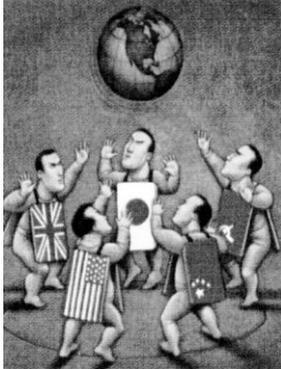


RGS-IBG Globalisation downloadable booklet for teachers



Globalisation is not really a new idea. It can be tracked back to the earliest stone age trade of obsidian and flint or to the trading of the Indus or the Sumerians. However, globalisation in its modern form is a very specific variant of productive processes that are characterised by connectivity, speed, flexibility and efficacy. The process of globalisation has far reaching implications through its connection of cultural, social, environmental, political, technological and economic spheres.

The creation of a modern globalised world has been caused by a number of factors. Communications and transport have become less expensive and more easily accessed. Subsequent to this, markets have become more enmeshed and the production process has been made more efficient by the option to create 'world products,' ie products whose components are made in different locations around the world. Also, the ability to ship information and products easily and cheaply from one country to the next and to locate the manufacturing process where labour and work processes are less expensive has changed the pattern of production and consumption across the world.

The consequences of globalisation are as many and varied as there are products and corporations operating globally.

Positive consequences of globalisation include:

- improvements in local productivity can promote prosperity
- the movement and sharing of information, knowledge and expertise
- the improvement of international standards for variables such as education and health
- increases the variety of goods available to the world market and provides a bigger range of markets for internationally sourced produce/products

Negative consequences of globalisation include:

- the loss of employment in MEDCs in manufacturing
- a trend towards the homogenisation of culture and society internationally
- local economies may be more vulnerable to the whim of international economic change
- increased centralisation of power in the hands of transnational corporations
- the location of industry in LEDCs, for many reasons, often leads to environmental degradation

Whilst almost every sector of the economy has globalised, some sectors in particular are known for having adopted early the concept of a globalised product. The car industry, for example, was an early adopter of global production, partially because of the varied nature of its product's componentry and also because of the size and value of the final product, the cost of which could be greatly reduced by shaving production costs from a large number of components.

The textile industry too has globalised partially because there is a large amount of expertise in textiles around the world. This expertise can typically be found in less economically developed countries (LEDCs) and it has been possible to produce goods in fabrics and leathers etc much more cheaply than would be possible in the domestic economy of more economically developed countries (MEDCs). Because such items are low in bulk and can be high in value this has also meant that the international trade of textiles lends itself well to international shipping.

Whilst a globalised world has many more than economic implications, the principal drivers for globalisation have been economic. Geographers have a responsibility not only to consider the economic implications (advantages and disadvantages) of globalisation, but also to look at the cultural, social, political and environmental impacts of such connections.

Suggestions for starting the topic

Globalisation is an exciting topic to teach because there is much to be revealed to students who have an inkling of global processes but no real understanding of the way the global economy operates. Moreover, the human dimension of connecting students with the lives of the people who have made and assembled their belongings brings the students face to face with aspects of the global economy.

Also, as the global economy includes the fortunes of brands with which students might have some identification, it can be revealing for them to find out the facts behind the advertising hype they have been subjected to and to gain some greater context about the products that they consume.

Can you have the students in your class look at the products that they own and make a list of the places from which they come? Perhaps for homework, they could be asked to look through items that they have at home to find out their country of origin. They could be asked to do this at random and then to work out the miles that these products have travelled to reach their final market.

There is a number of globalist and anti-globalisation videos available on YouTube. Can you ask your students to look at these and to provide a summary of the findings of each, and also to try to determine whether the

portrayal of information might or might not have been balanced. Ask students whether it was possible to verify the source of the information.

Alternatively there is a number of DVDs that are available that explore the issues surrounding globalisation. Additionally, there are often reports in the popular press such as Time, Newsweek or the Economist which might be useful.

There is a list of US based programmes here:

<http://www.richtervideos.com/Globalization/>

Information about a film on Walmart may be found here:

<http://www.walmartmovie.com/>

You might also have students look at the factory landscapes in Shenzhen and Shanghai using Google Earth.

Download the student documentation from this website and have it copied and circulated or sent electronically to students, where possible.

Suggestions for structuring a unit of work on Globalisation

Once you have decided how much time you will be devoting to this topic, go back to the slideshow and jot down any ideas which spring to mind from the suggestions given. Choose some of the suggestions and develop a sequence through these activities that support the key concepts for geography.

Try to include the use of IT in the work profile as well as an understanding of concepts and terms. There are many opportunities too to use GIS in the investigation of globalisation. There is a reference to this at the end of this document. Use a globalisation glossary to get some suggestions. The WHO provides a detailed globalisation glossary here: <http://www.who.int/trade/glossary/en/> though more suitable glossaries might be found in your own classroom resources, textbooks etc.

You might choose to follow up on any of the video resources you may have used in your introduction or you might use some of the websites that students may have found which explore globalisation. Remember that there are many sites which provide unbalanced information and whilst these sites might also include good information, it is important to show students how to check a site's credentials and to make a judgement about how even-handed provided information might be.

Look at the case studies that are provided in the student download section. Have your students read this material and address the questions that are provided with them.

Try to have students look at a number of case studies and to try to see a range of different pros and cons to globalisation. Try to get them to form their

own opinions on aspects of globalisation which they may have forged as a result of looking at the material or sources that have been provided.

If your unit of work corresponds with a student 'dress down' day, then you could conduct a survey about the brands of trainers that students might be wearing, with a view to graphically depicting where these shoes came from by brand. You could even photograph the trainers to make for an inclusive wall display. In some instances it might even be possible to locate specific factories that shoes come from. Nike for example now publishes the addresses of its shoe factories in China.

Developing case studies in globalisation

Whilst the case studies provided here may be adequate for the purposes of covering a topic on globalisation, you might want to look to developing your own case studies. If your school sponsors a child, or has some charitable connection with another part of the world, it might be a good idea to develop a global connection with the international industry that might occur in that area. The agencies with which one deals for charitable giving may be able to provide additional information, and it might be possible to support this charitable concern by developing an interest in the global dimension through this unit of work.

Once a topic like this involves real people, students very quickly develop an interest as the topic becomes much more than mere book-learning. Human stories do everything to make a topic relevant and compelling.

Globalisation and Centralisation

Although globalisation is a process that connects the components of production all over the world, it is also a process of centralisation. Although many people throughout the world might be involved in the production of one product, the transnational corporation whilst promoting this global organisation is, at the same time, centralising control, profits and power. Whilst countries exercise some control over local business, very often the sheer scale of transnational corporations mean that their buying power is too great for countries to want to alienate. Moreover, the advantages to a country which trades with the transnational often has much to gain, and in some instances governments are keen to do what ever it takes to attract such investment. In some instances the business that a TNC can bring can be very substantial. Walmart's 2006 revenue was \$351 billion, which is just a little less than the total GDP of Pakistan for example.

It is worthwhile having students look at the table below, which is also provided in the student download document, as it begins to put corporate scale into context.

Table showing a range of TNCs by annual revenue and various areas by GDP for comparison.

TNC	Revenue 2006 \$m CNN/Fortune 500	GDP for 2006 \$m (From IMF)	Area
Wal-Mart	351 139	61 258 714	World
Exxon Mobil	347 254	13 111 389	EU
BP	274 316	12 229 276	USA
General Motors	207 349	8 817 394	China
Ford Motor	160 307	2 006 978	UK
AXA	139 738	1 835 696	France
Carrefour	99 014	640 914	Australia
Tesco	79 978	386 973	Pakistan
Nestle	79 872	271 310	Greece
Sony	70 924	171 393	Ireland

In addition to the power that corporations might be able to access through the process of investment, they are also very often able to divert profits through countries either with liberal tax laws, or who might be wooing corporations through tax holidays etc. In such cases some countries may be realising relatively little direct economic gain from TNC activity.

Still, the global economy does produce a worldwide market which provides a broader range of products for consumers as well as a broader range of markets for producers. This flow of trade also creates a flow of information which has produced improved conditions throughout the world, even though the equality of such provision can be very varied.

The new globalism leads to the creation of a world culture which means on the one hand that the fruits of a range of cultures become spread around, but it also means that there is a tendency towards the homogenisation of culture and an emerging international sameness. On the one hand legal consistency provides for greater social and economic stability, whilst consistency also leads to a reduction in diversity.

In addition to the creation of a 'world culture,' and an increasing sense of universal values there is also an increasing sense of world pollution and a shared responsibility for climatic crisis and global warming.

Economists have sought to create a measure of globalisation, with one such measure being constructed by an international consultancy firm producing a globalisation index. In measures made in 2007, Belgium, Austria, Sweden, the UK, the Netherlands, France, Canada and Switzerland were regarded as most globalised with nation states such as: Myanmar, the Central African Republic, and Burndi being the least globalised. (KOF Globalisation Index).

Conclusion

The teaching of globalisation, aside from being an interesting topic, is an important topic. It ties in with issues relating to climate change and connects us with what it means to be citizens of the world. It plays a key role in social empowerment giving students a sense of context in the world in which they live as well as providing them with sufficient knowledge of the way it works to be able to contribute to it through conversation as well as action.

Sources of information on globalisation:

Video covering key points of globalisation with Di Swift of the Geographical Association <http://www.teachers.tv/video/12116>

Use of GIS in the study of globalisation:

<http://www.irows.ucr.edu/conferences/globgis/globgisblurb.htm>

There is a short discussion of the opportunities for GIS for the study of globalisation here:

www.geography.org.uk/download/GA_Conf07SPC3.doc

A US perspective can be found at Globalization101, which is supported by the Carnegie Endowment a, non partisan, private organisation for advancing cooperation between nations.

<http://www.globalization101.org/>

There is a short overview of globalisation at the tutor2u website here:

http://www.tutor2u.net/economics/content/topics/trade/globalisation_ukeconomy.htm

The BBC World Service has a fact page on globalisation, and this may be found here:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/globalisation/>

Worldmapper has a range of cleverly constructed maps that help to understand the process of globalisation.

<http://www.worldmapper.org>

There are some examples of anti-corporate activity in India on the India Resource website:

<http://www.indiaresource.org/>

To track corporate ownership the following website may be helpful although it is no longer being updated.

<http://www.whoownswho.org/>