

Researching Your Country

OBJECTIVE(S)

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

1. Begin their country research.

REQUIREMENTS

Level: 6-12 Grade(s)

Time: 1 or more class periods

Materials Needed:

- Directions for using Research Graphic Organizer
- Research Graphic Organizer
- Country Overview Chart
- Committee Overview Chart
- Access to research materials (i.e. Internet, library, etc.)

PROCEDURE

I. Lesson Introduction/Activation of Prior Knowledge

Discuss with students what they know about doing research. Where are some places they can go to look for information? You may want to provide them with a list of resources they can use to get them started.

II. Activity

Provide students with a copy of each handout. Have them work with their partner to complete the charts. Ask them to begin with the Country Overview Chart. This will provide them with a general knowledge of their assigned country and will help to situate them in the shoes of the delegates they will be playing at the conference. When they have finished with their country overview, ask them to move on to the Committee Overview Chart. This will give them some background on the committee they will be simulating, what it does, who is in it, and what powers it has.

Finally, ask students to use the Research Graphic Organizer. Go over the directions and the chart with them to discuss the different components. Make sure students understand what is required for each box. You may want to provide them with examples.

Once all the charts are completed, review them with the students to check for accuracy and to ensure their understanding of the material they have found.

III. Closing/Wrap-Up

Ask students to try to tie together what they know about their countries, their committees, and the topic. Based on this information, what do they believe is their country's policy on the topic? Once they have discovered this, they are ready to start writing their position papers.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Future In-class Follow-Up for Teachers: The charts the students have compiled will be extremely useful to use as references later, both as a basis for writing position papers and to bring with them and refer to at the conference.

COUNTRY INFORMATION CHART

Government

Official Country Name: _____

Governmental System: _____

Head of State: _____

Official language(s): _____

Region: _____

Allies/blocs: _____

People

Population and growth rate: _____

Major religions/cultures: _____

Standard of living: _____

Economy

Economic system: _____

GDP and growth rate: _____

Major cities: _____

Infrastructure status (good, poor, etc.): _____

Trade blocs/associations: _____

Balance of payments/trade: _____

Major exports/imports: _____

Major trade partners: _____

IMF, World Bank positions (debtor nation? Donor nation?): _____

Natural resources: _____

Energy sources (both the type of energy and its origin): _____

Development

Development status: _____

Climate: _____

Environment (problems, innovations, etc.): _____

Has this nation met the Millennium Development Goal targets? _____

Military

Military organization: _____

Military expenditures (% GDP spent on defense): _____

Major weapons, arsenal, nuclear capability, etc.: _____

Conflicts/Issues

What are four problems/threads that affect this nation? _____

Ethnic/cultural issues: _____

Refugees problems: _____

Major conflicts both past and present: _____

United Nations

Date admitted to United Nations: _____

UN dues payment status: _____

Has the UN ever intervened in a conflict involving this nation? If so, where and how? _____

How does the country contribute to UN peacekeeping? _____

Has the UN cited this nation for human rights violations? If so, why? _____

Based on your research, what do you feel is at the heart of this nation's identity? _____

Try to find at least one recent article that is about or makes reference to this nation (preferably from the past two weeks): _____

Committee Overview Chart

It is important to understand the purpose of a committee and how it works in order to debate effectively on a topic within that committee structure. Try to answer the questions below, using the background guide and outside sources to help.

Question	Answer	Resource Used
Why was the body established? Where does it do most of its work?		
What UN document helped to establish the committee?		
What kind of topics does it usually discuss?		
How many member states will be represented in the body? Is anyone else represented?		
How does voting work? Can everyone vote? Do all votes count the same way?		
How often does the body meet?		
What happens to resolutions that the body develops? Does the body have any special powers, or things it specifically can't do?		
Does this body manage programs or policies?		

Directions for Research Graphic Organizer

Box 1: Place the name of your topic in this box.

Box 2: Identify the key facts of the topic from the background guide and your research

Box 3: Identify three key international actions. These can be international treaties, conferences, or UN Resolutions or they can be ongoing programs and policies of the UN and any of its bodies. After you are finished, follow the arrow to box 4.

Box 4: Identify the goals of the international actions. Include main agreements that Member States decided on in negotiating which actions occur. Follow to Box 5.

Box 5: Identify the main players in the negotiation. Those who agreed to the terms of the agreements above should be identified in this box. In the case of ongoing programs and policies, identify the main donors or actors. This will help in your caucusing at the conference.

Box 6: Identify those main players that did not agree to the negotiation, and place their names here. List the major opponents of the policies and programs discussed above.

Box 7: Include the reasons why the Member States in Box 6 do not agree to the actions/agreements/resolutions.

Box 8: Identify the key players in the topic at hand. This will be useful when in committee.

Research Graphic Organizer

Key Facts:

2

International Actions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Key Non-Signatories:

6

Reasons for Not Signing:

7

Topic/ Issue:

1

Terms of Agreement:

4

Key Signatories:

5

Countries Most Affected:

8

