

## Understanding the Problem

The first challenge that any concerned citizen must face when tackling global challenges is to understand a problem as completely as possible before evaluating solutions. Understanding a problem begins by studying statistics, opinions, emotions, and impacts. Use this handout to shape your understanding of the global challenge we are studying in class. Remember to evaluate the sources you are studying for reliability and bias and to use <http://bitly.com> to shorten web addresses.

Type of Evidence	Evidence	Sources
<p><b>Statistics</b> are often the most convincing bit of evidence you can find when evaluating global challenges. By finding numbers that describe your problem today, over time, or in the future, you will get a better sense of just how big the issue you are dealing with is.</p>		
<p>In an increasingly connected world in which people can publish their thoughts easily, there are going to be <i>tons</i> of different people expressing <i>tons</i> of different <b>opinions</b> about any global challenge that you choose to study.</p> <p>Some will try to explain the source of the issue or challenge your studying. Others will detail potential consequences if your global challenge goes unaddressed. Reading through these opinions will turn you on to potential starting points for your solution planning.</p>		
<p>While statistics can be convincing and opinions can serve as starting points for your solution planning, <b>emotions</b> will always influence how important your problem really is and should always influence the choices you make when crafting solutions. After all, solutions are useless if they are wildly unpopular!</p> <p>As you work through your research, pay attention to passions. What do people feel strongly about? Why? Are passions different depending on locations? How might this change your solution planning?</p>		

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<p>In the end, the global challenge you are studying has an <b>impact</b> on our planet in some significant way—otherwise it wouldn't be a global issue at all!</p> <p>While it is likely that you will be able to find evidence of the impact that your global challenge is having on the world in the statistics, opinions, and emotions that you are collecting, it is important to create a clear, prioritized list of impacts before designing solutions. Otherwise, your work will be unfocused and careless.</p>		
<p><b>Summarizing Statement:</b> After collecting statistics, opinions, emotions, and impacts related to the global challenge you are studying, write a paragraph summarizing important points to remember about your problem. Check with your group mates to see if you have left anything important out of your summary. Resolve any group disagreements by coming to consensus about what is most important to consider when developing potential solutions.</p>		