

Three Approaches to Tackling Social Issues

The Three S's Lesson: Part 1



1. Pre-activity: Predictions

- a. There are three approaches to tackling social issues. Before we find out precisely how each approach is defined, come up with your own definitions for each approach.

1. Social Responsibility	2. Social Service	3. Social Justice

- b. Share out some predictions.

2. Jigsaw Activity

- Get your desks into groups of three.
- You will be numbered: 1, 2, or 3.
- If you are number 1, you are responsible for becoming an expert on approach 1. If you are a number 2, you will be responsible for becoming an expert on approach 2. If you are a number 3, you will be responsible for approach 3. Use the appropriate approach description below to complete the table summarizing your approach.
- Once you have all completed the table summarizing your approach, share your descriptions with your group so that you all have all three sections completed.



Three Approaches to Tackling Social Issues

The Three S's Lesson: Part 1



Approach descriptions

APPROACH 1: Social Responsibility

Social responsibility is about encouraging citizens to become responsible and caring citizens. This involves increasing our knowledge and understanding of democracy and of the society in which we live. It is our responsibility to consider how others in society may experience the world differently than we do. That is, we need to think outside of ourselves.

Social responsibility also involves reflection and criticality. That is, one needs to be willing to reflect on their own actions and the impacts their action or inaction may have on others. Further, one needs to be willing to critically look at their society and to engage in complex discussions about controversial issues.

APPROACH 2: Social Service

Social service is not about pity or judging others' ability to take care of themselves. It is not about restricting access to services or deciding who deserves support. It is about giving donations in-kind or raising money for a cause or an event. When we carry out social service, we are doing this in an altruistic manner, not expecting any personal return. It is an attempt to deal with immediate survival needs and to try to provide shelter, food, clothing, medical care, etc., to people who need them.

As well, many people donate time and money to ensure animals are cared for, wildlife is protected, and wild spaces are preserved. While social services such as food banks provide food for those who are hungry, this service, in itself, does not inherently deal with the root causes of hunger, nor does it eliminate the need for food banks. When we carry out charitable events in schools to raise money for others in our communities or in other countries, we are trying to help people to survive. We are not dealing with the underlying issues of inequity and its consequences.

APPROACH 3: Social Justice

Social justice involves righting injustices. It means taking actions that ensure systemic change will occur. It is about making decisions that are responsible and living conscientiously on a daily basis. It is ensuring everyone in a community is taken care of. When we are involved in projects that build skills and change the livelihood of others we are creating a civil society, based on respect and caring. For example, community gardens not only give people the opportunity to grow their own food, but also give them the chance to plan the course of action to be taken and to be equal participants in the decision-making process. When people receive a living wage, versus minimum wage or no wage at all, they gain the ability to make choices and participate in their community on a variety of social and political levels. Social justice is not about allowing an elite group to have power over another group of people or over a community or country. It is not about imposing one set of values on others, but it is about working side by side with others, often in the learner role, to create change.



Three Approaches to Tackling Social Issues

The Three S's Lesson: Part 1



Summaries of three approaches to help tackle social issues

Approach 1: Social Responsibility

Using the approach description above, outline 3 of the most important elements of this approach.

1.

2.

3.

Create a symbol that you think will help your peers understand Social Responsibility.



Three Approaches to Tackling Social Issues

The Three S's Lesson: Part 1



Approach 2: Social Service

Using the approach description sheet, outline 3 of the most important elements of this approach.

1.

2.

3.

Create a symbol that you think will help your peers understand Social Service.



Three Approaches to Tackling Social Issues

The Three S's Lesson: Part 1



Approach 3: Social Justice

Using the approach description sheet, outline 3 of the most important elements of this approach.

1.

2.

3.

Create a symbol that you think will help your peers understand Social Justice.



Three Approaches to Tackling Social Issues

The Three S's Lesson: Part 1



3. Post-Jigsaw Discussion

Using the three social issues below, think of an example for each approach. Examples are provided for the first issue.

Social Issue	Social Responsibility	Social Service	Social Justice
Low voter turnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate oneself on the reasons people do not turn up to vote. Raise awareness about the importance of voting. 	Provide rides for people who may need help getting to polling stations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower the voting age to 16. Overhaul government structure from first-past-the-post to another system.
Children lacking adequate food and going hungry			
Elderly people becoming homeless			
Student loan debt			
Lack of affordable housing			



