

# Asking questions

## Guidelines

- Pupils should be helped to recognise different kinds of question and think about their merits.
- Pupils should be encouraged to examine their own assumptions. You can help them do this by continually asking them 'Why?' and 'What do you mean by that?'
- You should also help pupils to distinguish between factual questions and those whose answers will involve beliefs or opinions, whether ethical, moral, political, or spiritual.
- Images – and artefacts too – are a very useful means of stimulating pupils' questions.

### Reflection point

Which of the skills, values and attitudes outlined on page 3 could these activities help develop?

### A further tool for stimulating questions

#### Route Finder

This is a framework, based on Tide~ Global Learning's Development Compass Rose, intended to stimulate questions around resources, such as photos, artefacts or stories. It ensures that an issue is looked at from all angles – economic, social, environmental and political. It can also be used for charting answers and/or further questions that emerge. The Route Finder is on page 94 of *Get Global!* See page 20 of this booklet for details.

## Why-why-why chain

### What is it?

This tool gets pupils thinking beyond surface impressions to the underlying causes of any issue. It can be a highly effective way of linking the local to the global with little or no steering by the teacher, other than to keep asking questions beginning with the word 'why'.

### Classroom set-up

Best done in pairs or threes, or as a whole-class discussion activity. Flip-chart or sugar paper, and pens or 'sticky' notes are useful.

### How is it done?

1. Write the issue in a box at the left hand side of the page. Then ask pupils to think of all the direct reasons for the issue. These should be written (or drawn) in boxes in a neighbouring column, linked to the issue box by arrows.
2. Ask pupils to think through the possible reasons behind this first set of reasons. Each reason may have more than one contributing factor. Repeat the process as many times as the issue will allow, each time starting a new column to the right of the previous one. The end result is a flow chart which highlights the complexity of an issue and the different scales of causation. You could then ask pupils to distinguish between links that they can support with evidence and those that they cannot.
3. Once the process has gone as far as it can, look at the boxes on the right-hand side, and encourage pupils to ask: 'Is it fair that this is happening?' and 'What can be done to change things?'

