Unfair Race

RX FOR CHILD SURVIVAL
PBS
A GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGE ™

Purpose: To examine how the social and economic conditions in a country can affect the health of its people

Activity at a Glance

- Activity type: Role-playing game
- Age range: Middle school–adult
- Number of players: 4 or more
- Duration: 15 minutes
- Space: Large room or outdoor space
- Facilitation: Required
- Preparation time: 15 minutes

Overview

Players begin by standing in a line, shoulder-to-shoulder. They receive a game card that lists nine social and economic characteristics of a country, and each player assumes the role of the country listed on his or her card. The facilitator calls out a characteristic and instructs players to step forward or back, depending on whether a country rates well or poorly with respect to that characteristic. Soon, the line of players is spread apart. After the last characteristic is read, the facilitator announces that there will be a race to a point very near the people in the front-most group. These people, who represent countries with well-functioning healthcare systems, win easily. The group discusses the impact that social and economic conditions can have on people's health.

Core Concepts

Participants will understand that:

- Public health has social and economic dimensions (as well as political and geographic).
- Where one lives affects one's health because of each country's differing conditions.

Materials

Facilitator script and a set of 24 game cards

Preparation

- Read the procedure and facilitator script before commencing the activity.
- Photocopy a card for each participant.
- Identify the baseline where people should line up at the start of the game.
- Identify the location of the "finish line" for the race, described in step 6.

Procedure

1. Have the group stand shoulder-to-shoulder at the baseline, forming a straight line.

2. Give each person a card that describes nine social and economic conditions in a country. If there are more people than cards, give out multiple copies of some of the cards.

3. Stand at the baseline with the group and read the following aloud:

Each of you represents the country named on your card. For each of the nine categories, I will read out two different situations. Depending on how your country measures up, I will tell you to move forward either one or two steps. If neither situation applies to you, stay in place for that round.

4. Remain at the baseline and read the situations on the "Facilitator Script" aloud, one at a time.

5. After you have read all nine statements, the group will be fragmented and will no longer be in a straight line. Have each person call out the country he or she represents.

6. Challenge the group to a running race. Choose a "finish line" near the front-most group. Point out this finish line, and then say: *On the count of three, we are going to have a race to the finish line I've just pointed out to you. One, two, three, GO!*

People holding cards from countries with well-functioning public health systems will already be very close to the finish line and will win easily.

7. Gather the group together. Process the activity by discussing the following points:

• What kinds of countries came in first? Last? (*People holding cards of countries in the developed world typically come in first. Those holding cards of developing countries typically come in last.*)

• Why do you think the race turned out this way? (*Answers will vary.*)

• What are some of the social and economic factors that influence a country's public health situation? (*The quality of public health relates to the quality of a country's economy, financial investment in health care, infrastructure, education systems, and preventive health programs.*)

• What are some of the major impediments to good health or good healthcare? (*Low per-capita income, lack of clean water, malnutrition, low vaccine rates*)

• What kinds of changes would improve the quality of health in the countries that remained near the base line in this activity? (*The quality of health would improve with improved economies, increased healthcare spending, better access to clean drinking water, improved nutrition, and expanded educational programs.*)

• What does this activity tell you about the health of the people in other countries? (*Answers will vary.*)

• How do people feel about the fairness of the race? (*Answers will vary*)

UNFAIR RACE Facilitator Script

1. **Average annual income:** *If the average annual income in your country is:*

   - above $20,000, take two steps forward.

   - between $5,000 and $20,000, take one step forward.

2. **Average annual healthcare spending:** *This amount includes both public and private healthcare expenditures. If this amount is:*

   - more than $1,500 per person, take two steps forward.

   - between $500 and $1,500 per person, take one step forward.

3. **Immunized against measles:** *If the percentage of people immunized against measles is:*

   - between 90% and 100%, take two steps forward.

   - between 65% and 90%, take one step forward.

4. **Number of doctors per 100,000 people:** *If your country has:*

   - more than 200 doctors per 100,000 people, take two steps forward.

   - between 50 and 200 per 100,000 people, take one step forward.

5. **Average life expectancy:** *If the average life expectancy in your country is:*

   - greater than 70 years, take two steps forward.

   - between 60 and 70 years, take one step forward.

6. **Access to clean drinking water:** *If the percentage of people with access to clean drinking water is:*

   - between 90% and 100%, take two steps forward.

   - between 70% and 90%, take one step forward.

7. **Chance of reaching 5th Birthday:** *If the percentage of children in your country who reach their 5th birthday is:*

   - 95% or more, take two steps forward.

   - between 85% and 95%, take one step forward.

8. **Malaria Threat:** *If the malaria threat in your country is:*

   - low, take one step forward.

   - high, take one step back.

9. **Enrolled in school:** *This is the average number of children enrolled in school at the appropriate level for their age, as a percentage of all children of the same age in your country. In your country, if:*

   - 90–100% of the children are enrolled in school, take two steps forward.

   - 80–90% are enrolled, take one step forward.

(Statistics are from the United Nations Human Development Report for 2001–2002)

UNFAIR RACE Game Cards   Cut out cards along dotted lines.

Albania

1. Average annual income: $4,830/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $150/person

3. Immunized against measles: 96%

4. Doctors: 137 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 73.6 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 97%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 97%

8. Malaria threat: low

9. Children in school: 97%

Botswana

1. Average annual income: $7,770/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $381/person

3. Immunized against measles: 90%

4. Doctors: 29 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 41.4 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 95%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 89%

8. Malaria threat: high

9. Children in school: 81%

Bangladesh

1. Average annual income: $1,700/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $58/person

3. Immunized against measles: 77%

4. Doctors: 23 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 61.1 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 97%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 92%

8. Malaria threat: high

9. Children in school: 87%

Brazil

1. Average annual income: $7,770/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $573/person

3. Immunized against measles: 93%

4. Doctors: 206 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 68.1 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 87%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 96%

8. Malaria threat: high

9. Children in school: 86%

Bolivia

1. Average annual income: $2,460/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $125/person

3. Immunized against measles: 79%

4. Doctors: 76 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 63.9 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 83%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 93%

8. Malaria threat: high

9. Children in school: 94%

Canada

1. Average annual income: $29,480/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $2,792/person

3. Immunized against measles: 96%

4. Doctors: 187 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 79.3 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 100%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 99%

8. Malaria threat: low

9. Children in school: 100%

UNFAIR RACE Game Cards   Cut out cards along dotted lines. ✂

China

1. Average annual income: $4,580/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $224/person
3. Immunized against measles: 79%
4. Doctors: 164 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 70.9 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 75%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 96%
8. Malaria threat: low
9. Children in school: 93%

Ethiopia

1. Average annual income: $780/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $14/person
3. Immunized against measles: 52%
4. Doctors: 3 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 45.5 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 24%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 83%
8. Malaria threat: high
9. Children in school: 46%

Costa Rica

1. Average annual income: $8,840/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $562/person
3. Immunized against measles: 94%
4. Doctors: 160 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 78.1 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 95%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 99%
8. Malaria threat: low
9. Children in school: 87%

India

1. Average annual income: $2,670/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $80/person
3. Immunized against measles: 67%
4. Doctors: 51 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 63.7 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 84%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 91%
8. Malaria threat: low
9. Children in school: 83%

Equatorial Guinea*

1. Average annual income: $29,780/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $106/person
3. Immunized against measles: 51%
4. Doctors: 25 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 49.1 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 44%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 85%
8. Malaria threat: high
9. Children in school: 85%

*much higher than the regional average due to oil production

Japan

1. Average annual income: $26,940/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $2,131/person
3. Immunized against measles: 98%
4. Doctors: 202 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 81.5 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 100%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 99%
8. Malaria threat: low
9. Children in school: 100%

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Kenya

1. Average annual income: $1,020/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $114/person
3. Immunized against measles: 78%
4. Doctors: 14 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 45.2 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 57%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 88%
8. Malaria threat: high
9. Children in school: 70%

Namibia

1. Average annual income: $6,210/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $342/person
3. Immunized against measles: 68%
4. Doctors: 29 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 45.3 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 77%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 93%
8. Malaria threat: high
9. Children in school: 78%

Mexico

1. Average annual income: $8,970/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $544/person
3. Immunized against measles: 96%
4. Doctors: 156 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 73.3 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 88%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 98%
8. Malaria threat: low
9. Children in school: 100%

Rwanda

1. Average annual income: $1,270/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $44/person
3. Immunized against measles: 69%
4. Doctors: 2 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 38.9 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 41%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 82%
8. Malaria threat: high
9. Children in school: 84%

Mozambique

1. Average annual income: $1.050/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $47/person
3. Immunized against measles: 58%
4. Doctors: 2 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 38.5 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 57%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 80%
8. Malaria threat: high
9. Children in school: 60%

Saudi Arabia

1. Average annual income: $12,650/person
2. Average annual healthcare spending: $591/person
3. Immunized against measles: 97%
4. Doctors: 153 per 100,000 people
5. Average life expectancy: 72.1 years
6. Access to clean drinking water: 95%
7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 97%
8. Malaria threat: low
9. Children in school: 59%

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Sweden

1. Average annual income: $26,050/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $2,270/person

3. Immunized against measles: 94%

4. Doctors: 287 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 80.0 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 100%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 99%

8. Malaria threat: low

9. Children in school: 100%

United Kingdom

1. Average annual income: $26,150/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $1,989/person

3. Immunized against measles: 83%

4. Doctors: 164 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 78.1 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 100%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 99.3%

8. Malaria threat: low

9. Children in school: 100%

Syria

1. Average annual income: $3,620/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $427/person

3. Immunized against measles: 98%

4. Doctors: 142 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 71.7 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 80%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 97%

8. Malaria threat: low

9. Children in school: 98%

United States

1. Average annual income: $35,750/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $4,887/person

3. Immunized against measles: 91%

4. Doctors: 279 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 77.0 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 100%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 99%

8. Malaria threat: low

9. Children in school: 97%

Thailand

1. Average annual income: $7,010/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $254/person

3. Immunized against measles: 94%

4. Doctors: 30 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 69.1 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 84%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 97%

8. Malaria threat: high

9. Children in school: 86%

Viet Nam

1. Average annual income: $2,300/person

2. Average annual healthcare spending: $134/person

3. Immunized against measles: 96%

4. Doctors: 54 per 100,000 people

5. Average life expectancy: 69.1 years

6. Access to clean drinking water: 77%

7. Infant's chance of reaching 5th birthday: 96%

8. Malaria threat: high

9. Children in school: 94%