

slum survivor

spend a few days the way a billion spend a lifetime

Extra Challenges and resources

Challenge Two: Literacy and health challenge

Slum Dwellers must decode unknown text rapidly in order to decide what medicine is safe to consume.

This is reality:

Over 800 million adults can't read or write, and almost 100 million school children who are of the right age to attend school currently miss out on an education. In slums, children might miss out on school for a number of reasons. The family might need the children to work in order to help provide income for the family. Or the local schools might be overcrowded, under-resourced, and not able to accept all the students who should attend. Or the family might be too poor to afford the costs of education – such as school, uniform and text book fees. Many children from slums might feel ashamed and looked-down upon by other students because of their poverty. A history of illiteracy and lack of education in the family can also mean that attending school and trying to learn seems too big a barrier to overcome.

Without literacy and education, many things in life become much more difficult. It can also have negative consequences for people's health. The family might not understand the cause of sickness and disease. They might not understand the importance of following dosage directions for medicine, or the consequences of improper use of medicine.

Materials required:

- Smarties or M&Ms divided into bowls for each different colour
- 1 alphabet code sheet per family (see below)
- Matching pairs of signs written in code (the hieroglyphics below) that indicate edibility (use pairs like: noxious/edible, poisonous/safe, poison/medicine, harmful/healthy, toxic/consumable, tainted/tasty, deadly/healthy, harmful/healing, bad/good, lethal/digestible, dangerous/safe)

Process:

- 1) Prepare clues written in code shown in the box below.
- 2) Place two bowls of smarties (each bowl containing a different colour) are side by side.
- 3) One family member comes forward at a time, with their decoding sheet and two opposite signs are placed in front of the bowls. Each family member has 10 seconds to work out which coloured smartie is safe to eat by trying to decipher the sign in front of the bowl. If a family member eats the wrong colour, or does not make a choice in the time allowed, then they become seriously ill and are removed from the challenge.
- 4) After each session, put a new pair of signs in front of the bowls. Conduct new turns until only one family member remains "healthy". You can reduce the time allowed for making choices with each round, or if you find that the Slum Survivors are translating too quickly.

Alphabet decoding sheet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X
Y	Z						

You'll need a font called Wingdings installed on your computer to read the chart above properly... it's a font that is on nearly all Windows systems, so should be here.