



Food Production

THIS ACTIVITY OFFERS an introduction to trade issues, using fruits as an example of the way that world trade sometimes works to the disadvantage of poor producers.

TIME REQUIRED: 30 MINUTES | INTENDED FOR GRADES 6-8



economics



government



mathematics



language arts

MATERIALS NEEDED

- » Two sheets of butcher paper and markers
- » Six pens or pencils
- » Six sheets of blank paper
- » Six pieces of fruit
- » One roll of tape
- » Visit worldvision.org/lp/acsi-teacher-resources for a video you can show to support this lesson. (optional)

1

Activity Steps

BEGIN BY OFFERING THE FOLLOWING KEY POINTS:

- » Trade can be expressed as selling our goods to a group of people and buying some of their goods in return. People have always traded. Can you imagine trying to grow or make everything you need? People need to buy and import goods they can't produce themselves. Trade is essential to reduce poverty, but how can it be used to serve both the poor and the rich?
- » Global trade has expanded enormously in the last 50 years, and countries like the United States have more wealth and technology than ever before. However, many lower-income countries are not getting these benefits. The global rules that govern how countries trade often benefit rich countries at the expense of poorer ones.

- » “Free” trade isn’t always the best way for developing countries to improve their economies and help people out of poverty. For example, when markets in poor countries are flooded with subsidized agricultural products from overseas, the prices for these goods in poor countries can drop, destroying the livelihood of farmers.
- » The problem is not with trade itself but with some of the inequalities and hardships created by global trade rules.
- » This activity will help us explore the issue of global trade and its impact on the poor.

2

DIVIDE THE PARTICIPANTS INTO SIX GROUPS of equal number. Assign each group one of the following names:

- » Pickers and growers
- » Retailers
- » Wholesalers
- » Importing company
- » Shipping company
- » Packaging company

3

PROVIDE EACH GROUP with a sheet of blank paper and a pen or pencil. Give the six pieces of fruit to the pickers and growers group. Then tell all the participants that each piece of fruit costs 10 cents.

4

ASK THE GROUPS TO DETERMINE their shares (expressed as percentages) of the final fruit price. This figure will depend on the labor and other costs the group believes it must meet.

5

AFTER FIVE MINUTES, invite each group to present its case. Write the percentages on the butcher paper. Add the percentages. If the total comes to more than 100 percent, explain that the price of the fruit will have to be more than 10 cents. Tell the groups that in order to keep the price of each piece of fruit at 10 cents, they must negotiate their percentages with one another until the total is 100 percent.

6

NEXT, ON A SHEET OF BUTCHER PAPER depict the actual situation using the following figures:

- » Retailers: three and a half cents
- » Wholesalers: one and a half cents
- » Importing company: one cent
- » Shipping company: one and a half cents
- » Packing company: one and a half cents
- » Pickers and growers: one cent

7

Then engage the participants in a large-group discussion using the following questions:

- » How do the pickers/growers feel?
- » What do you believe would be the fairest division of the price?
- » How could the pickers/growers get a better percentage?

ASK EACH GROUP to actually take their share from the fruit in possession of the pickers and growers group. Conclude by brainstorming with the participants how they can work toward making a difference on the issue of trade. Offer the following ideas as examples:

- » Write letters or send emails asking questions of companies who make ethical claims about their products. You may feel your single letter or email is irrelevant, but large companies do want to listen to their customers. The more people that make the same comment or ask the same question, the more effective the company's claims are likely to be.
- » Check and choose. You may not be able to afford, or may not have the choice, to shop ethically, but do use some of the fair trade options available and try to increase your awareness of where the things you consume began their journey to your home. Your supermarket will stock fair-trade goods only if enough people purchase them.

(This activity is adapted from Susan Fountain. *Education for Development: A Teacher's Resource for Global Learning*, London, England: Hodder and Stoughton Publishing, 1995. © 1995 by Hodder and Stoughton Publishing. All rights reserved. Used with permission.)

