

Strategy: Identifying Issues Activity

Helping students identify multiple and personal points of view on issues can improve their contributions to class assignments, discussions, and other activities.

Origin

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Application

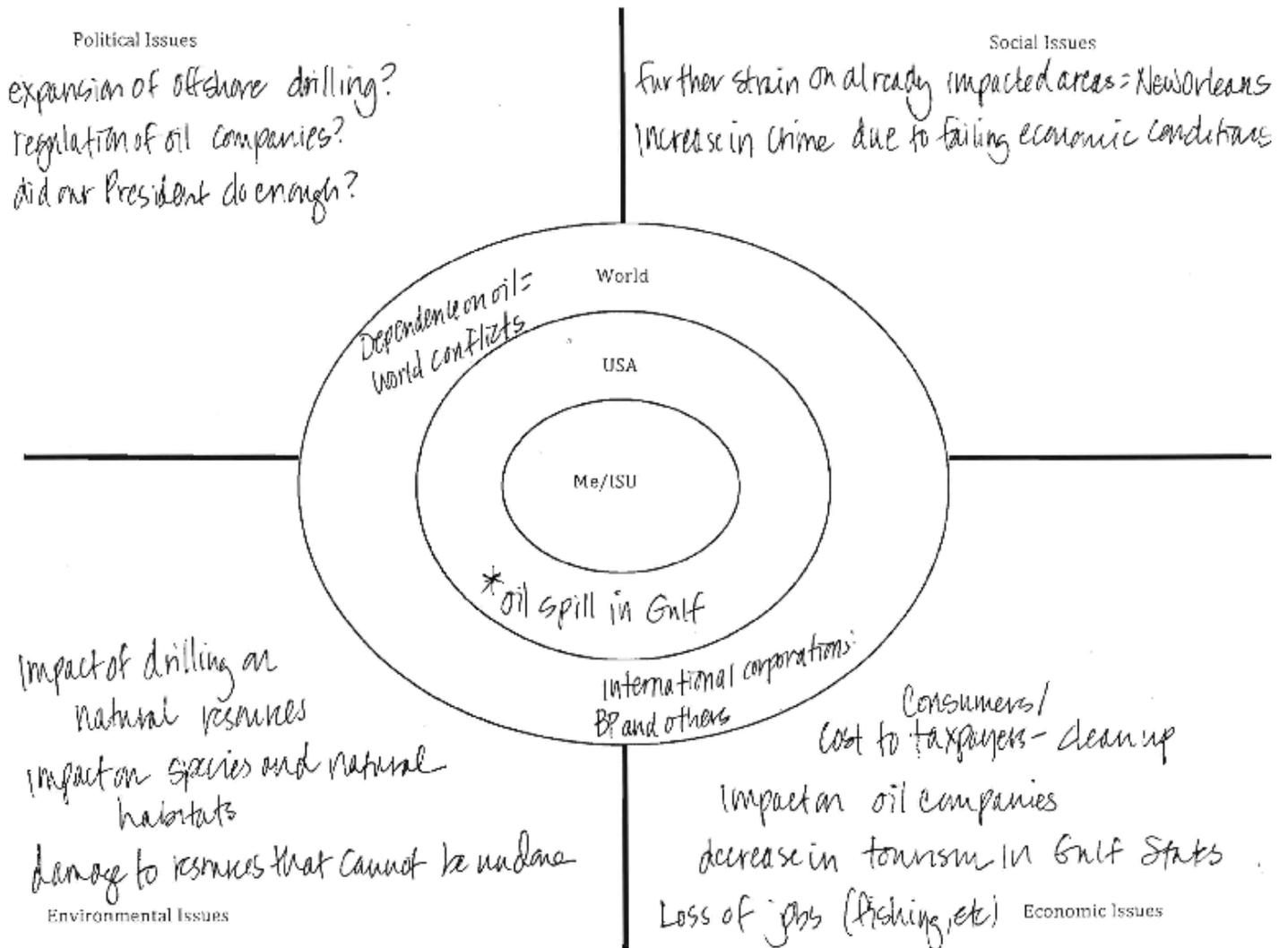
A student who completes this activity will:

- Identify a controversial issue that is important to them
- Identify local, national, and international connections to this issue
- Identify social, environmental, economic, and political dimensions of this issue
- Refine their description of an issue of importance to them
- Define their viewpoint on the issue based on a more complex understanding of the issue

Instructions:

- Have the student use a blank sheet of paper and a pen.
- Ask the student to write in the middle of the paper an issue that is interesting to them.
- Have the student draw a circle around that issue.
- Ask the student to draw three outer circles around that. Tell the student to make the circles large enough to write in but leave room around the outside of the sheet.
- In the middle circle, have the student write a national issue that is directly related to the issue they identified. Tell them to be as specific as possible.
- In the outer circle, have the student write an international issue that is directly related to the issue they identified.
- In the inner circle (closest to their first entry), have the student write a local issue that is directly related to the issue they identified.
- After drawing the circles, have the students divide the outer part of the paper (outside of the circles) into 4 quadrants using straight lines.
- Have the students label the 4 quadrants: SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL.
- Tell the students to brainstorm about issues/topics in each quadrant that relate to the issue they identified.
- When a student is finished, have the student turn over the paper.
- Ask the student to restate the issue that is interesting to them, reflecting on the dimensions of the issue that they have identified.
- Ask the student to provide three reasons they are interested in the issue.
- Ask the student to provide three questions that they would like to answer about the issue.

Please see the sample of this activity for more details.



Reflection

- How does this compare to what you are already doing?
- What concepts/units in your course could benefit from students being better able to identify multiple points of view on issues?
- How could you utilize this activity in your course?