

Lesson two: Import and Export: food and global trade

In this lesson pupils discover that the food we buy in local supermarkets comes from locations all over the world in all seven continents. They use maps and atlases to locate the source of popular food products and learn that not all foods we enjoy here in the UK can be sourced within our national borders. Pupils are introduced to the terms 'import' and 'export' and consider the geographical reasons why we import food.

Lesson plan

Key questions

- What resources do different regions have?
- Where do the food products we buy come from?
- Why do we import food?
- What are imports and exports?
- What do different countries import and export?

Subject content areas

- Locational knowledge: Pupils use maps and atlases to locate the source of a range of food products.
- Physical geography: Describe and understand key aspects of physical geography, including how natural resources and climate determine where our food comes from.
- Human geography: Describe and understand key aspects of human geography, including how trade connects different countries and their populations.
- Geographical skills and fieldwork: Use atlases, globes (and digital/computer mapping) to locate countries and calculate the distance travelled by products using map scale.

Downloads

Lesson Plan PDF | MSWORD

How did trade get global? PPT

Food Sources and Images PDF | MSWORD

Blank world map template: 'Source to Sale' PDF | MSWORD (enlarge to A3)

Example of pupil work main activity PDF

Additional resources needed

Atlases to label the relevant countries on blank world map

Glue and scissors

Coloured pencils

Optional resource: If you would like to purchase some of the items from the shopping list, this would be an effective visual resource

Optional resource: Google Earth (and the ruler tab) could be used alongside/instead of atlases if computers are available.

For extension: Rulers and calculators to calculate distance travelled

Learning Objective

To recognise that food bought in our local supermarket comes from different locations all over the world.

Starter

Revisit the definition of trade: 'the buying and selling of products we want and need'.

Explain to pupils that everything we want and need cannot be always obtained within the national borders of the UK, so we must import these goods from other countries in the world to meet demand.

Ask the pupils to consider their favourite food and ask: where were the ingredients to make that food grown? Could they have been grown in the UK? If no, what factors prevent it from being grown here?

Main Teaching

We 'import' and 'export' food in a system of global trade. Highlight definitions of these terms on the PowerPoint.

Some foods we buy and eat are not grown here in the UK because of the physical Geography of the UK. For example, tropical, exotic or out-of-season fruits, vegetables and spices must be imported from overseas. Also, some products such as wheat can be grown on a larger scale which reduces cost in countries with a greater landmass such as the USA.

As Martin Luther King Jr said, "Before you finish eating breakfast this morning, you have depended on more than half of the world". Demonstrate this idea to the pupils by telling them their morning orange juice may be from Spanish oranges, tea from India, sugar from Brazil, and cereal from corn grown in the USA.

Touch upon the fact it is a good idea to source food that is grown in the UK *when possible*, as it is better for the environment and supports British farmers.

Main Activity

Display the shopping list on the PPT. Explain to the pupils it is a typical Londoner's weekly food shop. Go through the items with the class and assess pupils' pre-existing knowledge of the source of the items.

If the teacher has purchased a few of the items, these can be displayed or laid out on desks.

Pupils use the *Food Sources and Images* (see resources) *sheet*, which includes the shopping list item images, name, and source location.

Explain to the pupils they first must use atlases to clearly label and shade the relevant countries on their *Blank World Map* (see resources – enlarge to A3) and the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Next, they cut out and stick the food images at their source location. Google Earth could be used alongside/instead of atlases if computers are available.

Make sure pupils include a map key: the colour of countries where we import the shopping list items from and any other features they may add (e.g. capital cities for more able and if time permits).

Extension: Use a ruler to measure the distance from source to sale (the UK) and the map scale to calculate the distance travelled by each food and add this to the map. If computers are available the ruler tool on Google Earth could be used instead.

Less able pupils can choose their favourite items from the shopping list and focus on recording the source location of these three or four.

Plenary

Follow up the lesson with a discussion.

Pose questions such as: which food item travelled the furthest to reach our shops? Does this surprise you? Would it be possible to source this food within the UK?

Ask the pupils if a food can be sourced locally, why it might be a good idea to do this rather than import?