

OUR CONNECTED WORLD

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL #8: Develop a global partnership for development

Activity Snapshot:

Students will create a visual representation of global interconnection, which will set them up for a discussion on equity and trade.

Rationale:

The success of the first seven Millennium Development Goals is dependent on a concrete commitment to uphold this eighth MDG, which calls for global partnerships to support development. The existing global partnerships benefit rich countries, especially when it comes to the issue of trade. Many countries are still struggling to pay only the interest on loans they acquired decades ago, making actual repayment of the principal impossible.

Objective:

- Students will understand the interconnections between themselves and the larger world
- Students will explore issues of equity with respect to trade

Materials: world map, dot stickers, thumb tacks, Internet

Steps:

1. Ask students to look at the tags on their clothes, shoes and backpacks, the food in their lunches (fruits with stickers, pre-packaged items, etc.) and other possessions to find out where they were made or grown. Ask students to create the following chart to complete this exercise:

Item Description	Where Did it Come From?

1. For every item, put a sticker on the country of origin on a map of the world. (Note: Students can take turns putting stickers on the map. Some countries may require multiple stickers. In this case, stickers can be put on a piece of paper beside the country.)
2. Once possessions have been exhausted, move on to ask where students' families, however many generations back, came from in the world. Again, mark these locations with thumb tacks on the map.
3. At this point, the map should be covered with stickers or thumb tacks, creating a visualization of the international connections of our everyday lives.

Transition:

5. In a large group, talk about the reasons behind the specific aims of the eighth Millennium Development Goal. This discussion is intended to summarize the ideas of inequality brought up by previous MDG lessons. To simplify the discussion for your students' understanding, tell them to think

of “global partnership” as a strategy for reaching out to other countries and helping people.

Here are some specific questions to address through the discussion:

- If we believe our lives are globally interconnected as we saw on the map, how can the eighth MDG benefit all countries? For example, how does a better life for children in China benefit people in North America?
- The reality that a large part of the population in many countries remains in poverty creates a dilemma. We have so much while other people have so little. How can we make the world a fair place for everyone?
- Ask students what they think may be the advantages and disadvantages of creating global partnerships. From this discussion, have students complete a Pro/Con table for their notes.
- What are some solutions to making things fair (e.g. fair trade, no sweatshops, etc.)?

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

Some students may think the current situation is fine since it seems to work in the favor of developed countries like the United States and Canada. Encourage these students to think about a child in a place like China, who has to work in a small factory making fireworks to pay for school fees because his or her family only makes an annual income of \$90 US. Or reread one of the stories to encourage students to empathize.

Extension:

After explaining the concept of fair trade in greater detail, ask students to do a small research project on the practices and availability of fair trade products.

Closure:

Ensure that students understand what the following terms mean, especially in relation to the eighth Millennium Development Goal. Use this glossary to enhance your own understanding so you can explain the concepts to your students in age-appropriate terms.

- **Trade** is the commercial exchange (buying and selling on domestic or international markets) of goods and services.
- **Aid** is a term referring to the net flow of official development assistance (ODA). This is the transfer of capital, usually in the form of loans or grants, from governments, international agencies and public institutions of the industrialized world to governments of developing countries. The costs of other forms of assistance, technology transfer or provision of materials may also be included in the totals. The goal of the aid system is for wealthy nations to help nations that are less well off.
- **Debt relief** is the partial or total forgiveness of debt, or the slowing or stopping of debt growth, owed by the least developed nations, especially those which put more money toward paying off debt than they do toward social programs that improve development within a nation (such as education, health care, etc.).
- **Developing countries** is a loose term used to identify poor nations, using criteria based almost exclusively on per capita income. The 172 countries in this group include states which are variously labeled as developing countries, underdeveloped countries, low-income countries, the Majority World, the South or the Third World. These nations generally have low levels of technology, basic living standards and little in the way of an industrial base. Their economies are mainly agricultural and are characterized by cheap, unskilled labour and a scarcity of investment capital.
- **Fair trade** is a trading partnership based on dialogue, transparency and respect. Fair trade seeks



greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers. Fair trade organizations (backed by consumers) are engaged actively in supporting producers, raising awareness, and campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.

- **Sweatshops** are work environments in which employees work long hours at low wages under poor conditions.
- **Child labour** is the phenomenon of children who work. In many countries, it is considered inappropriate or exploitative if a child below a certain age works, except for some household chores and of course, school work. An employer is often not allowed to hire a child below a certain age. This minimum age depends on the country.

Children are generally docile, fast, agile and above all, cheap and dispensable. Consequently, millions of children in developing countries toil long hours for little reward; they enjoy no benefits, insurance or security. Working children are more likely to suffer occupational injuries because of unsafe working conditions, inexperience and fatigue because most work places and machinery have been designed for use by adults.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, affirmed the rights of the world's children to be protected against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including labour.