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PHIL-92  
Professor Russinoff  
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Topic: Humanitarianism??

Overarching themes: Collaboration, community, and resource allocation

Goal: Get students to critically evaluate how collaboration alters resource consumption/allocation and regulation

Activity: “Fish in the Pond”

Materials: spoons, marbles, plastic plates/bowls

- Split students into groups of 4, give each group a bowl with 10-15 marbles, each player gets a spoon
  - Tell students they will have 10 seconds to **silently** “fish,”
  - After ten seconds, each marble left in the bowl reproduces once, they keep the marbles they took out of the bowl as their own “food”
  - Repeat two more times and see if any fishing patterns develop without verbal communication
  - *IMPORTANT:* If the bowl gets emptied, no reproduction is possible. Game over.
- (This is the remix) Split students into groups of 4, give each group a bowl with 10-15 marbles, each player gets a spoon
  - Tell students they will have 10 seconds to “fish,” but **collaboration is allowed**
  - After ten seconds, each marble left in the bowl reproduces once, they keep the marbles they took out of the bowl as their own “food”
  - Repeat two more times and see if any “fishing” patterns develop with verbal communication

POST-ACTIVITY QUESTIONS:

(Give students a few minutes to brainstorm in their journals if needed)

- How did the game change when you were allowed to speak/collaborate?
- What patterns did you notice? Why?
- Did you rely/depend upon others and their habits? Why or why not?
- How would you describe your group members during this activity?
  - Prodding further: “Justified?” “Kind?” “Civil?”

“Tragedy of the Commons”-ish:

- Tragedy of the Commons (common resources) is an economic theory based around sharing common resources such as cattle-grazing land. The “tragedy” the theory presents is that if an individual is incentivized to consume a resource at the expense of others, and without regulation, the resource will inevitably be depleted. There are essentially 3

outcomes: let individuals consume unregulated, outsiders (authorities) insert rules to prevent overconsumption, or allow the people using the resource to insert rules for resource sharing/allocation. Let's revisit our fishing activity....

- You're a fisherfolk who fishes in a river that is used by the other people in your community. Fish are limited and you need to be careful about not endangering the fish species. But you need to eat, make money, and support your family.
- Which option would you prefer (No rules, outsiders' rules, insiders' rules) and why?
- Prod further based on student's answers:
  - If Outsiders: How would you decide on who should insert the rules? Qualifications? Should they be an interested or disinterested party?
  - If Insiders: Would it be all the insiders or a select few?
  - Either Way: Should those who created the rules be expected to enforce them? Are there punishments for violating the rules? Who does the punishing?

**Wrap- up Discussion:**

- Can you think of a current example that relates to what we were talking about?
  - Prod if needed: Ventilators? Refugees?
  - In the issues you raised: do you think they would be better resolved by solutions/enforcement from "outsiders" or "insiders"? Why?
- Do we have a duty to help others/work together? Why or why not?
- WHY ARE YOU HERE? Why does this workshop count as a "Community Service Requirement" at Medford High?