Future Problem Solving Program International

Global Issues
Problem Solving

Topic Information for Coaches 2015-2016
2015-16 Topics

Treatment of Animals

Farmers, pet and animal owners, and scientific researchers have many different ways of treating animals in their care. Fewer than 30% of countries have animal welfare laws, and existing laws are not always enforced. Researchers assert that it is important to be able to use animals in research to test drugs and new medical procedures that can help both people and animals. Sometimes endangered animals are kept in captivity at a high cost in order to protect their limited populations. Animal shelters are often filled with feral animals or those that have been abandoned by their owners. Wild animals in many parts of the world come into conflict with human activity.

In the future, how might research impact human understanding and treatment of animals? Are zoos useful educational tools or unethical exhibitions? Are certain animals entitled to more rights than others based on cultural or intelligence differences? How can humans be better stewards in the treatment of animals? Who decides the appropriate treatment of animals and their role in society?

Disappearing Languages

Language is the soul of a culture. The survival of a culture may depend on the language used for rituals and to describe cultural ideas, beliefs, and understandings. What is the impact on culture when its language disappears? By some estimates, of the six thousand languages left on Earth, 90% are expected to disappear or be endangered before the end of this century. In New Zealand, government and community initiatives are trying to revive the language of indigenous people, but even so it is in a precarious state. Many indigenous peoples around the globe don’t have support to prevent their language from disappearing. Will anyone be able to read the rich literature embodied in the disappearing languages in the years to come? What oral traditions will be lost? What responsibilities, if any, do governments, institutions, and communities have towards preserving endangered languages?

Recovering from Natural Disaster

Earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other natural disasters are big news when they occur. Front-page news and internet feeds bring us the details of staggering statistics and images of loss of life and property. Recovery work such as rebuilding homes, infrastructure, and businesses go on even when the news moves on to the next big story. The human factor such as recovery from emotional, mental, and physical stress is a painful and difficult journey for survivors of natural disasters, often taking many years after the disaster strikes. A disaster recovery plan (DRP) often proves inadequate especially since it is often developed only after a disaster. Government agencies, insurance companies, charitable organizations, celebrities, and individual volunteers respond with immediate help, but long-term support can be difficult to sustain. How can relief efforts be best utilized, coordinated, and sustained to assist survivors? How can the people, communities, and countries that are affected by a disaster begin to recover from their losses and cope with their changed lives? How will the impact on psychological and physical health be managed?

The Global Workplace

The world today is increasingly interdependent with the advent of interconnectedness. The internet brings individuals living in diverse places together for innovative opportunities in global collaboration. Physical space may no longer define a workplace. Many local and international corporations are able to employ people without them having to step out of their homes or countries. Developed countries outsource jobs to other countries where labor may be cheaper and labor laws less regulated. How might a more global workplace affect local and national economies? Some firms downsize their workforce in favor of automated systems that require less human input. These changes create a pool of workers who, besides being out of work, are often unprepared for other jobs. How might employers develop innovative ways to work globally? Is the growing trend of working globally online benefiting current workplace trends? How might this affect the world economy? What economic or educational changes might better prepare governments, businesses, and workers for a global workplace?
Practice Problem 1
Treatment of Animals

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Tips for STEP 1

**AVOID “extreme measures.”**

DO explain the next logical step.

Students sometimes hit the extreme when explaining consequences – proclaiming widespread death, economic ruin, or the end of the world as we know it. Usually there are many intermediate consequences before such major disasters would overtake us. For example, cramped quarters in homes or undersea vessels could lead to stress and tension between people. This is a reasonable consequence. It is an extreme measure to assert that people might start fighting and everyone would kill each other.

Tips for STEP 2

**AVOID writing UPs that focus on funding and educating.**

DO focus the UP on significant issues in the Future Scene.

Nearly all situations, future or otherwise, can benefit from funds to support solution ideas and people who are knowledgeable about what is happening; however, key verb phrases that state “HMW raise money to” or “HMW educate people about” can be applied generically to any situation. With these KVPs, the solutions are usually generic in nature with solutions detailing all the possible ways there are to raise money (fund-raising campaign) or all the possible ways there are to inform the public (media campaign). UPs should instead focus on specific and significant issues within the Future Scene.

Tips for STEP 3

**AVOID solving your STEP 1 challenges.**

DO address your Key Verb Phrase.

Sometimes students write booklets in which solution #1 solves challenge #1, solution #2 solves challenge #2, etc. This is not a correct use of the problem solving process; rather each of the 16 solutions must address the Key Verb Phrase from the Underlying Problem. It should also be clear that the idea will fulfill the purpose and not negate it. Be sure that your students get some practice brainstorming solutions for several different key verb phrases before competition.

COMPLETE STEPS 1-3!

**STEP 1:** Identify 16 Challenges
**STEP 2:** Select an Underlying Problem
**STEP 3:** Produce 16 Solution Ideas

NOTE: Individuals complete 8 Challenges and 8 Solutions

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Tips for STEP 4

**AVOID** generic criteria.  
**DO** write advanced criteria.

Generic criteria are statements that can be applied to almost any situation. Which solution will... be the safest, last the longest, work the fastest, etc. “Modified” generic criteria include words from the Future Scene: WSW... last the longest to save a language. True advanced criteria address issues unique to the Underlying Problem, the Future Scene, and topic research. WSW... best preserve the language of the native people in Alaska?

Tips for STEP 5

**AVOID** arithmetic errors.  
**DO** double check computations.

Calculators are allowed for Step 5, but good mental math is still faster for adding across the grid. Double check the math by having one student add the row of numbers forward and another add the row backward. If they reach the same sum, odds are it is correct. A good use of the calculator is to add all of the totals. If the grid is correct, the grand total will be 180. If it’s not, there is a mistake somewhere!

**NOTE:** Affiliate Programs may be piloting the ALoU in Middle and Senior Divisions and not using the grid.

Tips for STEP 6

**AVOID** restating your KVP and purpose.  
**DO** explain how and why the plan will work.

“HMW increase the accuracy of AIDA’s information so that there is less chance of the Alaskan native’s language disappearing?” In your Action Plan, don’t simply state your best solution WILL increase AIDA’s accuracy or WILL result in less chance of basing decisions on faulty data. You must explain HOW and WHY that will occur. For example, “Using two AIDA programs that operate separately will increase the preservation of language by orally recording the language and saving to the cloud and using a mouth piece to record movements of the mouth for pronunciation. This will record the language in two different manners for optimal preservation.”


Turin, M. (2013, December 3). Globalization helps preserve endangered languages. *Yale Global Online*. [http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/globalization-helps-preserve-endangered-languages](http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/globalization-helps-preserve-endangered-languages)


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Competitive participants must abide by

QP Conditions!
2 hours; no help; no notes!
Team of 4 who complete booklet are the 4 who may qualify for Affiliate Bowl.

Tip: Not Ready for QP Conditions?
If your students still need help, opt for a non-competitive evaluation.
Not all teams and individuals are ready for the rigors of the QP conditions in the first year of participation. You must decide what will be the best educational experience for your students. If you still need to guide them through the writing, check with your Affiliate Director to see if you can get non-competitive feedback for your students.

Tip: Work from a Time Schedule
Teach your students to move on rather than get stuck on one step!
It is especially important that students learn to move on when they have spent a certain amount of time on their challenges and solutions. It is better to complete fewer of these rather than miss an entire step. When one or two students are working on the Action Plan, the others can go back to fill in any missing items or edit. Adjust this time schedule to fit your students:
10 min. – Read & discuss Future Scene
10 min. – Brainstorm Challenges
20 min. – Write Challenges
15 min. – Complete Underlying Problem
10 min. – Brainstorm Solutions
15 min. – Write Solutions
20 min. – Write Criteria & Rank Solutions
20 min. – Develop Action Plan


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**Recommended Resources**

**Readings, Research, and Resources**

The RR&R includes topic overview, terms and definitions, discussion questions, and many article summaries. Sample discussion questions:

1. What are some advantages and disadvantages of having people enter the workforce later in life? What are some valid reasons to justify entering the workplace sooner or later?

2. Some platforms such as Wonolo have real benefits for large corporations that need temporary but immediate workers. Does the system jeopardize opportunities for other types of workers? If so, how?

**Topic Activity Unit**

Practice the process using content from the topic research. The Global Workplace Topic Unit includes activities to explore an entrepreneur challenge, complete a structured overview of the future workplace, complete a vocabulary challenge to focus on topic-related vocabulary words, to practice generating solutions, to plan for a Presentation of Action Plan, and more. A practice Future Scene is included!

**Questions & Answers for RR&R**

Add fun to your meetings with these quiz cards based on RR&R.

Q&A Cards include multiple choice, true and false, and fill in the blank quiz cards about the topic. Preview or review research information from the RR&R to answer the questions.

Purchase The Global Workplace chapter

**READINGS, RESEARCH, AND RESOURCES**

**TOPIC ACTIVITY UNITS**

**Q &A CARDS**

AVAILABLE AT [WWW.FPSPIMART.ORG](http://WWW.FPSPIMART.ORG)


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