

# Introducing and Examining Background Guides

## OBJECTIVE(S)

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. become more familiar with the background guides.
2. begin researching assigned topic.

## REQUIREMENTS

**Level:** 6-12 Grade(s)

**Time:** 1 class period

### Materials Needed:

- Assigned background guides
- Background Guide Graphic Organizer handout

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## PROCEDURE

### I. Lesson Introduction/Activation of Prior Knowledge

This activity should be done when students are paired and given country assignments. Provide students with the title(s) of the background guide(s) that they will be reading and using for the Model UN conference. Ask them to write down anything that comes to mind when they hear the name of the topic.

### II. Activity

Provide students with a copy of their assigned background guide and ask them to read through it independently.

While they are reading, ask them to pay attention to several key things:

- Underline words they don't know, and then try to find out what these words mean and how they relate to the topic.
- Try to identify statements in the background guide that are fact and those that are debatable. How would their assigned country explain the facts? Would it agree with the opinions?
- Are the examples given specific to the country or region they have been assigned? If not, can they think of another example from the country's region?

Provide each student with a copy of the Background Guide Graphic Organizer. Ask them to work with their partner and fill in the chart. Post the graphic organizers around the room for reference.

Match up pairs of students who are in the same committee or are representing the same country. What are the similarities and differences in how the different countries feel about a single topic? What are the similarities and differences in how the same country feels about different topics?

### III. Closing/Wrap-Up

Have students try to answer the "Questions to Consider" listed at the end of the background guide. They may not be able to answer all of them right away, but they should help to point students in the right direction for further research. As students become more familiar with the guides and their topics and countries, they may want to revise and/or refine their graphic organizers.

### **OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Future In-class Follow-Up for Teachers: Have students use their background guides and the materials they produced during this class period, including the graphic organizer and their answers to the “Questions to Consider,” to help them when they write position papers later on.

Homework: Ask students to consider what points in the background guide they will address and include in their position paper. Ask them to begin research on the topic, using the sources for further research to get started.

**Background Guide Graphic Organizer**

**DEFINITION** of the  
problem

**EXPLANATION** of how the  
problem can be solved

**PREDICTION** of what will  
happen if things continue as  
they are

**PRESCRIPTION** of what  
needs to be done