

HANALEI 2 mi

8779 mi

LOS ANGELES 2613 mi

KEKA 40 mi

RUSSIA 607 mi

LONDON 10 mi

749 mi

AUSTRALIA 5039 mi

64 mi

Global Issues

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How do we understand challenges facing the world today?
- How can youth be involved in creating solutions to global issues?

Introduction to Global Issues

Have you ever stopped to think about how connected people in the world are to each other? In the 21st century, people around the world interact with each other more than ever before. If you have ever used social networking websites like Facebook, you know how easy it is to communicate with individuals from many different locations. Technologies such as the Internet and cell phones help transmit ideas rapidly. These days, you are likely to find youth in very different parts of the world listening to the same music, watching the same movies, and studying similar issues in school.¹

Today, approximately 50% of the world's population is under 27 years old.² What makes youth feel like they are part of a larger global community? Looking at specific trends can help answer this question.

What Connects Us?

Consider the following influences that have brought us closer together around the world:

Cultural Influences

Annually, there are over 190 million people living outside of their home country.³ These people impact their new communities when they arrive with their own language, culture, and food. *Culture* includes the behaviors and beliefs of a specific group of people. For example, immigrants who have moved from the Dominican Republic to New York City over the last century have brought a number of cultural influences with them like the dance styles of Merengue and Bachata.⁴ At the same time, new immigrants adapt to their host country as they learn new customs and traditions and merge their cultural practices with these. A family from Latin America might add plantains, roast pork, black beans, and rice to their Thanksgiving meal, bringing new meaning to the holiday.

The entertainment industry plays a large role in transmitting cultural ideas quickly

around the world. The United States is the largest producer of popular culture goods and entertainment.⁵ Foreign companies distribute movies, music, television shows, fast food, and clothing from the United States throughout the world. In 2007, the international community spent over \$17 billion toward American cinema while Americans spent \$9.6 billion.⁶

Entertainment from other countries also has a significant influence on global cultures. Bollywood, the film industry in Mumbai, India, generates the largest amount of feature films in the world. These films are extremely popular in places like Kuwait, Nigeria, Russia, and Scandinavia.⁷

Media Influences

Media is a form of communication. Mass media is a combination of many means of communication, especially newspapers, popular magazines, Internet, radio, and television, which reach and influence large numbers of people. These days, people around the world have wide access to a large number of different types of media. There are approximately 250 television sets per 1,000 people globally.⁸ In Mexico it is more common for people to have televisions in their houses than to have showers and refrigerators.⁹

The many people who have access to television are able to watch not only entertainment, but also news coverage of events happening both locally and globally. CNN, an American news network, provides 24-hour reporting to over 200 million households in over 212 countries and territories.¹⁰

The Associated Press (AP) is an American news agency that is able to distribute stories and images to 1,700 newspapers and 5,000 television and radio broadcasters daily. People around the world are able to access these stories via the Internet.¹¹

Technology Influences

Technology is a critical tool in connecting people around the world. The Internet alone has had a huge impact on how news, ideas, and culture

EarthCorps volunteers come together from around the world to restore green spaces.



MARK HOWARD

are spread. Think about how often you use technology throughout the day.

In 1962 the Internet did not yet exist. There were only about 10,000 computers and each one cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.¹² Over the next several decades, computers became less expensive and scientists learned how to connect computers to each other to create the Internet. Currently, over 200 million people use the Internet within the United States¹³ and close to 300 million people use the Internet in China.¹⁴ If billions of people around the world have access to the Internet, think about how easily information can spread in a matter of seconds from Thailand to Canada or Mozambique to Chile. Developments in social networking websites all impact the way we communicate with each other.

Cell phones are another technology that has had a major influence. Over one billion people have access to cell phones today, compared to only 33 million people during the 1990s.¹⁵ Cell phones are not only used as a means for social communication, but also for many other practical reasons. Using cell phones, construction workers can send pictures to contractors, residents can pay their heating bills, citizens can vote in electoral campaigns, and paramedics can send pictures of incoming injuries to hospitals. In some countries like Niger, farmers even use cell phones to determine who will give them the best price for their crops.¹⁶

Around the world, people have taken advantage of these technologies to help solve global issues. For example, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines used the Internet to create a large social movement with over 1,100 groups to educate the world about the dangers of landmines. Landmines are explosive devices used to kill people in times of war or conflict and are highly present in conflict-ridden areas. They were first put in widespread use during World War II. They can remain in a location years after a conflict has finished and severely harm individuals who step on them unknowingly.¹⁷ The director of the International



KIM CORRIGAN

A young man speaks on a cell phone in India. Cell phones have had a tremendous impact on communication around the world.

Campaign to Ban Landmines mobilized a large group of people to speak out against this weapon of war. The organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for working to decrease the number of landmines in the world.¹⁸ This type of global outreach would have been far more difficult in a time before the Internet.

Globalization Influences

Later in this textbook, you will learn about the process of economic globalization. *Economic globalization* is the increased ease with which countries can do business with each other.

In 1994, the United States, for example, opened up its borders for trade with Mexico and Canada through the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This agreement brought the countries and cultures closer together. Those in favor of NAFTA argued that the agreement would raise living standards and create millions of good jobs. Critics believe that there have been a number of unintended consequences. For instance, because these countries opened up their borders, the United States could sell food to Mexicans at much lower prices than local farmers in Mexico might.

As a result, a number of Mexicans migrated to the United States because there was no work available to them within Mexico.¹⁹

Global Issues and Sustainability

Sustainability represents the idea that we can meet our basic needs and live a good life without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own basic needs. You will be reading how issues in this book relate to this idea of sustainability.

These days, our societies, economies, and environments are more connected than ever. When thinking about sustainability,

understanding that our personal choices can have global impacts is key. Similarly, understanding that global issues can have local impacts is important. We have transformed from times when people were separated into kingdoms and feudal systems to a time when people of different backgrounds interact with each other constantly from opposite ends of the globe. Contrast modern societies to the early 1900s when 90% of humanity lived and died within a 50-mile radius. In the United States, 75% of people today move at least 100 miles away from their homes.²⁰

People these days may have connections to a global community, a local neighborhood, an ethnic group, a state, a city, a spiritual group, etc. These identities go beyond the traditional

CASE STUDY

Global Response to the 2004 Tsunami²¹

The tsunami on December 26th, 2004 made significant ripples throughout the world. This natural disaster killed over 270,000 people in both Africa and Asia. Some of the most devastated places were within Indonesia and Sri Lanka. Images of the gigantic waves and the resulting damage from those waves was broadcast globally, compelling many people to offer their support for the impacted communities. A Sri Lankan group living in South Africa created a special fund to help millions of Sri Lankans who were made homeless by the tsunami. Indonesian workers who lived in Hong Kong sent money, clothes, food, and other supplies back to Indonesia. Through these efforts, they were able to collect \$19,000 in just four days. The tsunami's impact was further felt throughout the world with an increase in global migration caused by the disaster. As a result, Canada



A fisherman in Sri Lanka works on his boat. One of the most devastated places after the 2004 Tsunami was Sri Lanka.

declared it would expedite immigration paperwork for any victims who had relatives in Canada. Immigration officers in Toronto even met with local Sri Lankan, Indonesian, Somali, and Indian communities

to work with them on how to best help tsunami victims from these countries resettle peacefully in Canada. One thousand applications from tsunami-affected areas were fast-tracked for immigration status.

geographic boundaries that defined people in the past.²² Consider the example of how the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 impacted communities around the world.

Global Issues Today

You've read about the influences that bring us closer together. These global issues impact us far more today than in the past.

So what exactly is a global issue? Let's say you're struggling with a class in school. You decide to speak to your teacher. After discussing ways to improve your grade, you both decide you will come in once a week during lunchtime to receive extra help. You defined a problem and your teacher and you have agreed on a possible solution.

Now, let's say the problem has transformed into something larger. A number of students at your school struggle with this same class and all of you need support or you won't graduate. Your teacher comes to school every few days, but you live in a rural location that is not easy to reach. Your relatives who live in different parts of the country express the same frustrations. In fact, many people have become concerned about the future of your country's youth. The problem has become a national issue. Lately, with no real educational opportunities, many families in your country have started migrating to other neighboring countries in search of opportunity. Some of these neighboring countries don't have the capacity (i.e., social services and natural resources) to meet the needs of new migrants. The issue has now become global.

A **global issue** is complex and can be defined in a number of ways:

- It persists over time.
- It is transnational and transboundary.
- It affects large numbers of people.
- It has underlying causes.
- It is connected to other global issues.

If we look at the topic of education mentioned before, we can see how a lack of education can easily become a global issue. The country



Young children stand in line for water in the country of Sudan.

of Sudan, for example, has struggled with education issues for over a decade. One of the underlying causes of Sudan's education issues was a long civil war that made it difficult for many children to go to school. Only 28% of school-aged children—mostly those who can afford to pay school fees—attend school. Due to this civil war, South Sudan officially divided from Sudan in 2011 and became an independent state. Most schools in Southern Sudan are overcrowded, with few teachers and hardly any school supplies. Teenagers who have had to flee their homes because of the war live in camps for internally displaced persons where they typically cannot attend secondary school. Since there are no other constructive activities for them in these camps, youth often become frustrated and may participate in violence.²³ With few opportunities for education in their home country, some families in South Sudan and Sudan may cross borders to other countries in search of opportunity. The issue now becomes transboundary.

For those who remain in Sudan and South Sudan, a lack of education can reduce economic opportunities and limit people to low-paying jobs. As a result, the struggle with poverty could lead people back into conflict. The good news is that just as global issues connect with each other, so do the solutions to these challenges.

Using Frameworks to Understand Global Issues

A number of frameworks can help us understand global issues on a deeper level:

Global Issues in Balance

Take, for instance, this visual you see below. Notice how Earth is situated at the bottom of this visual with a number of different balls balancing on top. If you slightly move one of the balls, the other balls will move too. Some might even fall to the ground. Think of global issues as being interconnected in a similar way. For instance, if more people are added to the planet, this means all of our needs and our consumption go up. What we consume is drawn from our natural resources and impacts the environment. These two reinforce one another: when resources are scarce, people struggle harder to get what they need and often cause damage. At the same time, as the environment degrades, it is able to produce fewer resources. Access to resources and how they are distributed is a

matter of equity and greater inequality often results in poverty among some people. In turn, poverty can be linked to social breakdown and crime. Essentially, if one part of the system is affected, all parts of the system feel the impacts.

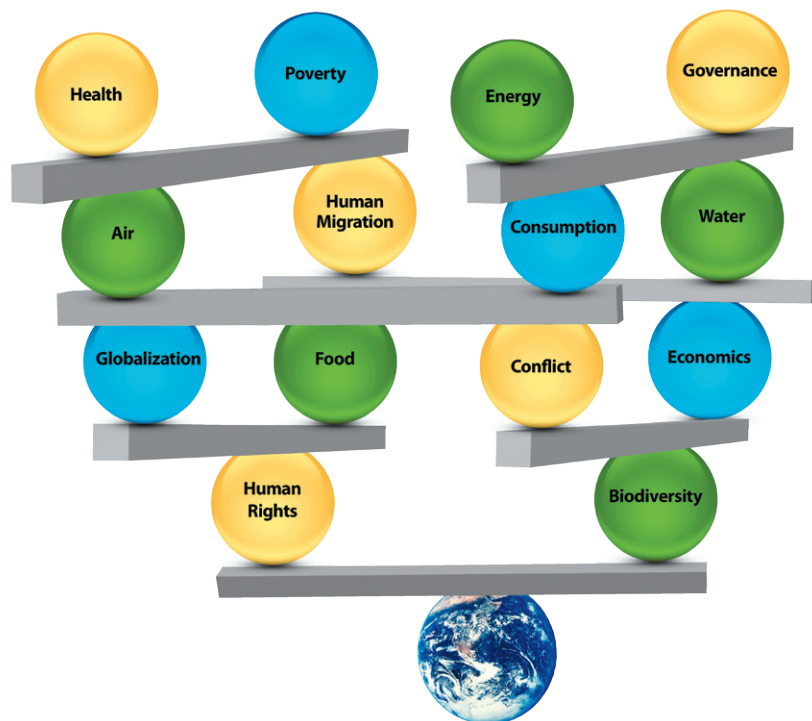
The Iceberg Model

The *iceberg model* is another way to understand global issues.²⁴ We know that an iceberg has only 10% of its total mass above the water, while 90% is under water.²⁵ But the 90% is what the ocean currents act on and what creates the iceberg's behavior at its tip. Global issues can be looked at in a similar way. We can think of the tip of the iceberg, above the water, as representing events or things we see or hear happening in the world.

If we look below the water line, we start to see patterns, or a recurrence of events. These patterns help us to understand that events are not incidents that happen in isolation.

Toward the bottom of the iceberg are underlying structures or root causes that create these patterns. By looking at root causes,

Global Issues in Balance



we can start to understand and address long-term solutions.

Finally, at the base of the iceberg are assumptions and worldviews that create or sustain the structures above. In solving global issues, the greatest impact comes from changing structures and applying deep currents to move the iceberg and, as a result, change the events at its tip.

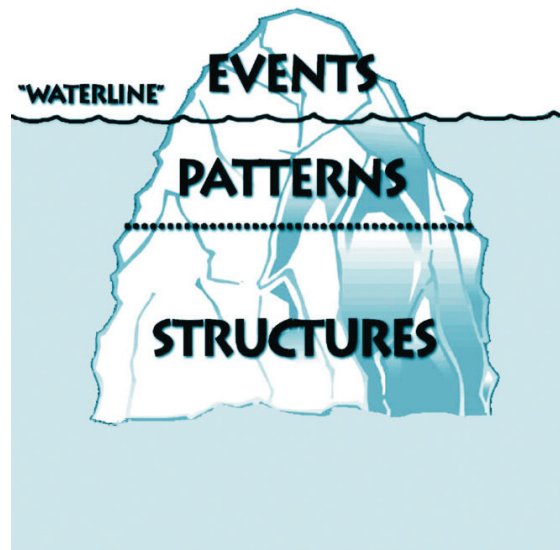
Systems Thinking

Systems thinking is a field of study that looks carefully at all important components of a system and how they connect to each other. A system is a group of components that form a complex and unified whole. Systems are everywhere. For example, the circulatory system in your body is made up of components like the heart, blood, and blood vessels that work together to deliver nutrients and oxygen to tissues in the body. Ecological systems and human social systems are living systems; human-made systems such as cars and washing machines are nonliving systems. Most systems thinkers focus their attention on living systems, especially human social systems.

Suppose a landfill in a city becomes full, leaving the citizens without a place to put their garbage. A nonsystems approach to this problem might be to build another landfill or find a landfill in another city that would take the garbage for a fee. A systems thinking approach would look not only at these two options, but also at other aspects of the problem by asking a number of questions: Where does the garbage come from? What's in the garbage? Is there a way to reduce the amount of garbage produced? Answering these questions could give the city a number of alternatives, including starting or expanding a recycling program, raising fees for garbage disposal as an incentive for citizens to create less garbage, or working with manufacturers to produce less packaging for their products.

The global issues in balance visual, iceberg model, and systems thinking framework provide ways of understanding how global issues

ICEBERG MODEL



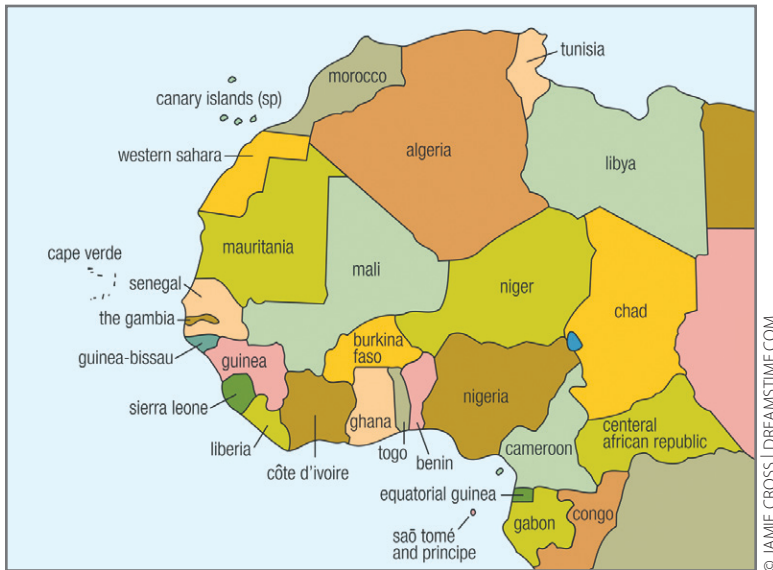
are connected. On the flip side, they can also help us visualize how solutions might be connected. Reducing poverty could help to create a healthy environment, for example. Or providing people a voice in government could help to reduce conflict.

Understanding the World

You've learned different frameworks that can help you to analyze global issues. On a more fundamental level, what are ways we as humans can understand the world around us?

Worldview

Worldview includes a set of assumptions, perspectives, and beliefs held by individuals, cultures, and societies through which we make sense of our lives and the world. Our worldview helps us understand structures, patterns, and events that we experience in life. People's worldviews are often linked to where they live and the environmental, economic, and social issues around them. Worldview is also a way that people can personally relate to global issues.



As a Peace Corps volunteer, Roz Wolmmering spent her time in the country of Guinea-Bissau.

An ability to appreciate differences in world-view can help increase understanding among different people throughout the world. Roz Wolmmering learned this fact firsthand when she became a Peace Corps volunteer in the West African country of Guinea-Bissau. The Peace Corps, an organization started in 1960, sends US citizens as volunteers to live and work in developing countries with the aim of increasing world peace.²⁶ Peace Corps volunteers work in such fields as education, health, business development, agriculture, and youth development.

Roz was assigned to be a teacher in a classroom of 47 students. On the first day of classes, Roz showed up promptly, charged with excitement. Her belief was, “Always wiser to be punctual and prepared than be tardy and unequipped.” Imagine her surprise when she found only two students in the classroom playing cards. Eventually, more and more students arrived in the next month, but she had classroom management issues and couldn’t seem to get students interested in what they were learning.

Roz finally asked her students what the problem was. They informed her:

- No one comes to school on the first day because students are typically still on farms

finishing harvests for their family or trying to register for class.

- Teachers only begin teaching the third week of school.
- Students believed Roz didn’t command respect from them because she never told them to wear their school jackets.
- Teachers typically walk in after all students are in the class so students could stand up and honor them. Roz was always in the classroom waiting for her students so they could never honor her.
- While Roz demanded that her students write all the time, Guineans are more used to verbal communication.

Roz’s willingness to hear from her students helped to clear up these differences in world-view.²⁷

Media Literacy

Think of how much information you receive daily through the Internet, television, radio, and print. The average person potentially sees up to 5,000 advertisements per day. Do you ever question where it comes from or who provides you this information? Have you ever thought about how news a person receives in Egypt could look quite different from news someone might receive in the United States?

Media literacy is the ability to access and evaluate media messages of all kinds in order to understand how these messages create meaning and what impact they have on society. Depending on where the media you read or view is created, it is likely to present a certain point of view or be associated with a certain value.²⁸ Ten huge conglomerates (companies that own many other companies) run the majority of global news and entertainment media. Well-known ones include Time Warner, Turner Broadcasting, and Twentieth Century Fox. When a few companies control messages that filter through the media, do you think there are some messages that might get left out?

In some places, the government exerts control over the media and may censor certain types

of news. For example, when the 2011 Egyptian uprisings happened and President Mubarak was asked to step down, China censored certain websites that used the word “Egypt.” The Chinese government was wary of how the social movement in Egypt might spur political reform and demands for democracy within China.²⁹

Media messages have economic, political, and social purposes. Media literacy helps to reveal the purposes behind these messages.

When you read newspapers, watch the news, and pay attention to other types of media, you can ask the following questions to help you determine possible bias:

- Who was this message written for?
- Whose perspective is this story told from?
- Whose story is not told in this message?

Asking the right questions about how media portray global issues can help you

CASE STUDY Global Visionaries

As I continue to develop and reflect on my experiences, it is almost impossible for me to speak about my life without the inclusion of GV—one of the many homes that I was raised in. Here, I learned to be a leader, humility, social responsibility, confidence and above all, to love the work I do with others.

—Marita Phelps, GV participant

Based in Seattle, Washington, the mission of Global Visionaries (GV) is to empower young people to become global leaders in the creation of a just and sustainable future. High school students who participate in GV programs have multiple opportunities to increase their global awareness.

Over the course of one school year, participants in GV’s Leadership Program receive cross-cultural training on global awareness, fundraising, and social action. They take part in a cultural immersion trip to Guatemala, where they meet their peers in GV’s Guatemala Youth Leadership Program. Together, American and Guatemalan youth undertake work in one of four areas:



COURTESY OF GLOBAL VISIONARIES

Global Visionaries participants volunteer in Guatemala.

- Construction of classrooms for schools
- Reforestation of rural areas by planting trees
- Production of coffee on small, independent farms
- Support of hospital nursing staff with care for premature babies, children, adults, and the elderly

Along with service learning, students experience the local culture by trying different foods, living with Guatemalan families, taking Spanish lessons, and going on trips to the local market.

Participants learn that every action they take has a ripple effect on society and the world as a whole. They become active leaders and global citizens who promote social and environmental justice through education and service at home and abroad.



COURTESY OF BACK ON MY FEET

Anne Mahlum, founder of Back on My Feet, walks with members.

understand the issue through multiple people's point of view instead of hearing only one side of the story.

Global Awareness

To develop **global awareness** is to gain the ability to understand people from other nations and cultures. This awareness also means learning from and working collaboratively with individuals from diverse cultures, religions, and lifestyles.³⁰ By studying other societies and learning about the connections between various peoples, cultures, and countries, you can understand both your own background and those of others around the world. It has become common for us to interact with people from all over the world. Check out the label on an item of clothing you're wearing. Was it made in this country? If not, what do you know about the country where it's made? How might things going on in that country affect your life?

With this awareness, you can understand why the world functions the way it does, work effectively with different kinds of people, and think critically in order to solve global issues.

Pathways to Progress: Global Issues

Throughout this book you will be reading about a number of interconnected global issues. You'll also be reading about some of the efforts made by individuals, communities, governments and other organizations to find lasting solutions to these issues.

Thinking of solutions to global issues is part of living sustainably; that is, making choices that ensure a healthy natural environment, a flourishing economy, and a thriving society. You might be thinking, how do I have the power to impact the environment, economy, and society? In order to live sustainably, you don't need to solve all the problems related to poverty, climate change, crime, war, and population growth. Taken together, these many problems can be overwhelming and tackling all of them individually is impossible. However, joining others in creating sustainable solutions to one issue can be a powerful way to positively impact your own future and the future of generations to come. Thinking at a local level could be the easiest place to start. Consider the **personal solution** Anne Mahlum created to address poverty in her neighborhood.

Fighting Poverty

Anne Mahlum would get up early in the morning to run through the neighborhoods of Philadelphia. She loved running and had even run a few marathons. On her route in the city, she always passed by a homeless men's shelter and the men would cheer her on. Anne came to realize that while she was always running past these men, they never moved. These were people who lived in her community, but were not able to fulfill their personal goals. Anne wanted to help the men at the shelter accomplish their goals just like she accomplished her goals each time she completed a marathon. She talked to the director of the shelter and started a running club called Back on My Feet. Members of the group run three mornings a week to improve their health. Additionally, the organization helps those who are homeless to improve their lives by providing them with opportunities to go to school and gain computer and job skills.³¹

YOUTH PROFILE

Urban Youth Collaborative

Earlier in this chapter, you read about the iceberg model and how this model helps to understand root causes of global issues. **Structural solutions** involve many people and address root causes of a problem. They are “structural” because they work to change a system—such as health care or education—in order to alleviate a problem. Structural solutions often involve organizations or governments and they can have a lasting impact on people and places around the world. Consider the issue of school bullying: a personal solution to bullying may be to tell one of your peers to stop bullying another student; a structural solution would be to implement policies that prevent bullying on school grounds.

The Urban Youth Collaborative based in New York City focuses on social and economic justice for youth. The organization formed in



The Urban Youth Collaborative marches over the Brooklyn Bridge.

COURTESY OF URBAN YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

Throughout this book, you will learn about a different career in each chapter. Look for this section at the end of the chapter, where you will read about real people doing jobs related to global issues solutions.

In the space of a few columns of words, journalists map out what's happening where and why it matters. They ask compelling questions, get the facts, and then compose an engaging written piece that grabs the reader's attention and brings even far-off people and places into clear focus. Journalists are good writers and often develop their skills by pursuing a degree, although this is certainly not required. Strong writing, even for your school paper, is the real determining factor in landing this dream job for any deadline-driven, analytical scribe. Some journalists work on the staff of newspapers, magazines, and blogs. Others make a good living by writing about whatever interests them, querying publications and working as freelance writers.



Carley Petesch (right) is a journalist in South Africa for the Associated Press.

Journalism offers you the option of studying something you care about and sharing it with the world.

Carley Petesch is the editor of the Africa Desk for the Associated Press. She collects stories from over 60 correspondents and writes stories from Johannesburg, South Africa about news all over the sub-Saharan region. She says, "I work with colleagues who are at the scenes of plane crashes, coups, or clashes

and they tell me what's going on. Sometimes they only send me a text message and I have to write a story to explain what is happening to readers all over the world." For her, going to work is an adventure where she meets all sorts of people and asks all sorts of questions. The reward is giving people access to these stories and explaining why these stories matter. "[Readers] may never travel to remote Congo but they should know that the minerals in their cell phone were in some cases harvested by people under very questionable circumstances." Carley helps keep people in Africa informed about what's going on in other continents and brings information about what's going on in Africa to the rest of the world. As democracy spreads through the Middle East, different parts of the world will read about it, hear about it, and perhaps be inspired. As people read about atrocities in other countries, perhaps they will be encouraged to learn from past mistakes and to reach out to help those in need.

2004 because students wanted a platform to voice their concerns related to overcrowding and safety in schools. One recent Urban Youth Collaborative campaign helped save student MetroCards. For many years, students who attended New York City public schools were allowed to travel to and from school on the bus or subway free of charge. However, in 2009, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) announced the program would be cut in 2011 because of a \$800 million budget deficit. Students taking public transportation would have to pay \$1,000 each year to get to school.

The Urban Youth Collaborative spoke out against the cut and campaigned to preserve

student access to free MetroCards. They also held a number of press conferences outside MTA offices and met with city officials. To increase the visibility of their campaign, they organized a student-led walk-out of 23 high schools. One thousand students left their schools during the school day, rallied, and marched over the Brooklyn Bridge in support of the cause. The group also met with state legislators over several months, making trips to Albany, New York to discuss the issue. Based on the Urban Youth Collaborative's strategic thinking, state officials made a tentative deal to keep student MetroCards.³²

Increasing Access to Technology

Leapfrogging is the idea that developing countries do not have to progress in the same way developed nations have done in the past in order to adopt modern technology like the Internet and cell phones. Leapfrogging does not mean that countries invent new technologies, but they are developing ways to “leapfrog” infrastructure needed to support these types of technologies. Certain developing countries have discovered how easy it is to put in cellular phone towers in rural areas compared to landlines. Therefore, cell phone use has exploded throughout these areas.³³

While limited electricity and illiteracy pose problems for establishing and utilizing conventional computer networks, the technology that outfits mobile phones with Internet access is

readily available and is not dependent on computer hardware or landlines. Internet-enabled cell phones have many potential uses beyond simple communication. For example, they can promote education and citizenship, including remote voting.

A cell phone with Internet access will not substitute for the basic and readily available technology that can result in increased food production, fresh water for agricultural and domestic use, or improved health care services. However, it can serve personal and business needs efficiently, even substituting for some of the advantages that more expensive and unlikely Internet access might afford. For example, the business earnings from the average Nigerian cell phone are twice that of the average American’s because of the amount and type of business conducted over the phone.³⁴

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Global Issues

What issues do you care about? Are there certain things in the world you want to change, or things you want to make sure stay the same? How would you like to impact the world around you?

You can participate in actions now that can significantly affect the future—both your own future and the future of the planet.

Of course, the world is a big place. Not sure where to start? The best place to start is by educating yourself. You can read this textbook to find out more about global issues and solutions happening right now and research events that are impacting your local and global communities. There are millions of people around the world working to create personal and structural solutions to global issues and they would love for you to join them!

What do you care about? How would you like to impact the world around you?



COURTESY OF URBAN YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

Chapter

1 Global Issues

CHAPTER BIG IDEAS

- Global issues affect large numbers of people, span geographic and political boundaries, and persist over time.
- Understanding interconnections between global issues can help when considering solutions to these issues.





COURTESY OF GLOBAL VISIONARIES

Guiding Questions

- How do we understand challenges facing the world today?
- How can youth be involved in creating solutions to global issues?

Key Concepts

- global issue
- systems thinking
- worldview
- media literacy
- global awareness
- personal solution
- structural solution

Supporting Vocabulary

- culture
- media
- technology
- economic globalization
- iceberg model
- leapfrogging

Summative Assessment

Chapter Test

Connections

World History connections:

Influence of technological advances; human migration; global issues relating to human interactions

Geography connections:

Impacts of global issues throughout the world

Economic connections:

Economic globalization; decreasing price of technology over time; North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); media advertising

Civics connections:

Personal and structural solutions to global issues



COURTESY OF URBAN YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

Activities in Teacher's Guide: Suggested Sequence

Day 1

Reading: *Introduction to Global Issues*

Activity 1: *From Issue to Opportunity*—Students develop criteria for determining what makes an issue global in scope, brainstorm and list global issues, group and prioritize the issues into categories to highlight interconnections, and explore solutions.

Day 2

Reading: *Global Issues and Sustainability*

Activity 2: *Making Global Connections*—Students demonstrate the interconnectedness of global issues and solutions through a kinesthetic exercise using global issues cards and a ball of yarn.

Day 3

Reading: *Global Issues Today*

Activity 3: *What's in the News?*—In this media literacy activity, students use an “iceberg model” to analyze the global patterns and underlying structural causes that drive events in the news.

Day 4

Reading: *Pathways to Progress: Global Issues*

Activity 4: *Navigating the Global Issues Net*—Students determine ways to search the Internet effectively and find credible sources.

Discussion Questions from the Chapter Reading

Introduction to Global Issues

1. How does entertainment influence the way we think about the world around us?
2. What are different perspectives on globalization?
3. Use the iceberg model to analyze why there is a lack of educational opportunities in Sudan. What are possible root causes or underlying structures that result in obstacles to education?
4. What is the connection between sustainability and global issues?

Global Issues Today

5. How can understanding someone else's worldview increase your global awareness?
6. Explain why media literacy is important when learning about local and global issues.

Pathways to Progress: Global Issues

7. Explain how Anne Mahlum was able to address poverty at a personal level.
8. Explain how the Urban Youth Collaborative was able to address education at a structural level.

What You Can Do

9. What is a global issue you are concerned about? What's a personal solution you can take to address this global issue? What's a structural solution you can take to address this global issue?

Chapter Assessment: Global Issues, page 1

Recall

Match the following words on the left with their definitions on the right.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Worldview | events that happen over a given time that impact many people and places across boundaries |
| 2. Global issues | a comprehensive approach to problem-solving that considers how things are connected |
| 3. Media literacy | a set of assumptions, perspectives, and beliefs held by individuals and cultures through which we make sense of the world |
| 4. Systems thinking | an ability to access and evaluate media messages of all kinds in order to understand how these messages create meaning and what impact they have on society |

Reasoning/Explanation

Complete the following multiple choice questions by choosing one correct answer.

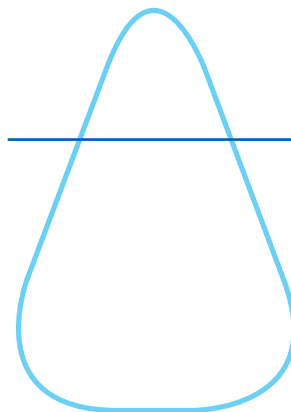
- Which example below **best** explains how water scarcity within a given country could transform from a national issue to a global issue?
 - Children would have to walk miles to gather water instead of attending school.
 - Conflicts between local villages will develop over who should have access to a well.
 - Many people would become sick because they are using unclean water for cooking and drinking.
 - A civil war would increase the number of people migrating as refugees move to neighboring countries.
- Which of the following **best** demonstrates a structural solution to poverty?
 - helping feed the homeless at a local shelter
 - donating money to an organization that works on poverty issues in India
 - creating a policy that provides additional social services to the poor
 - educating a friend about the global impacts of poverty
- Which of the following **best** demonstrates a question you could ask to determine possible bias when reading a newspaper article?
 - When was this article written?
 - Whose story is not told in this article?
 - What's the main idea of this article?
 - What language is this article written in?

Chapter Assessment: Global Issues, page 2

8. Which of the following is an example of a personal solution to climate change?
- riding a bike instead of driving to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
 - creating a climate change program across the country to educate high school students
 - developing an international policy to address climate change
 - using a cap and trade system to regulate pollution released by businesses
9. Which statement **best** demonstrates how two cultures might clash on worldviews?
- One culture believes men should only receive an education while the other culture believes both genders should receive an education.
 - One culture believes elementary school should include grades K–6 while the other culture believes elementary school should include grades K–5.
 - One culture believes homework should be done in school and the other culture believes homework should be done out of school.
 - One culture believes children should go to school at 7 a.m. and the other culture believes children should go to school at 9 a.m.
10. A neighborhood landfill has become full. Which question below **best** demonstrates a systems thinking approach for determining what to do next?
- Where can we put the new landfill?
 - What city can take our additional garbage?
 - Is there a way to reduce the amount of garbage produced?
 - How many more landfills will we need in the next 10 years?
11. Review the iceberg model and answer the following question below:

Based on the iceberg model, which example below would **best** explain a root cause for why these children are not in school?

- The children have teachers who are not very committed to teaching.
- A natural disaster has just devastated the area where these children live.
- A decade long war has been going on within the country.
- Teachers have joined a union and have gone on strike in the past week.



Tip of Iceberg (single event):

A number of children in Sudan are not in school.

Below Water Line (pattern):

These children have not been attending school for a number of years.

At Base (root causes):

Chapter Assessment: Global Issues, page 3

12. Which example below illustrates the idea of leapfrogging?
- a. A country jumps over laws in order to pay people less than a minimum wage.
 - b. A country bypasses specific infrastructure, but can still provide modern technology for citizens.
 - c. A country avoids international news coverage of domestic events in order to maintain privacy.
 - d. A country sidesteps legal restrictions on importing specific kinds of produce.
13. Which explanation below **best** illustrates why the Campaign to Ban Landmines was so successful?
- a. The campaign was able to create public policies related to banning landmines in many countries.
 - b. The campaign used the Internet to mobilize over 1,000 groups to educate people around the world about landmines.
 - c. The campaign utilized the help of famous musicians, actors, and actresses to persuade governments to ban landmines.
 - d. The campaign raised over \$4 billion dollars from private foundations and became very credible to the international community.
14. Which statement **best** describes why people supported the North American Free Trade Agreement?
- a. NAFTA diminished cross-cultural differences between Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
 - b. NAFTA closed borders for trade between Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
 - c. NAFTA increased the number of jobs for people in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
 - d. NAFTA gave unlimited power to corporations and businesses within Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

Chapter Assessment: Global Issues, page 4

Application/Complex Reasoning

Answer the following short answer questions below.

15. Use the global issues visual to the right to answer the question below:

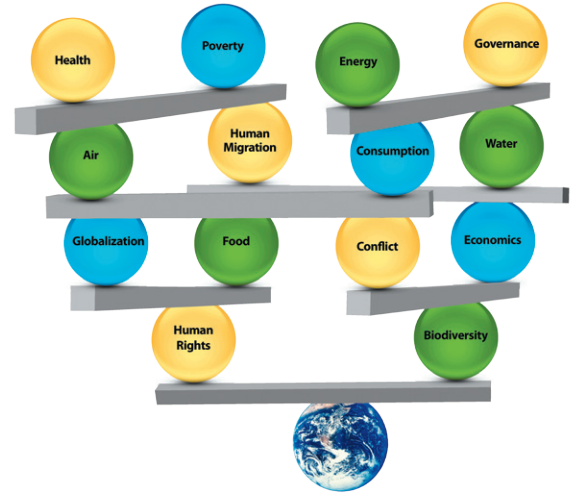
Part A. Choose 2 global issues and explain how they are related to each other.

Part B. Identify a solution that would help to solve both of these issues.

16. **Part A.** Provide 1 way culture influences our global connections.

Part B. Provide 1 way media influences our global connections.

Part C. Provide 1 way technology influences our global connections.



Teacher Master

Chapter Assessment: Global Issues

Recall (4 points total)

1. **Worldview**—a set of assumptions, perspectives, and beliefs held by individuals and cultures through which we make sense of the world
2. **Global issues**—events that happen over a given time that impact many people and places across boundaries
3. **Media literacy**—an ability to access and evaluate media messages of all kinds in order to understand how these messages create meaning and what impact they have on society
4. **Systems thinking**—a comprehensive approach to problem-solving that considers how things are connected

Reasoning/Explanation (10 points total)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 5. d | 10. c |
| 6. c | 11. c |
| 7. b | 12. b |
| 8. a | 13. b |
| 9. a | 14. c |

Application/Complex Reasoning

15. Part A. Answers will vary. (1 point)

- Conflict and human migration are related because if there is conflict in a specific country, people may need to migrate to other countries.
- Consumption and biodiversity are related because as more natural resources are consumed, biodiversity may decline.

Part B. Answers will vary. (2 points)

- A solution to conflict and human migration might be ensuring people's needs are being met within their home country. This could mean good governance that ensures access to health, education, other indicators of a good quality of life.
- A solution to consumption and biodiversity might be to educate people and businesses about how to use resources sustainably and which resources are endangered.

16. Part A. Answers will vary. (1 point)

- Culture influences our global connections because as different populations migrate to different parts of the world, they inevitably bring parts of their culture to these new places.

Part B. Answers will vary. (1 point)

- Media influences our global connections because media shares what's happening around the world through a specific lens.

Part C. Answers will vary. (1 point)

- Technology influences our global connections because inventions such as the Internet and cell phone provide us the opportunity to communicate in faster and more efficient ways than ever before.

Activity 1: From Issue to Opportunity

Overview

Students develop criteria for determining what makes an issue global in scope, brainstorm and list global issues, group and prioritize the issues into categories to highlight interconnections, and explore solutions.

Objectives

Students will:

- develop and discuss criteria for defining a global issue
- identify, group, and prioritize global issues
- explore and explain the interconnections between global issues as well as their solutions

Inquiry/Critical Thinking Questions

- What defines a global issue?
- How are global issues connected to each other and to our own lives?
- What is the benefit of understanding the connections between global issues?

Time Required

One 30-minute class

Key Concepts

- global issues
- interconnectedness
- leverage
- problems as opportunities

National Standards Addressed

National Council for the Social Studies

3. People, Places, and Environments
5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
9. Global Connections

National Science Education Standards

F: Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

National EfS Standards

3.1 Personal Action: Personal Change Skills and Strategies

3.2 Collective Action: Organizational and Societal Change Skills and Strategies

Materials/Preparation

Overhead: *Defining a Global Issue*

Butcher paper, 5 to 10 sheets

Tape or other means to hang the butcher paper on a wall

Marking pens, 1 per student

Sticker dots or stars, 2 per student

Activity

Introduction

1. Ask students what they think the phrase, “Think Global, Act Local” means.
2. Have them brainstorm, list, and discuss the defining criteria of a global issue. These may include the following: global issues have significant impacts, they affect large numbers of people or places, they are transboundary, they are persistent (occurring repeatedly over time), and they are interconnected. Use the overhead *Defining a Global Issue* to help lead this part of the discussion.

Steps

1. Have the class brainstorm and list on the board or overhead as many global issues as they can think of, assessing each issue against the agreed upon criteria for defining a global issue.

Activity 1: From Issue to Opportunity *continued*

2. Look at the entire list and have the class develop categories into which similar issues can be grouped. For example, rain forest destruction, loss of natural habitat, global warming, and species extinction could all be categorized under the Environment. Other possible categories could include: Health, Human Rights, Energy, Food and Water Security, Peace and Conflict, Economics, Population, Governance, and Culture/Worldview. After deciding on 5 or more categories, write each category on the top of separate pieces of butcher paper and post them around the room.
3. Have 2 to 3 students go to each of the posted sheets and write the global issues from the brainstorm list under a relevant heading. There will likely be issues that fall under more than 1 category.
4. Give each student 2 sticker dots. Have students walk around the room, read all the posted sheets, and then place a sticker next to the global issues they believe are the 2 most important ones.
5. Conclude with the following questions.

Discussion Questions

1. Which issue had the most votes (stickers)? Is there a clear majority?
2. Which specific issue fell under the most categories?
3. Why is it that some issues seem to have many connections? How might this information be useful and what might this tell us about the issue(s)?
4. Explain the idea of leverage. The global issues that seem to be most connected to other issues are probably ones that have the highest leverage. Working on 1 or 2 issues that have several connections, therefore, can help alleviate many other problems. Brainstorm possible solutions to the high-leverage global issues.
5. Discuss the process of brainstorming, grouping, and prioritizing used in this activity. What potential does this process have for solving other problems?
6. When considering solutions to the issues you are most concerned about, do you see opportunities for you to get involved?

Social Studies Extension

Students can survey peers within their grade or school to determine what issues are most important to them. Based on this information, students can create a number of meaningful service learning projects. Students can create and distribute a paper survey or an online poll. If students decide to create an online poll, they can present their information using presentation software. After, they can visit www.facingthefuture.org to gather ideas on different types of projects their classmates could participate in within their school, local, or global community.

Additional Resources

- **Website:** *This Week in Rap*
<http://theweekinrap.com/>
This Week in Rap informs students of weekly global issues through the medium of rap.
- **Website:** *Global Citizens Corps*
<http://www.globalcitizencorps.org>
Global Citizens Corps is an international movement of youth who connect globally and act locally. The Corps educates people about the root causes of global issues and teaches how to embrace global citizenship.

Defining a Global Issue

What makes an issue “global”?

Global Issues Are:

- Significant
- Transnational or transboundary
 - Persistent or long-lasting
 - Interconnected

Activity 2: Making Global Connections

Overview

Students demonstrate the interconnectedness of global issues and solutions through a kinesthetic exercise using global issue cards and a ball of yarn.

Objectives

Students will:

- kinesthetically experience and visualize the interconnectedness of global issues
- understand how a change in one issue can positively and negatively affect a change in another issue

Inquiry/Critical Thinking Questions

- How are global issues interconnected?
- How does a change in one global issue affect other global issues?
- How are solutions to global problems interconnected?

Time Required

One 60-minute class

Key Concepts

- global issues
- interconnections

National Standards Addressed

National Council for the Social Studies

3. People, Places, and Environments
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections

National Science Education Standards

- F. Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

National EfS Standards

- 3.1 Personal Action: Personal Change Skills and Strategies
- 3.2 Collective Action: Organizational and Societal Change Skills and Strategies

Materials/Preparation

Handout: *Global Issues Cards*, 1 card per student (or 1 per pair of students if you do the activity in pairs).

Ball of yarn

Activity 2: Making Global Connections *continued*

Activity

Introduction

1. Write the following quote on the board and have students respond with a journal entry.
 - “Ours is a world of 24-hour-news cycles, global markets, and high-speed Internet. We need to look no further than our morning paper to see that our future, and the future of our children, is inextricably linked to the complex challenges of the global community. And for our children to be prepared to take their place in that world and rise to those challenges, they must first understand it.”
— Roderick Paige, Former U.S. Secretary of Education
2. After they write for a few minutes, lead a class discussion about the quote, having students share their writing.
3. Tell students they are going to do an exercise that will help them see and experience how global issues are interconnected.

Steps

1. Have students stand in a circle. Pass out the *Global Issues Cards* to each student and keep 1 card for yourself. In classes with more than 16 students, you can have students pair up, choose 1 card between them, and do the activity together. Have the pairs stand so that 1 partner is in front of the other.
2. Read aloud the global issue on your card and then toss the ball of yarn to a student across the circle.
3. Have the students (together with their partners) read the global issue on their card and state how this issue is connected to your issue (e.g. *healthcare is connected to poverty because most people living in poverty do not have access to basic healthcare; conflict is connected to discrimination because some wars are started when one group of people does not like another group based strictly on their ethnic background or religious beliefs; education is connected to population growth because people with higher levels of education tend to have fewer children*). If the student(s) cannot figure out how the 2 issues are connected, other students in the circle can help. If no one in the circle can think of a connection, the student(s) can pass and continue the activity.
4. Once the students have stated how their issues are connected to the previous one, they hold onto a piece of the yarn and tosses the ball of yarn to someone else across the circle.
5. Continue the exercise until everyone has caught the ball of yarn, called out the interconnections, and is now holding a piece of the yarn. Have the last student throw the ball of yarn back to you. You should now have a representative “web” of yarn with every student holding a *Global Issues Card* and a piece of the yarn.
6. Have everyone pull the string so the web is taut.
7. Tug on your piece of the yarn and ask if anyone felt the tug. Have some others tug on the yarn and see who else feels it. Try tugging harder and see who feels it then. Ask what that tug might represent or signify about the connections between global issues.
8. Conclude the lesson with a discussion using the questions below. You may want to lead the discussion while the students are still standing and holding the string so the symbolism of the web is still present.

Activity 2: Making Global Connections *continued*

Discussion Questions

1. Why might it be helpful to understand how and why global issues are interconnected?
2. Can you think of additional issues that might be interconnected like the ones we raised in this activity?
3. How can understanding the interconnectedness of global issues help us find solutions to the problems surrounding these issues?
4. What are some examples of places we could intervene in a system and maximize positive connections between various issues?
5. Identify not only where or when one could intervene in a system but how an individual's actions can “snowball”— i.e., trigger other reactions in the system that build upon and sustain the positive effects of the original action. What kind of small action might “snowball” into a large result? How can small changes replicate and multiply to produce widespread and lasting change?
6. Consider a solution to one of the issues in the web. Trace the impacts of the solution through the interconnected web.

Writing Extension

Arrange students in groups of 5 or 6. Using a *Global Issues Card*, 1 student writes a few sentences about their issue on the top of a piece of notebook paper and then passes the sentences to the next student. That student then writes a few sentences that explains how the issue on their card is connected to the previous story. They then fold the paper so that only the last few sentences are visible, and pass it on to someone else. Keep passing, writing, and folding the paper until everyone has written part of the connections story. Once everyone has written, have each group open the whole story and read it aloud to the class.

Additional Resources

- **Website:** *Voices of Youth*
www.unicef.org/voy
Voices of Youth is a UNICEF website that educates young people about global issues and what they can do to take action.
- **Video:** *The Global Wombat*
<http://www.globalcommunity.org/flash/wombat.shtml#>
The Global Wombat video makes connections between people and global issues around the world. It was created by the Foundation for Global Community (<http://www.globalcitizencorps.org/>), an educational public benefit foundation.

Global Issues Cards, page 1

Poverty	Consumption
Population Growth	Peace and Conflict
Human Migration	Environment
Technology	Healthcare
Education	Food
Water	Economics

Global Issues Cards, page 2

Discrimination

Sustainability

Human Rights

Climate Change

Governance

Culture

Non-renewable Resources

Biodiversity

Media

Energy Use

Quality of Life

Gender

Activity 3: What's in the News?

Overview

In this media literacy activity, students use an iceberg model to analyze the global patterns and underlying structural causes that drive events in the news.

Objectives

Students will:

- analyze several news articles using a model that helps identify the particular global patterns and economic, political, and social forces (i.e. structural causes) behind the story
- diagram the events, patterns, and underlying structures in a news article
- identify connections among news articles
- discuss structural solutions to address these events
- write an article about the emerging patterns and underlying causes of a particular current event

Inquiry/Critical Thinking Questions

- What are the economic, political, and social forces that drive the dramatic events we see reported in the news?
- How are news events connected to each other in terms of their underlying causes?
- What are some positive ways we can address the structural causes of many negative world events?

Time Required

One 60- to 120-minute class

Key Concepts

- newsworthy events
- global patterns
- economic, political, and social structures
- media literacy
- root causes
- structural solutions

National Standards Addressed

National Council for the Social Studies

- 3. People, Places, and Environments
- 9. Global Connections

National Science Education Standards

- F. Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

National EFS Standards

- 3.1 Personal Action: Personal Change Skills and Strategies
- 3.2 Collective Action: Organizational and Societal Change Skills and Strategies

Materials/Preparation

1 sample news article to model the activity

Overhead, Iceberg Model

A variety of news articles, 2 or 3 per group. Gather articles from the newspaper, magazines, and/or the Internet about significant events in the world (you can gather the articles yourself and/or have students bring in articles).

Butcher paper, 1 sheet per group

Colored marking pens, 3 to 4 pens per group

Activity

Introduction

1. Ask the students to define the word **media** (*means of communication, such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazine that reach or influence people widely*).
2. Ask them what the word **literacy** means (*the quality or state of being literate, especially the ability to read and write*).
3. Finally, ask them to define the term **media literacy** (*the ability to read, analyze, evaluate, and produce communication in a variety of media forms such as television, print, radio, computers, etc.*).
4. Tell them that they are going to explore an aspect of media literacy by analyzing some news articles using a tool called the iceberg model.

Activity 3: What's in the News? *continued*

Steps

1. Share with the class your sample news article about an important current event, such as a significant conflict, an environmental disaster, an economic situation, or a criminal activity.
2. Ask students to paraphrase the event depicted in the sample article in pairs.
3. Use the picture of the iceberg model and the information below to lead a class discussion about the relationship between current events and the global patterns and underlying economic, political, and social forces that propel them to prominence in the news.

Explain that what we read about most often in the news are events—the newsworthy, exciting, and dramatic things that happen in our world. Events in the news are like the tip of an iceberg. The visible part of an iceberg is only about 10% of its total mass and the remaining 90% is underwater and never seen. However, it is this hidden 90% that the ocean currents impact and that determine the behavior of the iceberg's tip. Likewise, news events “at the tip of the iceberg” may be things such as war in the Middle East, crime in our community, or a massive flood in China. On the news, these events are witnessed as dramatic isolated incidents—the forces that create and shape them (what happens “underwater”) are not often revealed.

When we notice the occurrence of similar events (e.g., wars or terrorist attacks in other parts of the world, or other extreme natural disasters such as earthquakes or a tsunami), we are seeing the emergence of a pattern. It may appear that more of these events are happening, or it may be that the media is reporting these events more often. For example, we might read a news article in the paper today about a local robbery (an event). During the course of a year we may notice that there are several articles about robberies and other crimes committed in the same area of town (a pattern). Does this indicate that crime is up or just that we are hearing about it more frequently? Patterns underlie and act upon events, so they are shown just below the tip in the iceberg model.

Finally, deep beneath the surface are the underlying structures or root causes that drive the events and patterns—just as the underlying ice mass drives the tip of the iceberg. These underlying structures or causes can be economic, political, or social. For example, the underlying cause of the robberies and other crimes may have to do with the economics of the area. Perhaps schools in that area are unable to offer quality education, or unemployment may be high. Underlying structural causes may be the growing gap between the rich and poor, a lack of education or job opportunities, or other forces that preclude sustainable livelihoods. Are underlying structural causes such as these typically revealed in news stories? If not, what effect does this have on how we understand an event and how we perceive the people who are involved in the event?

4. Go back to the sample news article, and together with the students use the iceberg model to analyze it. As an example, if you use an article about a war in Africa, you might look for a discussion in the article about Africa's colonial past, arbitrary boundaries, population growth, the AIDS epidemic, environmental destruction, and poverty. Use the following questions to guide this analysis:
 - Has this type of event been in the news before?
 - Is it a recurring event?
 - If so, can you identify a global pattern that is driving these events?
 - What are some possible root causes of these patterns? For example, is the event related to poverty, lack of education and/or health care, or development practices that are not environmentally sound?
 - Does the article discuss some or all of these root causes?”
5. Before moving on, be sure students understand how to use the iceberg model to analyze a news article in terms of the events, emerging patterns, and underlying causes.

Activity 3: What's in the News? *continued*

6. Arrange the class into groups of 3 to 4 students and give each group 2 to 3 different news articles, 1 sheet of butcher paper, and 1 set of marking pens.
7. In their groups, have the students read the articles, choose 1, and use the iceberg model to analyze the event and look for patterns and root causes. Have students discuss whether they have noticed other similar events in the news. Then have them brainstorm, discuss, and list on a separate piece of paper all of the root causes they can think of that might contribute to the event.
8. Have each group create an iceberg diagram of their news article by gluing or taping the article onto the top of the paper, listing and/or drawing the patterns they have noticed, and finally listing and/or drawing the underlying root causes. Their final diagram should have a shape similar to an iceberg with the news article at the top (the event), the pattern below, and the underlying causes at the bottom.
9. Explain to students they will also be using media literacy to analyze the information they were presented in their news article. Have them analyze the article through the following lens:
 - For whom was this article written?
 - From whose perspective is this story told?
 - Whose story is not told in this message?
10. Have each group present their iceberg models to the class. Discuss how many of the events presented connect to each other through similar underlying causes. For example, wars, social unrest, and environmental damage are often closely linked by factors such as poverty, lack of education, and limited resources. They can also share what they learned from their media literacy analysis.
11. Have each group discuss structural solutions that could be implemented to address the root causes of events and patterns identified in their articles.
12. Conclude with the following questions.

Discussion Questions

1. How did using the iceberg model to analyze the news articles help in your understanding of events, patterns, root causes, and their connections?
2. How does the iceberg model fall short as an analysis tool? In other words, are there news stories and/or events that would not fit this model?
3. What was the most surprising thing you found in your analysis?
4. How could you use the iceberg model to improve your reading skills (reading for content versus understanding)?
5. What do you suggest could be a solution that would directly target the event? What do you suggest could be a solution that would directly target the underlying structure? Which solution is easier? Which is a longer-term strategy?

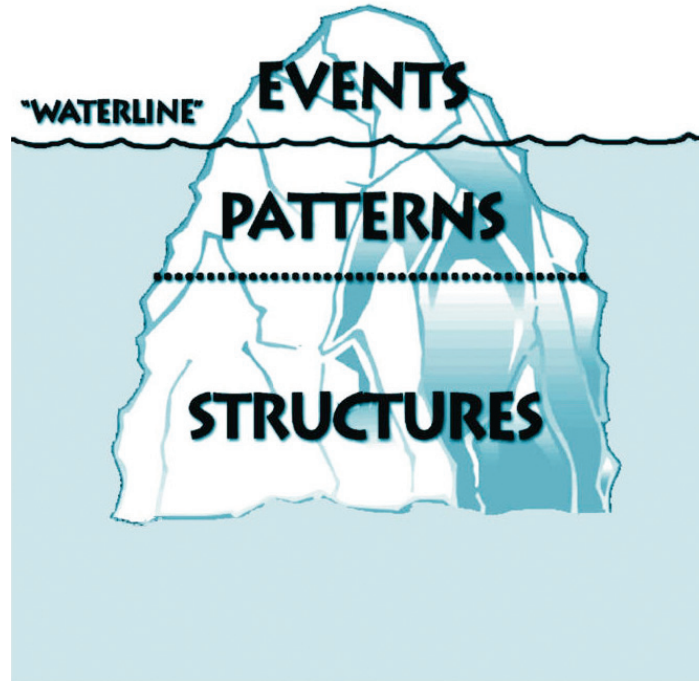
Writing Extension

Have students rewrite their article explaining the event, but also including the patterns, underlying structures, and different points of view. Students can publish their articles in the school paper or submit them to the news source that published the original article.

Additional Resources

- **Website:** *Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting*
www.fair.org
Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting is a national media watch group working to invigorate the First Amendment by advocating for greater diversity in the press and by scrutinizing media practices that marginalize public interest, minority, and dissenting viewpoints.
- **Book:** *Media Meltdown*
Authors Liam O'Donnell and Mike Deas developed a graphic novel that examines how media is made and the types of research people can do to assert critical media literacy. (Orca Book Publishers, 2009)

Iceberg Model



Activity 4: Navigating the Global Issues Net

Overview

Students determine ways to search the Internet effectively and find credible sources.

Objectives

Students will:

- apply strategies to search the Internet effectively
- understand that we are consumers of information
- evaluate information critically, to determine the accuracy of a source/reference

Inquiry/Critical Thinking Questions

- How can we use the Internet as a tool to effectively address global issues?
- What are critical questions we can ask ourselves when provided with information?

Time Required

One 60-minute class

Key Concepts

- global issues
- interconnections
- media literacy

National Standards Addressed

National Council for the Social Studies

- 3. People, Places, and Environments
- 9. Global Connections

National Science Education Standards

F. Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

National EFS Standards

3.1 Personal Action: Personal Change Skills and Strategies

Materials/Preparation

Internet access

Agree and Disagree signs, In large letters, write “Agree” in large print on a piece of paper and “Disagree” on another piece of paper. Tape the “Agree” sign to one wall in your classroom and the “Disagree” sign to the opposite wall.

Handout: *Believe It or Not?*, 1 per student pair

Activity 4: Navigating the Global Issues Net *continued*

Activity

Introduction

1. Refer to the Materials/Preparation section for instruction regarding Agree and Disagree signs.
2. Write on the board the following statement: “Information found on the Internet is not credible. Anyone can write a blog, make a Wiki entry, or start a website. You should not believe what you read.”
3. Ask students to decide whether they agree or disagree with this statement. Those who agree should stand by the “Agree” sign. Those who disagree should stand by the “Disagree” sign.
4. Ask for volunteers from each group to explain why they agree or disagree. Make sure that no one has spoken twice before everyone has spoken once. If a student makes a persuasive case for one side, other students are welcome to switch to that side.
4. After this sides debate, ask students to return to their seats.

Steps

1. Have students answer the following question: The Internet is a defining trait of globalization, an electronic highway of information that connects the world. Some think of the Internet as one large book that the world is writing. How can someone navigating this huge resource know whether it is a reliable source of information?
2. Share with students how on one hand, the Internet is an essential and remarkably productive tool for exploring global issues, especially because it can provide up-to-date information from a range of sources, including governmental, commercial, and nongovernmental websites. On the other hand, the “global issues net” is huge and uneven in both quality and reliability. In addition to being immensely time consuming, “surfing the net” can be overwhelming—and even misleading, if done recklessly or uncritically.

3. Ask students what websites they like to visit when searching the net and for what purpose do they use this website (e.g., information or entertainment)?
4. Ask them if they believe everything they read on these specific websites. Are they more likely to agree with a source that confirms their own beliefs? How do they sort truth from fiction?
5. Explain to students when they search for information on the Internet, they should make sure they critically evaluate websites to make sure the information they receive is legitimate.
Option: Have students identify a global issue as a class and visit a specific website together to analyze whether they think it’s credible or not.
6. Explain to them that in pairs, they will choose a global issue they would like to know more about and determine if websites they visit are valid or not.
7. Before they begin, you can share a few tips on how to analyze a website’s credibility:
 - Be wary of personal websites that are not affiliated with an organization. They tend to be less accountable and less reliable.
 - If it’s been more than a decade since the website has been updated, you may want to reconsider the site.
 - Analyze the URL address. You can determine what type of organization produced the site: .edu is an educational institution, .org is a nonprofit or other nongovernmental organization, .gov is a governmental body, and .com is a corporation or company.
 - Check for links that do not work on the website. If there is an excessive amount, reconsider using the site.
8. Pass out the handout *Believe It or Not?* to student pairs.

Activity 4: Navigating the Global Issues Net *continued*

9. After students have done research, they can compile these results so that everyone knows sites to visit and sites to avoid.
10. Ask the following discussion questions.

Discussion Questions

1. What advice would you offer students when they are researching information on the Internet?
2. What are the benefits and consequences to having endless amounts of information accessible through the Internet?
3. When researching information on global issues, what resources aside from the Internet can you use?
4. What are ways you can evaluate if these resources are credible?

Writing Extension

Write an annotated bibliography (a brief description and evaluation of the source) for websites you visit related to a specific global issue you are interested in learning more about. Include a citation with the website name and URL address on the first line, followed by a paragraph that summarizes the website's content and its usefulness for different audiences.

Additional Resources

- **Website:** *Project Look Sharp*
<http://www.ithaca.edu/looksharp/>
Project Look Sharp is a media initiative of Ithaca College that provides materials, training and support for effective integration of media literacy with critical thinking into classroom curricula. There are tips and tools that support classrooms in how to evaluate websites.
- **Website:** *The Center for Media Literacy*
<http://www.medialit.org/>
The Center for Media Literacy is an educational organization dedicated to promoting and supporting media literacy education.

Believe It or Not?

Directions: Follow the steps below to determine what sites are reliable when researching global issues.

1. After you have chosen a global issue to research, visit a search engine such as Google or Yahoo and begin a search of this issue by typing in key words (i.e. population growth in India, conflict in Bosnia).
2. Choose three websites you think look legitimate as resources and answer the following questions about these websites in the chart below.

	Website 1	Website 2	Website 3
Website address			
Name of author			
Is the author of the material on the website an expert in the field?			
What is the background/affiliation of the organization connected to the website (i.e., university? governmental organization? corporation?)			
Does the content seem credible (i.e., are citations listed on the website, can facts be verified by another source, etc.?)			
Is this website biased and how?			
Based on the information you researched, do you think this website is credible? Why or why not?			