Understanding Fair Trade

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A collection of activities and resources regarding the study of fair trade that meet state education standards and national sustainability standards for the 6th grade level.
# Understanding Fair Trade

## Table of Contents

**Introduction** .................................................................................................................. 1

- Grade Level .................................................................................................................. 1
- Discipline ...................................................................................................................... 1
- TEKS ............................................................................................................................... 1
- National Education for Sustainability Learning Standards .............................................. 1

**Objective** .................................................................................................................... 2

**Keywords** ..................................................................................................................... 2

**Description of Activities** ............................................................................................. 2

**Activities** ..................................................................................................................... 3

- **Activity 1: Understanding the Concept of Fair Trade** .............................................. 3
  - Introduction ............................................................................................................... 3
  - Materials .................................................................................................................... 3
  - Products .................................................................................................................... 3
  - Process ...................................................................................................................... 3

- **Activity 2: Defining the Concept of “Fair”** ............................................................... 4
  - Introduction ............................................................................................................... 4
  - Materials .................................................................................................................... 4
  - Products .................................................................................................................... 4
  - Process ...................................................................................................................... 4

- **Activity 3: Trade Activity** ........................................................................................ 5
  - Introduction ............................................................................................................... 5
  - Materials .................................................................................................................... 5
  - Products .................................................................................................................... 5
  - Process ...................................................................................................................... 5

- **Activity 4: Coin Exchange Activity** ........................................................................ 6
  - Introduction ............................................................................................................... 6
  - Materials .................................................................................................................... 6
  - Products .................................................................................................................... 6
  - Process ...................................................................................................................... 6

- **Activity 5: Cocoa Farming** ....................................................................................... 7
  - Introduction ............................................................................................................... 7
  - Materials .................................................................................................................... 7
  - Products .................................................................................................................... 7
  - Process ...................................................................................................................... 7

**Additional Resources** .................................................................................................. 10

- **Online Resources** .................................................................................................... 10
- **Educational Literature** ............................................................................................. 10
- **Educational Videos** ................................................................................................... 10

**Handouts**

- "Lens-tri Venn"
- "Scenarios-Fair or Not Fair"
- "Coin Exchange Activity"
- "Dollar Bill Manipulative"
- "Farmer Checklist"
- "Need Cards"
- "Station Signs"

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Understanding Fair Trade

![CC BY-NC](https://example.com/cc_license.png)
Introduction

Grade Level

These activities are intended for a sixth grade classroom.

Discipline

These activities have a social studies focus.

TEKS

Content:

Students identify the role of the U.S. free enterprise system within the parameters of this course and understand that this system may also be referenced as capitalism or the free market system. TEKS §113.18. Social Studies, Grade 6. (a)(4)

Throughout social studies in Kindergarten-Grade 12, students build a foundation in history; geography; economics; government; citizenship; culture; science, technology, and society; and social studies skills. The content, as appropriate for the grade level or course, enables students to understand the importance of patriotism, function in a free enterprise society, and appreciate the basic democratic values of our state and nation as referenced in the Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.002(h). TEKS §113.18. Social Studies, Grade 6. (a)(5)

Skills:

The student understands the factors of production in a society's economy. TEKS §113.18. Social Studies, Grade 6. (b)(8)(A)(B)(C)

The student understands the various ways in which people organize economic systems. TEKS §113.18. Social Studies, Grade 6. (b)(9)(A)(B)(C)(D)

The student understands categories of economic activities and the data used to measure a society's economic level. TEKS §113.18. Social Studies. Social Studies, Grade 6 (b)(10)(A)(B)(C)

National Education for Sustainability K-12 Student Learning Standards

2.3 ~ Economic Systems ~ Equity ~ Food Systems
2.4 Social and Cultural Systems ~ Multiple Perspectives ~ Quality of Life Indicators
Objective

Students will learn about the different types of economic systems, and the role they play in food systems at the local, national, and global food systems.

Key Words

Equity
Food Systems
Cultural Systems
Industrial Farming
Factors of Production
Free enterprise
Socialism
Communism

Description of Activities

The following activities have been compiled to address the topic of “Fair Trade” in sixth grade classrooms. The activities meet the state and national education standards for sixth grade, and are intended to supplement pre-existing curricula, with a focus on integrating sustainability topics. The activities can be used in conjunction or alone.
Activities

Activity 1: Understanding the Concept of Fair Trade

Introduction

In this activity, students will learn about fair trade and through an open classroom dialogue will understand the concept of “fair” as it applies to the economic system.

Materials

Chart Paper

Products

Understanding of the concept of fairness

Process

1. Write the word “fair” on the board

2. Ask the students “What do you think fair means?” and write responses on the board.

3. From the students’ responses develop a definition of “fair” and write it on the chart paper. Encourage the understanding that fair is
   - Something right and just
   - Something that does not unjustly favor one person over another.

4. Ask the students: What is the opposite of fair? (unfair/not fair)

5. After they respond, ask the students to share a story of something that happened to them that they thought was unfair? How did that make you feel?

6. Discuss the variations of student’s concepts of fair.

Activity 2: Defining the Concept of “Fair”

Introduction

Students will learn what is meant by “fair” and “not fair” through possible real life scenarios, and role-play.

Materials

Handout “Fair or Not Fair”

Products

Skits
Handouts

Process

1. Tell the students you are going to explore the concept of fair further with some scenarios, or things that could happen in real life. Options to present the scenarios include:
   - Read the scenarios aloud to the group
   - Students read the scenarios aloud to the group
   - Students role-play the scenarios for the group

2. After each scenario is presented, take a vote on whether the scenario was “fair” or “not fair”.

3. Now have the students discuss the result after each vote.
   - What were the results?
   - Did all students agree?

4. After you are finished with the scenarios, ask students if there is anything they want to add to the board about what fair means.

**Activity 3: Trade Activity**

**Introduction**

Students will conceptualize what is meant by fair trade through role-play. They will explore the process of trade in a tangible manner with the use of coins.

**Materials**

- Coins
- Whiteboard/Chalkboard

**Products**

- Role Play

**Process**

1. Write the word “trade” on the board.

2. Ask the students and write responses on the board.
   - What do you think trade means?
   - What is a trade?

3. Encourage the understanding that “trade” is an exchange of one thing for another.

4. Show the students five dimes. Tell the students you need to trade or exchange the dimes for quarters because you are playing an arcade game that takes only quarters.

5. Ask the students:
   - How many quarters should I get for my dimes?
   - What would be a fair trade?
   - What if I were given one quarter?
   - Would that be a fair trade or an unfair trade?
   - Why?

6. Show students different examples of fair and unfair trades/exchanges.

7. Ask students if they can list any.

8. Adapt the values in the examples according to the grade and skill level of the students.

Activity 4: Coin Exchange Activity

Introduction

Students will explore the meaning of “fair trade” through a pair role-playing game.

Materials

Handout- “Coin Exchange Activity”

Products

Handouts
Student Responses to Questions

Process

1. Ask students to pick a partner.
2. Have one student fill out “Coin Exchange Activity.”
3. Now have the students trade roles.
4. After both students have complete the worksheets tell students that the coin exchanges were one example of a trade.
5. Ask the students:
   • What was a “fair trade” in the coin exchanges performed?
6. Encourage the understanding that the equal coin trades during the lesson are one example of a fair trade, because they are equal.
7. Demonstrate some trades/exchanges using objects. For example, ask one student if they would trade an apple in their lunchbox for an orange.
8. Ask the students:
   • If we trade one thing for a completely different thing, how do we know if that trade is fair?
   • If we trade money for a different thing, how do we know if that trade is fair?
9. Refer students to the board with their definition of fairness. Encourage the understanding that, if you are exchanging one thing for a different thing or money for a thing, whether a trade is fair depends on whether we think it is the right thing to do and whether it is just, as in the scenarios.
10. Ask students and write responses to the following question: What do you think is a fair trade?
Activity 5: Cocoa Farming

Introduction

Students will conceptualize the differences between “fair trade” and “non-fair trade” by experiencing what different farmers contend with when they are paid for their cocoa beans.

Materials

Clay  
Paper  
Dollar Bill Manipulatives  
Farmer Checklists  
Need Cards  
Station Signs  
Handout- “Lens-tri Venn”

Products

Understanding of fair trade through role-play  
Lens-tri Venn  
Answers to final question

Process

1. Tell students: “You are going to experience what happens to cocoa farmers when they are paid for their cocoa beans. You will do the activity twice. During the first round you will be non-Fair Trade farmers and during the second round you will be Fair Trade farmers. First, you will “grow” your cocoa beans by making them either out of clay or paper. You will have five minutes to make the beans and you should try to make at least 25 beans.

2. Stop the students when the time is finished. You may want to mention that farmers’ harvests are often different, just like the students have completed different numbers of beans in the time allotted, because of different conditions such as weather, pests, farming methods, etc.

3. Pair up the students, have each pair pool their beans and then distribute beans so that each pair has 50. Tell the students they now have their harvest and these are the beans they will be selling to earn money.

4. Remind students that it is actually very hard work to produce cocoa beans, and it takes a long time. Review the steps cocoa farmers take to produce beans (growing, harvesting, fermenting, drying).

5. Write this on the board: Non-Fair Trade Cocoa Beans = Earn $1 for 5 beans, Fair Trade Cocoa Beans = Earn $2 for 5 beans
6. Tell students you are the trader, who will buy cocoa beans from the farmers for chocolate companies. The money they will earn is written on the board. Each pair of students will put their beans in groups of 5 to sell you their beans. Ideally, students should be seated so they can view the transactions (A circle is probably optimal, if class size allows.)

7. Explain to the students that these are not the actual amounts that farmers earn, but it will help give them an idea of what it means to farmers to earn a higher price for their cocoa beans.
8. Go around to each pair to buy their beans and say, “You are earning the non-Fair Trade price for your beans. You have 50 beans, so your pay is 10 dollars total. Have them help you figure out their pay.

9. Ask the students: “What are people’s most basic needs?” Have them share their ideas and guide them to the agreement that basic needs are food, shelter, clothing, education/school and healthcare/doctor visits.

10. Put out station signs with corresponding cards at five separate stations. Give each pair of students Sheet 11: Farmer Checklist. Tell students that they will now work with their partner to use the money they have earned to try to purchase the things they need to take care of themselves and their families. Read and explain the directions on the checklist sheet.

11. Pairs will go to stations and pay for needs cards, while you supervise the stations. Pairs should take cards purchased back to their seats and fill out the checklist. They should keep the cards together on one side of their work space. After completing the sheet, students can discuss the questions on the sheet with their partners.

12. Repeat parts two and three above with same partners. This time students will be Fair Trade farmers and receive the Fair Trade price for their beans. The teacher is the Fair Trade cooperative, which buys beans from Fair Trade farmers.

13. When you buy the beans from the students during this round, say: “You are earning the Fair Trade price for your beans. You have 50 beans, so you will earn 20 dollars total.” If desired, have them help you figure out what they have earned. Pairs purchase cards, fill out checklists and discuss questions as they did in the first round. Have them put the cards from this round together on the other side of their work space.

14. Bring students back together as a whole group. Students should be able to refer to their checklists and the two sets of cards they purchased. They can compare the cards they purchased during the first round with the cards they got during the second. Facilitate a discussion using the questions on the checklist sheet as a guide.

15. Remind the students of the different prices/costs of the chocolate bars they tasted. Refer back to their ideas about why the chocolate bars had different prices. Ask them if they have any new ideas now. Encourage the understanding that when companies pay more for cocoa beans to make chocolate, their products may become more expensive. Confirm that students understand that Fair Trade farmers earn more.

16. Help them make the connection between what they thought a fair trade was and what fair trade farmers earn for their beans: Fair trade is fair because the farmers receive the a fair price for their cocoa, which enables them to better provide for themselves and their families.
18. Ask students: Would you prefer to be Fair Trade farmers or non-Fair Trade farmers? Why?

19. Ask students to reflect filing in a Lens tri-Venn, each pair of students completes one for a fair trade and one for the non-fair trade chocolate.
Additional Resources

Online Resources

Primary Source
http://www.sustainableschoolsproject.org/curricula/sustainable-economics-triple-bottom-line

Reference Resources

Educational Literature
“The Story of Chocolate” by Caryn J. Polin

Educational Videos
http://fairtradecampaigns.org/2014/01/video-the-merits-of-fair-trade/
**Sheet 8: Scenarios - Fair or Not Fair?**

- **Fair**
- **Not Fair**

You are watching television and your brother comes in and changes the channel. He will not change it back, so you ask your mom for help. She says that you are only allowed to watch your show for five more minutes and then your brother can watch his show for an hour.

- **Fair**
- **Not Fair**

You and your sister both want to play with the same toy. Your dad says that you can play with it for ten minutes and then your sister can play with it for ten minutes. He sets a timer to keep track of the time.

- **Fair**
- **Not Fair**

Your mom is really busy, but you want her to take you to the pool. She says that if you help her do some chores at home in the morning, she will take you to the pool in the afternoon.

- **Fair**
- **Not Fair**

You and your friend are collecting stickers. She tells you that if you give her three of your animal stickers, she will give you three of her animal stickers.

- **Fair**
- **Not Fair**

You notice that your friend has some baseball cards that you like. You ask if you can buy one for a dollar. He says you would have to pay two dollars, but then he sells it to another friend for a dollar.

- **Fair**
- **Not Fair**

You and your friends are playing foursquare on the playground. When you hit the ball out of the lines, they say you have to go out. When they do the same thing, they say they can stay in the game.
**Sheet 9: Coin Exchange Activity**

Directions: Show your partner a group of coins, with a value of $1.00 or less. Record your coins in the first column below. Then tell your partner you want to make a trade or an exchange. Your partner should give you a new set of coins. It could be a group of coins that makes the same or equal value but with a different combination of coins, which would be a fair trade. Or it could be a group of coins with a value that is not equal to/less than what you made, which would be an unfair trade. Record these coins in the second column below. Then decide whether you thought your partner gave you a fair trade or an unfair trade and check the correct box to the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Coins</th>
<th>Trade or Exchange</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Unfair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: 25¢</td>
<td><img src="5%C2%A2" alt="5¢ coins" /> <img src="5%C2%A2" alt="5¢ coins" /> <img src="5%C2%A2" alt="5¢ coins" /></td>
<td><img src="5%C2%A2" alt="5¢ coins" /> <img src="5%C2%A2" alt="5¢ coins" /> <img src="5%C2%A2" alt="5¢ coins" /></td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Coins</td>
<td>Trade or Exchange</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Unfair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sheet 10: Dollar Bill Manipulatives
Names__________________________________________________________

In order to provide for yourself and your family, you need to get the things on the list below. You must have shelter and food for your family first, then clothing, before you can visit the doctor or send children to school. Go to the different stations in order to buy these things for your family. At the station, pay the money required and then take the cards you paid for. Then fill out the form below, circling yes or no. Think about the questions below and discuss them with your partner.

**Round One: Non-Fair Trade Farmer**

*Could you provide this basic need?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Visit*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Questions to think about:*

* Did you provide all the things your family needed?
* If not, which things could you provide and which things couldn't you provide?
* Why did that happen?
* What was the experience like for you? What did you learn about what it’s like to be a cocoa farmer?
Sheet 11: Farmer Checklist

Round Two: Fair Trade Farmer

*Could you provide this basic need?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter*</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing*</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Visit*</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Questions to think about:*

- Did you provide all the things your family needed?
- If not, which things could you provide and which things couldn't you provide?
- Why did that happen?
- What was the experience like for you?
- What did you learn about what it's like to be a cocoa farmer?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Visit</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
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<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Visit</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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