

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPLORE YOUR IDEAS** What is the difference between a problem and a global problem? Do you think your generation faces more serious global problems than the generation of your parents or grandparents? Explain.

## The following issues were most frequently mentioned in a global survey about current world problems.

**CORRUPTION** People all over the world complain about the corruption of police, government officials, and business leaders. Two examples of corruption are:

- A police officer takes money (a "bribe") from a driver so he doesn't give the driver a ticket for speeding.
- A company that wants to do business with a government agency offers a public official money or a gift to choose that company for the job.

Some people feel that power promotes corruption and that corruption is unavoidable. But an independent media—for example, non-government-backed newspapers, television stations, and Internet blogs—can also play an important role in exposing corruption.

**POVERTY** Approximately one-fifth of the world's population, over 1 billion people, earns less than US \$1 a day. Each day, over a billion people in the world lack basic food supplies. And according to UNICEF, each day, 25,000 children under the age of five die of starvation or preventable infectious disease.

There are many causes of poverty, ranging from catastrophic natural events to bad economic and agricultural policies, so there's no one solution to poverty worldwide. Some people feel that wealthy nations must send aid to poorer nations, while others are concerned that nothing will help unless local corruption is reduced and bad government policies are changed.

**TERRORISM** Every day, we see or hear about suicide bombings and other violent acts committed against innocent people for religious or political reasons. Many ask why terrorism is on the rise.

Some social scientists believe that television and movies may contribute to growing anger. They claim that some people may feel frustrated and powerless when they measure their lives against the lives of extremely wealthy people they see in the media.

However, views about what causes terrorism can be very controversial, and many people disagree about its causes or possible solutions. While some feel that terrorism can be met with military force, others believe

that people's extreme poverty and powerlessness must be reduced to make a difference.

**RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION** Racism (the belief that one's own race or ethnic group is superior to others) and racial and ethnic discrimination (treating members of other groups unfairly) exist in many places. These two common problems cause human rights violations all over the world. In some cases a more powerful ethnic or racial group justifies the domination and, horribly, even the complete destruction of ethnic or racial minorities they consider to be inferior. When taken to this extreme, genocides such as the European Holocaust and the massacre in Sudan have threatened to wipe out entire peoples.

Can racism and discrimination be eliminated—or are these simply unfortunate features of human nature? Many people believe that education can help build tolerance of the "other" and may contribute to creating a more peaceful world.

### A UNDERSTAND FROM CONTEXT Match each definition with a word from the box.

- ..... 1 a lack of necessary money to survive
- ..... 2 the attempt to destroy all members of a racial or ethnic group
- ..... 3 judging or harming people because of their racial or ethnic heritage
- ..... 4 money paid or some other reward given to a person to perform a dishonest or unethical act or to provide a favor
- ..... 5 the abuse of power by people in government or business
- ..... 6 the belief that other racial or ethnic groups are inferior to one's own

- a a bribe
- b genocide
- c poverty
- d corruption
- e discrimination
- f racism

**B ACTIVATE LANGUAGE FROM A TEXT** Based on the information in the Reading, cross out the one word or phrase in each row that is unrelated to the others. Explain your reasoning.

1	people	politics	ethnic groups	racism
2	money	property	income	racism
3	bribe	corruption	discrimination	money
4	hunger	starvation	domination	lack of food
5	racism	business	discrimination	prejudice

**C CRITICAL THINKING** Discuss each of the following.

- 1 Reread the section on corruption in the Reading. What do all acts of corruption have in common? Do you think it is possible to end corruption, or do you feel that it is a part of human nature? Use specific examples in your discussion.
- 2 What are some of the causes of poverty, and what are its effects?
- 3 In your opinion, why do people engage in acts of terrorism? Is terrorism an expression of power or powerlessness and frustration? Provide examples to support your opinion.
- 4 What reasons do people have to hate other groups? Is hatred of another group ever understandable, appropriate, or justified? Explain the reasons for your opinion.
- 5 Do you see a single problem connecting all four issues in the Reading? If so, what is it?