

# LOOKING AT THE JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT

## CASE STUDY: LOOKING AT CARTOONS

Cartoons can be a stimulating and thought provoking resource for exploring issues with children. They are immediately accessible and are familiar from comics and television. They can easily be created: a successful child's cartoon is less about the ability to draw, than about thinking and interpreting. We have used them in particular to develop thinking skills within mixed ability classes.

For topical cartoons from around the world see [www.cartoonweb.com](http://www.cartoonweb.com)



The 2002 World Summit on sustainable development was the world's largest ever international conference. 65,000 delegates attended it. It agreed action on a wide range of issues, including poverty reduction, health and the environment.

Bringing so many people together took a huge amount of organising, not least around their travel arrangements. It also used a lot of energy. With most delegates flying to Johannesburg, it was estimated that the summit added an additional 50 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Was it worth it?

- Children looked at the cartoon above. What is it telling us? Why did the newspaper use a cartoon?
- We set up a debate: one group argued that the need to make global decisions about poverty and the environment outweighed the environmental damage caused; the other group argued the opposite case.
- With younger children, it proved necessary to spend some time discussing the purpose of the summit. It seemed easier for them to understand what environmental damage meant than it was to grasp the value of global decision making processes.
- What did the children think? [You could use scales to show how the balance of the argument is falling ... with tokens as "votes"].
- We debriefed their decision - was there an alternative? [eg using technology or other forms of transport].
- You may wish to draw children's attention to carbon offsetting schemes such as [www.climatecare.org](http://www.climatecare.org). At the summit, many delegates bought certificates to offset the carbon dioxide their journeys produced. The money raised was used to reduce future emissions.
- Children went on to look at the journeys they make [for holidays, to school, shopping, to the doctor etc]. When was the need for the journey worth its effect on the environment?