

## Sample lesson

### Global Politics Core: Understanding power and global politics

**Guiding question:** How does the concept of polarity help us understand the structure of contemporary global politics?

#### Preparation

Before the lesson, students should have watched the following two videos.

- [Polarity in International Relations](#) (4 minutes)
- [Power Structures and Global Politics](#) (5 minutes)

#### Main lesson

- Opening activity: Take a quick vote on the question: What is the most powerful country in the world today?  
Follow this up with a short discussion about what factors you might consider: economic power, political power, structural power. Aim to find out what students instinctively think of as 'power'. (5 minutes)
- Individual/small group work: Find the revision worksheet *Exploring polarity and multiplexity in Global Politics*.  
Students complete the 'Before Reading' section individually or in small groups of 2-3. Responses should be written down in each student's notebook. (10-15 minutes)
- Small group discussion: Thinking about polarity.  
The following questions accompany the two videos linked above. Working in small groups of 3-4, students should respond to all/some of the following questions. (10 minutes)
  - What is the definition of polarity in Global Politics?
  - How is power defined in international relations?
  - What is an example of a unipolar system?
  - What is an example of a bipolar system?
  - What is an example of a multipolar system?
  - How do you think power distribution affects international relations?
  - Which system of polarity do you think best describes the world currently? Why?
  - Which system of polarity is likely to be most stable and have less conflict? Why?
  - Do you think non-state actors have more power than states nowadays?
  - What are some examples of non-state actors that have significant power?

How do you think global political challenges like the climate crisis or pandemics have affected power dynamics in contemporary global politics?

What are some potential consequences of a rapidly shifting balance of power?

- Class discussion: If time allows, allow the whole class to discuss their responses to the questions above. (10 minutes)
- Individual work: Students should read the relevant section of the core chapter on **'Polarity and multiplexity within global politics' (pp.25-26)**. Then students complete the 'After Reading' section of the revision worksheet: *Exploring polarity and multiplexity in Global Politics*. This can be done individually or in small groups of 2-3. These could be the same groups as before or students could be assigned/asked to form new groups. Responses should be written down in each student's notebook. (20-25 minutes)
- Activity (in class or set as homework): Multiplexity in action in contemporary global politics. (20 minutes)
  - a. Working in groups of 3-4, students need to choose a specific year from the last two decades. No two groups can use the same year.
  - b. Groups need to review their chosen year in terms of significant political, economic, cultural (including sports, music, art, film, etc.), military, environmental, etc. events/phenomena/processes and to identify specific examples of multiplexity in action.
  - c. In each case, they should note which actors were involved and how they were involved.
  - d. Using flip-chart paper or poster paper, each group needs to create a visual account of multiplexity in action for their given year. These can form a gallery or display for the following class.

## Homework

- Students complete the Paper 2 quick writing revision worksheet *Actors in Global Politics*. (20 minutes)