One pair, three voices

Ages 14 and up, civics, history or geography

Students describe how two countries relate using three kinds of evidence (what governments say, what they do, how people live connected) and notice when the three disagree.

BEFORE THE LESSON

Open the pair page for Germany and France on a screen. Print the handout for each student or pair.

STEPS

1. Ask the class: how would you know whether two countries get along? Collect answers on the board and sort them into saying, doing and living connected. (5 min)
2. Open Germany and France. Read the one-line summary and the index. Do not explain the number yet. (5 min)
   https://nationsrelations.org/p/deu-fra
3. In groups, each takes one section: Say (speeches), Do (votes, trade, conflict) or Live (people). Each group finds two facts and writes them in one sentence. (15 min)
   https://nationsrelations.org/p/deu-fra
4. Open a second pair where the voices disagree, China and the United States. Ask: where does what they say differ from what they do? (10 min)
   https://nationsrelations.org/p/chn-usa
5. Each group reports one surprise. Close by asking what the index cannot tell you. (10 min)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITING

Which of the three kinds of evidence would you trust most to describe a friendship between countries? Why?

Name one thing about a relationship that none of these numbers can show.

Why might two countries trade a lot and still vote differently at the UN?

KEEP IN MIND

Scores describe patterns in published data, not who is right. A close pair is not a friendship and a distant pair is not an enemy.

Pages used: Germany and France https://nationsrelations.org/p/deu-fra; China and the United States https://nationsrelations.org/p/chn-usa; How scores work https://nationsrelations.org/method

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