

A “just invasion”

We've used this several times for classes studying invaders and settlers. It's based on the largely Christian doctrine of "Just War." Just, in this case, stands for 'justified'. Thinkers such as St. Augustine, and St. Thomas Aquinas recognised that if life is to be protected, it may be sometimes justified to engage in combat. Their conditions for 'Just War' provided ethical guidance on waging war, and conduct in it. A similar approach can be taken for 'invasion'. We've found this has worked with pupils as young as Year 3. Older pupils could also come up with rules themselves.



This enquiry is about making moral judgements based on particular situations. To practise this on a smaller scale, whilst introducing relevant themes and concepts, take the first set of cards (in capitals).

Without revealing the session's theme, introduce the cards as '*simply rules or sayings that we're all familiar with. Some are more serious than others.*' Get pupils into groups of 4, with one pair giving as many reasons why it's good to stick to the rule. The other pair gives situations that it's OK to break this rule.

Either lay the cards around the room for pairs to stand opposite each other, rotating every few minutes, or go through one at a time with all talking about the same one. The key is for everyone to break their silence within a hubbub of voices. Flip things around half-way through so if a pair have been arguing 'for' the rules, they get a chance to argue against.



Once you've done a few, explain the relevance of the activity: people often make ethical judgments based on situations – just like judging if they should invade somewhere. It may be right in some situations, but wrong in others.

Present the group with the second set of cards (non-capitals), ideally with a set for each group of 4. On each card is a reason for invasion. Ask each group to rank the reasons from the 'best' to 'worst' on the floor.



If a group finishes quickly, challenge them to add reasons of their own. Where do these fit?

Next, you could either:

- Ask '*what made your group disagree?*' and let them suggest a contestable reason to discuss as a class. You can usually gauge what will fly based on the stir of chatter caused at its mention.
- Scanning over the sets of cards, commenting on any big discrepancies between groups, and focus on a question from there

It's brilliant if any historical knowledge is brought in to support opinions. However, ensure this doesn't exclude pupils without this knowledge.

It's most rewarding when points are made based on pupils' ideas of fairness and good conduct - highly relevant points can be made without any knowledge of current affairs. On the question of removing an evil leader, one Year 3 girl said: "We think he is evil, but he probably thinks he is good, so can we actually say for sure he is bad?" This was followed by another girl pupil arguing "if we get rid of the leader, it might create a war, and some people will want to leave."

NEXT STEPS

Ask pupils to come up with their own rules for a "Just" invasion. They could either write these out, with reasons, or choose where to divide their sorted reasons into acceptable and unacceptable.

FINDERS

KEEPERS

DO NOT STEAL

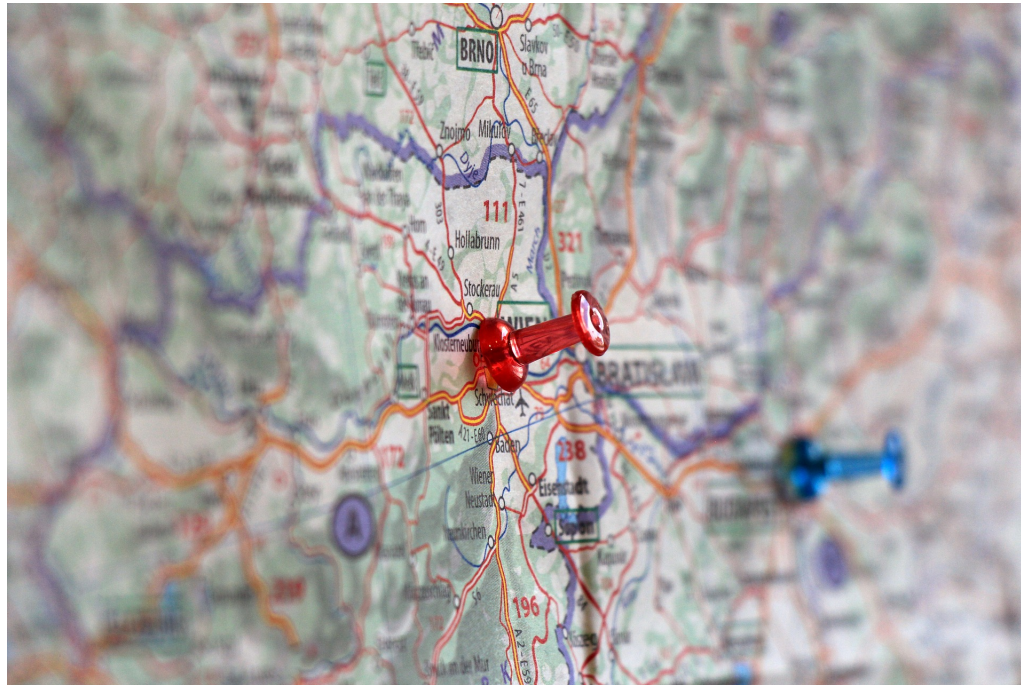
**DON'T BE
GREEDY**

**DON'T ENTER
SOMEONE'S HOME
WITHOUT
PERMISSION**

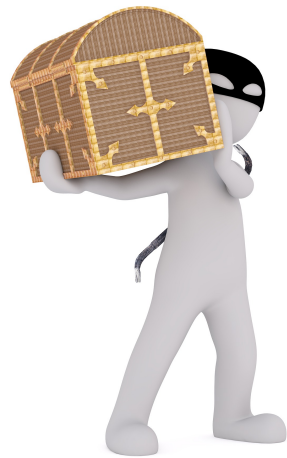
If your own country
is poor



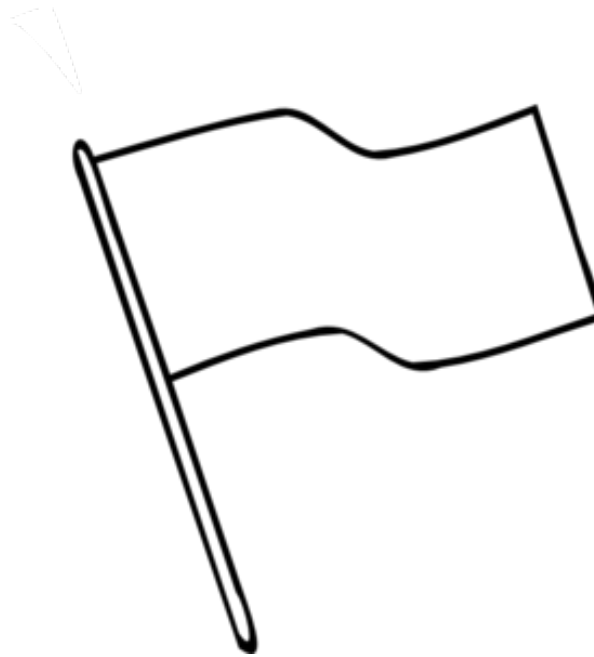
To get more land



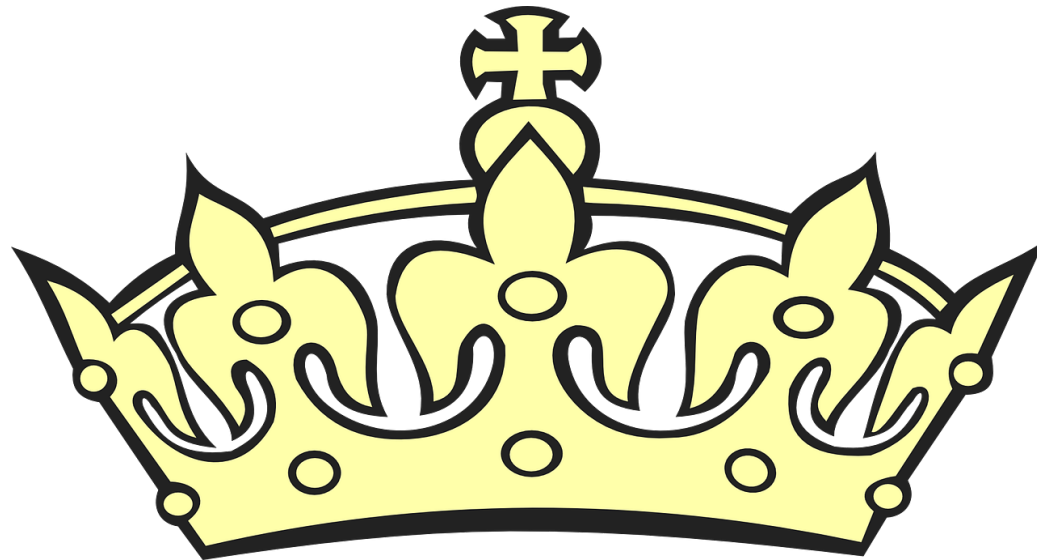
If their country has
stolen something
from your country



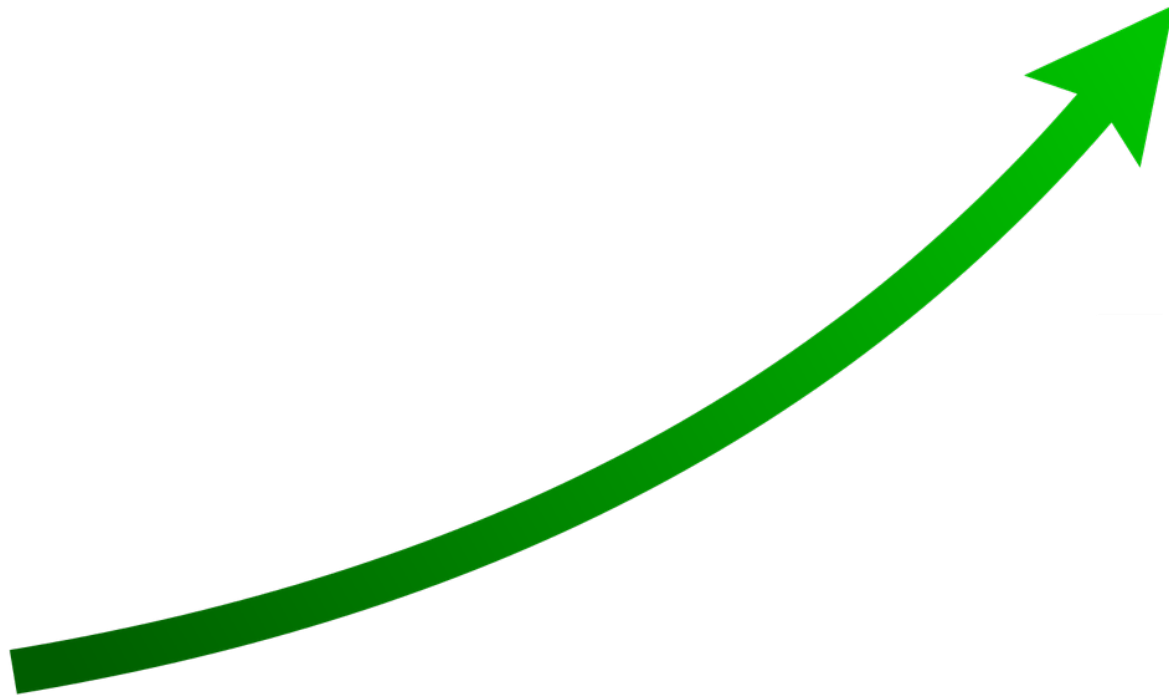
If no one already
owns the country



To protect their people
from an evil leader



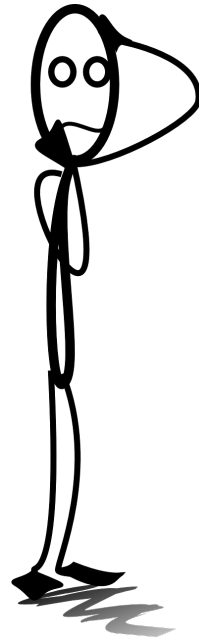
To improve their
country



If they have
invaded you



If you think they
might invade you



Because they have invaded another
country you promised to protect

