



ACTIVITY 2 WHAT ARE SERIOUS CONFLICTS AND WAR ABOUT? Using critical thinking to understand the causes of international conflict and war

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Large blank posters to write on
- Coloured pens
- Post-its
- Tablets and internet access

DURATION: between 1 ½ hours and 2 ½ hours

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION IN STEPS

1. Agree on definitions: Brainstorm

For example:

War is the use of violence and force in a conflict in an armed conflict.

Serious crisis is an intense conflict between two states, which can lead to armed action.

2. The students discuss in groups what they consider to be causes of serious conflict and war.
3. Each cause is written on a post-it or a piece of paper, each group explain their choices in plenum and place the post-its on a large piece of paper or the wall
4. Discuss in plenum how to group the causes in categories. If possible with the whole class standing right in front of the board. Alternatively, you may prepare as a teacher to create a poster with categories.
5. The post-its are placed under the relevant categories.

METHODOLOGICAL SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

- Examples of causes could for example be:
 - o Persons or groups' ambitions of power, economic gain, nationalism, defence, inequality (political, social, economic), poverty, high unemployment, oppression...
 - Examples of categories of causes could be:
 - o Land or territory disputes
 - o Politics and ideology
 - o Access to resources. (water, oil, metals etc.)
 - o The politicizing of ethnic/cultural/ religious identities
6. Each group selects a serious conflict or war. They may include a war/conflict they have studied before.
 7. The groups propose causes for the chosen conflict/war and explain it in plenary.

They watch a film from You tube or read/write short descriptions (like <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/06/using-human-suffering-as-a-political-tool/>)

Examples of films:

Seven years of war in Syria explained https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoL0L_DbuQQ
Syria's war: who is fighting and why <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFpanWNgfQY>