

The glossary

The purpose of this glossary is to provide teachers and students with the meanings of key terminology to develop literacy and aid learning. The glossary can be used as a reference point for students or alternatively as a card sort activity. For differentiation purposes and ease of access, it may be helpful to use key terms as they are required, on an activity by activity basis.

Term	Description
abstention	An abstention is the act of refraining from voting. When countries abstain from voting at the UN, they are neither casting a vote in favour or a vote against. As an abstention does not count as a vote against, countries that have the power of veto – the five permanent members of the UN Security Council – can use abstentions to signal that they are not in favour of a decision without actually blocking it.
access to education	'Access to education' means that children are able to go to school, regardless of their gender or where they come from and where they live. It also means having a safe journey to school, a safe learning environment and not having to work.
African Union	The African Union (AU) is a regional organisation that consists of 54 African countries. The AU enables these countries to cooperate closely on political, economic and social issues.
Arab League	The Arab League is a regional organisation that currently has 22 members. It was formed to enable closer cooperation between these states. Since 2011, events in North Africa and the Middle East have seen the League take on a more prominent role in global affairs.
Arab States	The Arab States include the Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa: Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.
armed conflict	An armed conflict happens when two or more groups or countries cannot solve their disagreement in a peaceful manner and they turn to violence to get their way. The Second World War is an example of an armed conflict.
ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional organisation that consists of ten countries. ASEAN aims to promote economic growth, social progress and regional stability.
birth rate	A country's birth rate is the number of childbirths per 1,000 people per year.
Blue helmets	Blue helmets are worn by UN peacekeeping troops to make them easily recognisable and show that UN troops do not take sides in a conflict and only shoot in self-defence (blue is the colour of the UN). This can help to keep them safe.
ceasefire	A ceasefire (or truce) is a temporary stop to an armed conflict in which each side agrees to stop fighting.
child mortality rate	'Child mortality rate' is the chance of a child dying between birth and its fifth birthday. The rate is presented as the number of deaths per 1,000 live births. In the UK the rate in 2009 was 5 deaths per 1,000 live births while in Chad the rate was 209 deaths per 1,000 live births. About 21,000 young children die every day, mainly from preventable causes. Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 4 aims to reduce child mortality.
child labour	The term 'child labour' is often defined as work that prevents a child from having a normal childhood, prevents them from attending and finishing school, or is harmful to their physical or mental development.
child soldier	A child soldier is a child who takes part in an armed conflict. The term is sometimes also used to refer to children who are used as porters, cooks, spies, wives and slaves.
Darfur	Darfur is a western province of Sudan. The ongoing conflict in Darfur has produced one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. Since the conflict began in 2003, around 300,000 people have been killed and almost three million more have fled their homes.
death rate	A country's death rate is the number of deaths per 1,000 people per year.
democracy	Democracy is a political system where the power to govern is given to representatives who are elected by the people in free elections. The UK is an example of a democracy.

Term	Description
development	Development is the process of building up the institutions, services and economy of a country to ensure that all people can live healthy, stable and peaceful lives. This includes building schools and hospitals, developing democratic institutions and creating jobs for people.
diplomacy	Diplomacy is the term used when representatives of countries (diplomats) carry out negotiations on issues such as peace-making, trade, economics and climate change. International agreements are usually negotiated by diplomats before they are agreed by national politicians.
discrimination	Discrimination means that certain groups or individuals are prevented from having the same rights and the same access to services and jobs that others enjoy.
Education for All (EFA)	'Education for All' is a global movement led by UNESCO to promote quality education. A key aim of the movement is to achieve universal primary education for children everywhere (Millennium Development Goal 2) but it also includes a focus on quality education, early childhood education, life skills and adult literacy.
Emerging economy	Emerging economies (also referred to as 'emerging markets') are countries that are experiencing rapid economic growth and industrialisation.
European Union	The European Union (EU) is a regional organisation that consists of 27 countries. The EU promotes closer cooperation on economic, social, political and defence issues. It is the most integrated of all regional organisations.
Euro zone	The 'Euro zone' is the collective term for the 17 European countries that have adopted the Euro as their currency.
equality	Equality means that everyone has the same opportunities and rights, and equal access to jobs and services.
fair trade	'Fair trade' means making sure that people are paid fair wages for the work they do and the products they make.
G20	The 'Group of 20' (G20) comprises the world's 20 largest economies (19 countries and the European Union). They meet regularly to discuss global financial and economic affairs.
G77	The 'Group of 77' is a broad coalition of developing countries that was formed to promote collective interests at the UN. Founded by 77 countries, it has now expanded to 132.
gender equality	Gender equality means treating women and men equally. Women are often prevented from having the same opportunities as men. The UN is working to stop this, for example by making sure girls have the same opportunities as boys to go to school (Millennium Development Goal 3).
genocide	Acts such as killing or displacing members of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, that group.
General Assembly (GA)	The General Assembly is like a world parliament where all 193 UN member states meet to resolve international issues. All countries have one vote and every country has an equal say.
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	Gross Domestic Product is the total value of a country's goods and services in a year. The figure is sometimes given 'per person', which means dividing the total by the number of people living in that country.
HIV/AIDS	HIV is a virus that is passed on through blood and body fluids, which attacks the immune system. AIDS is a term used to describe the latter stages of HIV when the immune system has stopped working and the person develops a life-threatening condition. Sub-Saharan Africa is the region most affected by HIV/AIDS and many people there cannot access medicine to prevent the illness getting worse. There is as yet no cure for AIDS.
human rights	Human rights are the rights and freedoms that we are all entitled to. Our rights include: the right to life, to be free from torture and abuse, to go to school and to work, to shelter and to food, to practise a religion, and the right to think and say what we want as long as we don't hurt anyone. Every person has every human right because we are all born equal and should be treated with equal dignity and respect.
humanitarian crisis	A humanitarian crisis is an event (or series of events) which represents a critical threat to the health, safety, security or wellbeing of a community or other large groups of people, usually over a wide area. Armed conflicts, epidemics, famine, natural disasters and other major emergencies may all involve or lead to a humanitarian crisis.
inequality	Inequality means that people do not have the same opportunities or do not have access to the same basic services or enjoy the same rights as the rest of the population. The term typically refers to inequality among individuals and groups within a country, but can also refer to inequality among countries.
infant mortality	The number of deaths per year of babies under one year of age per 1,000 live births.

Term	Description
international aid	International aid can be divided into two categories: humanitarian aid (emergency relief efforts, e.g. in response to humanitarian crises), and overseas development aid (aimed at helping countries to achieve long-term sustainable economic growth).
international community	The term 'international community' is used to refer to all the countries in the world.
International Criminal Court (ICC)	The International Criminal Court is an independent global court to which the UN can refer individuals accused of the most serious crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.
international organisation	An international organisation is an organisation where many countries work together on global issues. The United Nations is an example of an international organisation.
international sanctions	International sanctions are restrictions agreed by international organisations (e.g. the UN) that are applied to a country which has broken an international agreement. The restrictions can affect trade, travel, sports and political relations. During the <i>Apartheid</i> era (1948–1994), the UN imposed sanctions on arms trade to South Africa which meant that countries could not sell weapons to South Africa.
international treaty	An international treaty is a legally-binding written agreement between two or more countries that has been formally approved and signed by their leaders. International organisations such as the UN often lead the work on international treaties.
life expectancy	Life expectancy denotes the number of years that a person is expected to live based on statistical predictions.
literacy rate	The percentage of people in a country who are able to read and write.
malaria	Malaria is an infectious disease carried by mosquitoes. It is widespread in tropical and subtropical regions, including parts of the Americas, Asia, and Africa. Each year, there are approximately 350–500 million cases of malaria across the world, killing between one and three million people, the majority of whom are young children in sub-Saharan Africa. Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 6 aims to provide treatment for malaria and other diseases that can be cured.
market economy	A country that operates a 'free market' or 'capitalist' economy, with little planning or regulation by the government.
maternal health	'Maternal health' is a term used to refer to the health of pregnant women or women with young children. Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5 aims to improve the health of mothers in the world.
member state	'Member state' is the term used for a country that is a member of an international organisation, such as the UN.
military	The term 'military' usually refers to a country's armed forces. A country's military is often organised into different branches such as the army, the navy and the air force. Military units or groups of soldiers are often referred to as 'troops'.
militia	The term 'militia' is commonly used to refer to a military force made up of ordinary citizens as opposed to an army made up of professional soldiers.
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international goals aimed at eliminating global poverty and inequality. All 193 United Nations member states have agreed to try to achieve them by 2015.
Model United Nations	Model United Nations (also Model UN or MUN) is a simulation of a United Nations meeting where students play the roles of country ambassadors and UN representatives.
negotiations	Negotiations are discussions between two or more groups on an issue, a problem or a conflict. At the international level, negotiations often take place through international organisations such as the UN. International negotiations can cover anything from nuclear weapons and war to climate change and trade.
net migration	The difference between people entering a country (immigrants) and leaving a country (emigrants) per 1,000 people per year.
Non-Aligned Movement	The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) consists of countries that are not formally aligned with any major power bloc. This was particularly important during the Cold War, when countries including Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia and Yugoslavia formed the Movement as an alternative to the 'Western' and 'Eastern' blocs. It now has 120 members.
Organisation of American States	The Organisation of American States (OAS) is a regional organisation that consists of 35 states. It promotes closer cooperation on economic, social and political issues.
peacekeeping	Peacekeeping is one of the ways in which the UN tries to resolve conflicts and build peace. UN peacekeepers are sent to troubled areas to protect civilians and to help restore peace.

Term	Description
permanent members (P5)	The five permanent members of the Security Council (also known as the P5) are the main victorious powers of the Second World War: China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA. The permanent members have the right to veto any major decision of the Security Council.
placards	Placards are used during Model United Nations simulations and have country names written on them. When you wish to speak in a debate or when you are voting on an issue, you raise your placard.
poverty line	A 'poverty line' or 'poverty threshold' is the minimum level of income deemed adequate for a person in a particular country. The most common international poverty line, which is applied by the United Nations and used throughout 'The UN Matters' teaching resource, is US\$1.25 a day. The figure used to be US\$1 a day before it was readjusted to take into account the value of the dollar across the world.
refugee camp	A refugee camp is a temporary camp built to receive people who have had to flee their homes because of war, a natural disaster or a humanitarian crisis. Thousands or even hundreds of thousands of people may live in a single camp. They are often built and run by the United Nations.
resolution	A resolution (also referred to as 'UN resolution', 'General Assembly resolution' or 'Security Council resolution') is the term used for the formal text of a UN decision.
Security Council (SC)	The UN Security Council is responsible for maintaining peace, and tries to settle conflicts that threaten international security. It can set up peacekeeping operations in countries to protect civilians and help the parties to a conflict to resolve their differences peacefully. The Security Council has 15 members, five of which are permanent (often referred to as the P5).
slavery	Someone is in slavery if they are forced to work, are owned or are controlled by an 'employer', treated as 'property' or are physically constrained against their will. Slavery is illegal in all countries across the world and the right to be protected from slavery is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
South Asia	South Asia is a geographical region of Asia made up of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
Sub-Saharan Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa is a geographical term which refers to the countries in Africa which lie south of the Sahara, the world's largest desert.
Sudan	Sudan is one of the largest countries in Africa. It is also one of the poorest and has been suffering from civil war for many years.
sustainable development	Sustainable development is development that aims to meet the needs of people today in a way that will also meet the needs of people in the future. This means, for example, being environmentally friendly.
United Nations (UN)	The UN is an international organisation made up of 193 countries known as 'member states'. It was created in 1945 as the world emerged from the Second World War. Its main aims are to secure international peace, eliminate poverty and protect human rights.
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	The CRC is an international treaty that spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The CRC was adopted by the UN in 1989.
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the UN in 1948 and is the most famous human rights agreement in the world. The UDHR outlines the human rights we all are entitled to. Our rights include: the right to life, to be free from torture and abuse, to go to school and to work, to shelter and to food, to practise a religion, and to think and say what we want as long as we don't hurt anyone.
UN Human Rights Council	The UN Human Rights Council is the UN body responsible for monitoring the human rights records of all UN member states. It also has independent experts who work on specific issues and countries.
UN Secretary-General	The UN Secretary-General is the head of the United Nations. The current Secretary-General is Ban Ki-moon of South Korea, who took office on 1 January 2007.
UNDP	UNDP is the UN's Development Programme and it works to eliminate poverty. One of UNDP's main tasks is to coordinate global efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), agreed by world leaders in 2000.
UNESCO	UNESCO – the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – is a UN agency that was established in 1945. It promotes international cooperation in education, science, culture and communication and information.
UNICEF	UNICEF – the United Nations Children's Fund – is the UN body that focuses on improving the lives of children across the world.

Term	Description
UN Charter	The UN Charter is the founding document of the UN which sets out the role, function and powers of all the elements of the UN system. It was signed in 1945.
universal primary education	Universal primary education means that every child in every country should have the chance to go to school. Millennium Development Goal 2 aims to make sure that all children across the world have access to and finish primary school. UNESCO is leading the UN's efforts to make sure this happens.
veto	A veto means the power to stop a decision. There are five member states on the UN Security Council that have 'veto' power - China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA (often referred to as the P5). This means these countries can block any major decision of the Security Council.
WHO	WHO is the UN's World Health Organization. WHO is the international authority on global health and helps people to be free from preventable diseases like malaria and HIV/AIDS. WHO works to strengthen healthcare systems in every country so people can stay healthy and live longer, happier lives.