are just a pointless game.” “You’re wrong, football is at the heart of who we are.” “No it’s just boring – are you saying we’re a boring nation?” | ⬤ Encourage these students to focus on what kind of information would help to answer the question. At the moment they are just disagreeing and starting to trade insults. |
|———|———|
| “How can a national sport say something about a country?” “Well, we could look at different countries’ national sports.” “Yeah, then we could look at characteristics, like precision and artistry or violence and aggression.” | ⬤ These students have made a good start. |
| “OK, so the first thing we need to do is define sport. Then see if darts, motor racing and chess fit into the definition.” “What about if people disagree on what sport is?” | ⬤ These students have gone right to the heart of the issue. |
Activity 3
Encourage students to think, discuss and justify their thinking.
(a) This is a matter of definition, although there may be minor differences of opinion about the definition.
(b) Fact.
(c) “What is education?” seems like a question that should have a simple definitive answer, but actually, how you answer this question depends on the values you hold, your opinions and your feelings.
(d) Opinion, values.
(e) Opinions, values, predictions.
(f) Fact.
(g) Values, possibly predictions.

Activity 4
Discuss findings with students. Broadly speaking it is likely that students will have found the following.
A search for the term “family” will return sites such as Wikipedia, local news bulletins reporting events that have happened to families, family records sites, child care, family movie sites and so on. Not terribly helpful in answering questions.
A search for the term “family values” will return sites such as Wikipedia, religious groups, sensationalist articles in national newspapers deploring the loss of family values and so on. These may be useful in understanding local or national opinions about family values, but often are too deeply grounded in a particular set of values (often polemical or ranting) to help answer questions in a thoughtful way.
A search for “effect divorce family values” will return academic articles, sites for support groups, and legal groups. These sites might be quite hard for students to follow, but they are likely to provide thoughtful answers to some of the questions.

Activity 5
(a) Discuss students’ findings. Expect them to give reasons for their findings, and to talk about the different kinds of site and different kinds of information they have found for each search.
(b) Encourage students to be more precise and to try alternatives if one phrase does not work.

Activity 6
(a) Encourage students to look for key words relating to the topic, and then for specific markers relating to more precise meanings. The following are examples:
single parent, lone mother, single mother → recent change, family structure, head of family, dates
fair sports competition → possible, between nations, international, rich, poor, advantage, disadvantage
prevent species extinction → protect, habitat
(b) For this question expect the following answers.
(b)(i) helps to answer (a)(ii).
(b)(ii) is not helpful in answering any of the questions in (a). It is on the topic of single-parent families, but deals with family values rather than family structures.
(b)(iii) helps to answer (a)(iii). Protecting wildlife habitats of endangered species can help to prevent species extinction. (Give credit to students who say it doesn’t help much because it’s so vague).
(b)(iv) helps to answer (a)(i). It shows that single-parent families go back a long time, at least in the US. Therefore they are not a recent change in family structure, at least for some parts of society.
(b)(v) is not helpful in answering any of the questions in (a). It does deal with some issues of fairness in sports, but does not help to answer whether it is possible to have a truly fair sports competition between nations.

Activity 7
(a) Fact – can be verified and is supported by evidence from Activity 6.
(b) Opinion – can’t be verified but can be argued for; value judgment – it deals with values, “good for”.
(c) Value judgment – this is about what should be, and about fairness. As with other value judgments, it’s also an opinion because it can’t be verified like a fact.
(d) Fact – can be verified.
(e) Opinion – can’t be verified. This describes human activity in negative values but it feels more like a description than a value judgment. However, this can be debated. Allow students to support their opinions about it and to think it through – remember that the thinking process is more important than clear-cut answers.
(f) Opinion – can’t be verified; likely to be based on value judgments which are not expressed, such as, “fighting is wrong”. As it stands this is not a value judgment itself.
(g) Value judgment – ascribes a high importance to education. Also an opinion as it can’t be verified. (Students might enjoy discussing the relative merits of education, a loving family, wealth, health and so on.)
(h) Prediction – about a future event.

Activity 8
(a) Encourage students to really think of reasons, arguments that lead us to accept an opinion, rather than restating opinions or giving further statements which don’t add anything to the discussion.
Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Sport is boring because it’s just not very interesting.”</td>
<td>The reason here means exactly the same as the opinion. Why is it not interesting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sport is boring to me because it’s competition about things that don’t really matter. I don’t care who kicks the ball into the net more times, or who runs faster.” “Sport is interesting because of the strategies the players have to use to outwit each other.”</td>
<td>The students here are giving reasons that take the discussion further. They could be challenged, or asked to take their reasoning further, but they have started down the right path.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Everyone should stay at school because it’s the best place for people who are under 18.”</td>
<td>The reason here doesn’t really add much. Why is school the best place for people who are under 18? What are the alternatives (work, home, apprenticeship) and why is school better? Why is school better for everyone?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There is no point recycling things because it takes more energy to recycle them than it does to make new ones.”</td>
<td>This student is giving a reason that takes the discussion further. They can be asked if there is evidence to support the reason. Is it true for all things or just for some? Even if it does take more energy to recycle, are there still benefits in terms of using our limited resources?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For (b)(i), (ii), (iii), and (v) give students time to talk, listen and examine their thoughts. Encourage them to go beyond their initial opinions, and to push each other to think.

For (b)(iv) useful information might include the following.

For (a)(i), statistical information on how family and friends influence people at different times of life; information about how parents fund their children; psychological studies about peer pressure, family support, family damage.

For (a)(ii) further information is unlikely to help. Finding sport boring, interesting or exciting is largely a matter of personal preference. Discovering more about how a particular sport works, techniques, tactics and strategies, can make that particular sport more comprehensible and therefore more interesting but only if you tend to find sporting competition interesting in general.

For (a)(iii), information about alternatives to school, and the opportunities that go with those alternatives; statistics about life chances for various alternatives; psychological and economic studies.

For (a)(iv), statistics on recycling; energy use; statistics on waste; information about the damage cause by landfill, incinerators, and other methods of waste disposal; information about the damage we do to ourselves and the environment with our throwaway cultures.

**Activity 9**

(a)(i) Cause: Rich nations can afford to find, develop and train elite athletes. → Consequence: Rich nations do better in international events than poor nations.
(a)(ii) Cause: Frank got a bad mark in his maths exam. → Consequence: So he believed he was bad at maths. → Further consequence: So he stopped trying. → Further consequence: So he became bad at maths. → Further consequence: So when Frank opened his own business, he made a mess of the accounts. → Further consequence: So his business failed.

(a)(iii) Cause: Ilke got a bad mark in her maths exam. → Consequence: So she worked hard for her next maths exam. → Further consequence: So she got a better mark. → Further consequence: So she realised that hard work could lead to success.

(a)(iv) Causes: Deforestation, farming, overgrazing, development. → Consequences: irreversible changes such as soil compaction, erosion, desertification, alteration of local climactic conditions. → Further consequence: habitat loss.

(a)(v) Cause: People are living longer lives than they used to. Additional cause: They are also having fewer children. Consequence: This means that a small number of adults are providing for a large number of older people. (Note that diagrams should have lines from each cause to the consequence.)

(b) Discuss the possible consequences of Imran putting a frog in Selima’s bed. Consider how realistic each one is, and how they might vary according to different personalities, family dynamics, moods, other things that were going on, etc. Encourage students to realise that some consequences might happen some times, and that some consequences are complex and hard to predict, but allow students to have fun exploring. Possibilities include: Selima shrieking, Selima punching Imran, Selima laughing, Selima putting a spider in Imran’s bed, their mother (and/or father) telling one or both of them off, their parents having a serious talk with them.

(c) Allow discussion of various possibilities, encouraging students to think about how likely each possibility is, and how different possible causes might act together in complex ways.

(c)(i) Jasper didn’t work hard. Jasper finds maths difficult. Jasper was ill. Something bad happened at home. Jasper was upset about his friend. There could be one simple cause, or several causes coming together, for instance, what was the cause of Jasper not working hard?

(c)(ii) Khalila was rude to the teacher. Khalila didn’t do her work. Khalila was violent towards another student. This is likely to be fairly simple with one clear cause, although it could be complex with a build-up of lots of causes. Again, you could ask why Khalila didn’t do her work. The causes of this might be complex.

(c)(iii) They didn’t get on. They argued. One of them worked too much. This is likely to be complex with a variety of causes. (This might be an opportunity to reinforce the idea that Santiago was not the cause, even if he felt to blame.)

(c)(iv) They were old and couldn’t manage alone. No one wanted them to go into a home. By combining their resources they could get a bigger house. There are probably complex cultural causes together with a simple trigger cause.
(c)(v) They weren’t the best team. They didn’t train hard enough. The referee was biased. This is probably fairly simple, but without a single cause.

(d) Talk to Imran and listen to him. Get Imran to draw pictures about his feelings (especially if he is too young to talk through his feelings and actions). Talk to Imran’s family. (Talk to Imran’s child psychologist.)

(e) Again, allow discussion.

(e)(i) The teacher gives Petra a detention. Petra is suspended from school. Petra’s classmates cheer. Petra’s teacher actually thinks about their teaching. This will depend on exactly how Petra says it, what Petra’s relationship with the teacher is like, what kind of student-teacher relationship there is in the school, whether Petra’s teacher reacts emotionally or thoughtfully.

(e)(ii) This will depend on the individual’s talent, hard work and connections. Consider the consequences of getting in on friendships, family, future prospects (in football and other work) as well as the consequences of not getting in on self-esteem, openness to other trials and opportunities.

(e)(iii) It is likely that this will lead to better results than not working hard, but as not everyone can get top results, for some working hard will lead to simply better results.

(e)(iv) Consider the effects on relationships with family, competence and independence, schoolwork, time with friends.

(e)(v) Consider the effects on family relationships, economics and so on.

(f) Allow discussion. Encourage realistic assessment.

Activity 10
There are no right answers here. Encourage students to think, and ask questions such as, “Is it really of national importance?” Allow students to recognise that some questions have greater personal perspectives than international, for example.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want to eat meat from animals that have been kept in poor conditions; it’s cruel and disgusting.</td>
<td>Keeping animals intensively can make meat cheap enough for everyone to be able to afford it, which is good for the health of the population, therefore there is less sickness resulting in a better economy.</td>
<td>Making meat cheap in Europe means that Europeans only eat the best cuts, for example, chicken breast fillets. The rest of the chickens get sent to Africa and offloaded therefore the African chicken farming industry suffers resulting in Africa being more dependent on Europe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 11 and Activity 12
There are no right answers. It is only important that students reflect. Encourage students to use images, diagrams, writing, and speech as tools for reflection. They can use stories, poems, art, word chains, mind maps or any other strategy. These questions can be discussed in class, but students should begin to understand that reflection is a quiet, ongoing activity.
Activity 13

(a) Allow discussion and justification. It is more important that students think through whether each action is SMART carefully than that they "know" the right answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Measurable</th>
<th>Realistic</th>
<th>Achievable</th>
<th>Time bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (but discuss how)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii)</td>
<td>No, too vague</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (if a specific school event is given as a deadline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (discuss how)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Allow discussion, encouraging students to think it through and come to realistic conclusions about proposed actions. Encourage them to use tables like the one above.

Activity 14

Encourage students to come to conclusions about teamwork, planning and leadership based on these activities. Discourage personal comments or discussion about the tasks themselves.

Activity 15

(a)(i) Ari Budiman is right to take on the logging job because education for his children is the most important thing. In addition, if work is hard to find, you take what you can get.

(Alternative: Education for his [Ari’s] children is the most important thing. In addition, if work is hard to find, you take what you can get. So Ari Budiman is right to take on the logging job.)

(a)(ii) International sports competitions put different nations in opposition to each other, so it is like a mini war. You are happy when the other country loses, because you believe that your country winning is most important. For example, during the Olympics, I really wanted the competitor from my country to win, even though the other competitor was better. Therefore international sports competitions actually make us less peaceful.

(Alternative: It [International sports competition] is like a mini war because you are happy when the other country loses, because you believe that your country winning is most important. For example, during the Olympics, I really wanted the competitor from my country to win, even though the other competitor was better. So international sports competitions put different nations in opposition to each other. Therefore international sports competitions actually make us less peaceful.)