

RGS-IBG KS3 Module 2: Globalisation v2.2

Slide1: Introduction

Welcome to the RGS-IBG KS3 tutorial on Globalisation. The aim of this module is to provide a range of teaching ideas, information and resources that can support planning for and teaching of this topic in a KS3 context. There is an emphasis on making learning enjoyable as well as linking with the Key Concepts, Key Processes, Range, Content and Curriculum Opportunities in the Geography programme of study as well as promoting progression within the subject. It is hoped that as students learn about globalisation that they will begin to understand the way that the world is deeply interconnected.

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

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/globalisation/>

Slide 2: Overview

We often hear the word globalisation in the media, but it is used in many different ways. Whilst geographers themselves disagree about an exact definition, it is still regarded a useful concept. Globalisation describes the process of change that places and people around the globe are experiencing because the world is becoming more and more connected. This process is a fundamental one in understanding the way that the world works. This increasing interdependence is far reaching and involves political, economic, social, technological, cultural and ecological dimensions. Understanding the processes, structures and implications of globalisation are essential to geography today. The teaching of globalisation requires teachers to have an understanding of global flows of information, power, products *and* by-products. Globalisation is an exciting geographical topic because it connects students with other places in the world. This tutorial also provides a range of teaching ideas and resources, some of which are downloadable from this webpage.

Slide3: Key facts on Globalisation

Globalisation as a modern concept was popularised in the 1980s. Yet, globalisation is also an historic process which began at the time of early international trade and exploration. As the speed of communication has become faster modern life is increasingly interconnected globally and some think that culture is becoming increasingly homogenised . Globalisation itself is an industrial process that is characterised by the global movement of information, products and by-products. It also includes the concept of the world product where one product might be the result of components built in different locations throughout the world. In its modern guise globalisation implies speed, flexibility and efficacy in the flows that it employs. Moreover, the scale of global industry has brought both great benefits of a 'closer world,' as well as increasing problems and risks. Many industries lend themselves to globalisation and there are many notable examples that are regularly highlighted in the popular press. Whilst being circumspect about the source of such information, these documentaries, books and websites can provide valuable insights into the nature of work throughout the world. Can you find a way to introduce globalisation to your students through some of these resources? There are some ideas to download on this webpage.

<http://www.worldcentric.org/filmseries/globalization.htm>

Slide 4: Case studies

Transnational corporations can be found in many different sectors of the economy ranging from primary through to tertiary industry. Whilst each TNC will operate differently, there are some basic principles that are often employed as a means of maximising profits. These include shifting of income to where tax is lowest, locating production in areas where labour is inexpensive and neither well organised nor protected. Wal-mart, which operates in a number of countries under different names (ASDA in the UK) is one such example of a TNC which exploits its international opportunity. Clothing and sporting goods companies also often operate internationally because of the great differences in wages between LEDCs and MEDCs. Still, it is argued that despite such disparities of income, global industry brings prosperity to many who would have been otherwise impoverished. More information about these examples can be found in the download section of this page.

http://www.globaleye.org.uk/secondary_summer/focuson/index.html

Slide 5: Place

Globalisation affects people locally. Can you find ways that TNCs might be affecting local experience? Advertising is a good way to look at the impact of transnationals locally. Can you conduct a survey of high street advertising imagery, posters, signage, shop hoardings, corporate branding etc and then relate this to corporate ownership? Can you find information about the greater global strategies of local company's parent companies by looking at their websites and websites tracking aspects of globalisation? There is an example of how to do this in the download section of this page. TNCs are also having an impact on making high streets all over the country become largely the same, with similar shops in many locations eroding local identity. Global chain coffee shops such as Starbucks and Café Nero contribute to this process. Can students find evidence of this in their local area?

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

Slide 6: Space

Transnationals may operate globally and their action can have an impact on local geography, but what are the real impacts of these flows on local communities? The globalised world is increasingly fluid with goods, people and information moving around the world much more than it has ever done in the past. Perhaps you can consider, with your class the impact of South American coffee being imported into the UK. Or, you could look at the growth of tourism in the light of improved transport connections, aircraft and infrastructure. Perhaps you could look at the ease with which migrant workers can more easily travel the world in search of either skilled or unskilled employment. You could also look at the way the global economy now locates different parts of its business in different parts of the world. This can be seen in the growth of foreign call centres. You could also look at the way that global trading stores such as Wal-Mart or Carrefour have influenced local economies. How big a role are TNCs having on our high streets? Information on this topic is available on this webpage.

Slide 7: Scale

Global companies can be deceptive in their scale. Because many have a local presence it can be difficult to get a sense of the size of their operations. Getting a sense of scale is important because it reflects the national and global importance of what is more normally a local and individual experience. Moreover, it provides geographers with an opportunity to understand the real extent and implications of a process that crosses boundaries and transcends the local. Can your students do a survey and produce a map of some items from the supermarket, perhaps from different sections of the store, showing

where products are sourced? Connecting students with the processes of production, transportation and distribution helps to provide a sense of context. Guidance for doing this can be found as a download on this webpage.

Slide 8: Interdependence

Globalisation has many broad impacts on every country it involves and it can also have impacts on many countries with which it is less directly involved. Supply and demand can change quickly and as business is increasingly flexible, operations can move globally very quickly sometimes having devastating affects on local communities. Produce from Kenya can be on supermarket shelves in the UK, 48 hours after being picked, but retail grocery firms are also able to choose from many potential the sources, which can make entire local communities subject to the change of international market and regulation. The global economy also allows companies to shift operations to economies where taxation might be minimal and where work practices might be more in the favour of the employer than the employee. Can your students show flows on maps which demonstrate the global movement of goods throughout the world? Some atlases provide good examples of such data. There is a student download to support this exercise.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/food/focus/story/0,,956536,00.html>

Slide 9: Environmental Interaction and sustainable development

Whilst communications can reduce the need for the physical movement across the globe, the movement of goods involves the clocking of 'transport miles.' The global sourcing of produce for example provides new opportunities for local communities, most often in LEDCs, to provide for the lucrative western market, but this is at the cost of the release of greenhouse gases and the clocking of food miles. Additionally due to agricultural demand local communities may switch to growing crops which may not be best suited to local conditions or may convert lands with other important local uses into financial opportunities through global initiatives. Globalisation is also a key driver of urbanisation, and with 50% of the world's population now being urban and with this figure growing there are growing concerns about the sustainability and vulnerability of today's cities and megacities.

Slide 10: Physical and Human Processes

Because of the pace and scale of globalised activity the linkages between the physical and human worlds can be much more direct. Increased carbon footprints relating to travel and transport have immediate and significant affects on the physical world. Climate change is a good example of how human processes of globalisation have created a global environmental crisis.

The key issue is that globalisation connects a chain of cause and effect more keenly than has ever been the case in the past. Can you have your students identify circumstances which might make local communities vulnerable, in any number of ways, to global variation? There is a downloadable student worksheet on this webpage to support this activity.

Slide 11: Cultural Understanding and Diversity

Global trade necessarily distances producer from consumer. This process can protect the consumer from knowing the real conditions of the production process. Can you find a way to reconnect the consumption of your class members with the producers of the products they consume? Can you find an internet source which provides salient information about the factory experience in another part of the world? Encourage your students to look at the source of this material and to consider its objectivity. How certain can students be of the truth of the accounts and what do the accounts add to their understanding of work in other parts of the world. There are many documentaries that explore such themes, many of which have websites which allow for the exploration of these issues. There is a student sheet to support this as a download from this webpage.

Slide 12: Pulling the threads together

The process of globalisation is part of the west's industrial heritage stretching back in time and including Britain's heritage of colonisation. Modern globalisation, however, is characterised by the rapid movement of goods and information across vast distances as well as the increasing flexibility of such arrangements as well as products being made across national boundaries. There is no doubt that globalisation offers the world great opportunities but it is also evident that there are significant costs to our globalised world. The evaluation of globalisation is at best a project of ambiguity and it is important that students realise that there are winners and losers in the process, and ironically, individuals might be both winners and losers in different ways. There is a student sheet which helps students to weigh up the balance which may be downloaded from this webpage.