

Sweatshops, Outsourcing and Child Labour



Summary of Issues and Learning Outcomes

Lesson Outcome Students will explore sweatshops, outsourcing and child labour in today’s world and gather information on each topic from different perspectives.

Inquiry Questions

- Are sweatshops good for a country?
- Is outsourcing good for both the country receiving the jobs and the country sending the jobs out?
- Is child labour the lesser of two evils in developing countries?

Values and Attitudes Outcomes

- 3.1 recognize and appreciate multiple perspectives that exist with respect to the relationships among politics, economics, the environment and globalization.
- 3.2 recognize and appreciate impacts of globalization on the interdependent relationships among people, the economy and the environment.

Knowledge and Understanding Outcomes

- 3.6 analyze political and economic challenges and opportunities of globalization (trade liberalization, foreign investment, economic growth, privatization, outsourcing, knowledge economy).
- 4.1 recognize and appreciate the impact of globalization on the quality of life of individuals and communities.
- 4.5 analyze impacts of globalization on children and youth (awareness of global issues, employment issues, identity).
- 4.8 analyze how globalization affects individuals and communities (contemporary issues).

Key Skills

- S.1.1 evaluate ideas and information from multiple sources.
- S.1.5 evaluate personal assumptions and opinions to develop an expanded appreciation of a topic or an issue.
- S.1.9 analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives.
- S.7.3 draw pertinent conclusions based on evidence derived from research.
- S.7.5 consult a variety of sources, including oral histories that reflect varied perspectives on particular issues.
- S.8.1 communicate effectively to express a point of view in a variety of situations.
- S.8.2 use skills of formal and informal discussion and/or debate to persuasively express informed viewpoints on an issue.
- S.8.4 ask respectful and relevant questions of others to clarify viewpoints.



Activity Overview

Time:

- 2-4 periods

Preparation:

- Photocopy a class set of articles on sweatshops, outsourcing, and child labour
- Photocopy 6 copies of **Activity Masters 5.1: From the Heart, 5.2: Force Analysis Chart Part 1, and 5.3: Force Analysis Chart Part 2**

In this activity, students are asked to consider the benefits and problems associated with sweatshops, outsourcing and child labour. Students will be divided into groups of 4 to 6 and asked to complete an assignment on one of the following topics:

- sweatshops
- outsourcing
- child labour

One article for each side will be provided but additional materials can also be used. You may also wish to split the topics and cover one of them as a horseshoe or U shaped discussion, one as a 4-corner discussion, and one as a debate.

Key Concepts

- employment issues of globalization
- outsourcing
- global sourcing
- labour rights
- sweatshops
- exploitation
- forced labour
- child labour
- child slavery
- children's rights
- impacts of globalization on youth
- impacts of globalization on women

Resources Issue 1: SWEATSHOPS

- **Don't get into a lather over sweatshops**
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0802/p09s02-coop.html>
by Benjamin Powell, David Skarbek
The Christian Science Monitor, August 2, 2005
- **The Case Against Sweatshops**
<http://www.thehumanist.org/humanist/articles/essay2mayjune04.pdf>
by Anna Yesilevsky
The Humanist, May/June, 2004
- **El Salvador Becoming Giant Sweatshop, Group Charges**
<http://www.albionmonitor.com/9701b/salvadorsweatshop.html>
by Farhan Haq
Albion Monitor, January 26, 1997



Resources cont. Issue 2: Outsourcing

- Globalization: Threat or Opportunity for the U.S. Economy?
<http://www.frbsf.org/publications/economics/letter/2004/el2004-12.html>
 by Robert T. Parry, President and Chief Executive Officer
 FRBSF Economic Letter, May 21, 2004
- Offshoring the Middle Class
http://www.ad-mkt-review.com/public_html/air/ai200405.html
 by Glen Emerson Morris
 Advertising & Marketing Review
- Protesters to rally against offshore outsourcing
http://www.costaricascallcenter.com/page_builder.php?page=article.php&Lang=EN&article=201
 by Ed Parry, News Editor
 SearchCIO.com, 21 Jan 2004

Issue 3: Child Labour

- **It's official: child labour is a good thing**
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/canada/1482368/Its-official-child-labour-is-a-good-thing.html>
 by David Harrison
 The Telegraph, January 30, 2005
- **Child labour robs children of childhood, impedes development**
http://www.unicef.org/media/media_34504.html
 by Karen Dukess
 UNICEF, June 12, 2006

Other Articles

- **Export-Driven Economic Growth Dogma Creates a World of Losers**
http://axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/Article_61666.shtml
 by Mel Watkins
 Axis of Logic, November 18, 2010
- **Trip spurs look at outsourcing issue**
<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/2010/11/07/20101107obama-outsourcing1107.html#ixzz14iw99vjC>
 by Emily Wax
 The Arizona Republic, November 07, 2010

Objectives/Rationale This activity enables students to explore for in-depth knowledge and understanding about the topics presented. As well as an appreciation and a respect for alternate perspectives, students gain valuable communication, questioning and discussion or debating skills.



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Instructional Strategies Part 1: Introduction

1. Begin by reading the article **on Activity Master 5.1: From the Heart** to your class and discussing the issue identified at the end. An alternative opener is Santa's workshop (32 minutes) which can be live streamed from:
<http://freedocumentaries.org/int.php?filmID=297>
2. Use **Activity Master: 5.2: Force Field Analysis, Part 1** as a guide to analyze the issue. "A **force field analysis** is a technique for identifying and analyzing the positive factors of a situation that help ('driving forces') and negative factors that hinder ('restraining forces') an entity in attaining its objectives."
<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/force-field-analysis.html>

On the board create a chart of positive and negative forces for the workers and their families, a second section for the country they live in, and a third section for the multinational corporation. More detailed information can be found in the on-line guide to social studies.

3. Complete the example in a class discussion and/or assign the rest of the chart for homework. Have the students record the information to be used as a guide for the research activity in Part 2 of this lesson. A partial key for this activity is provided.
4. The class will then look at the positive and negative forces affecting the issue being discussed and the factual support for the arguments. Using the information gathered in **Activity Master: 5.2**, have the students complete **Activity Master 5.3** by prioritizing the strongest 3 arguments for each side of the issue. They will then plan/design ways to strengthen the positive forces, and reduce or eliminate the negative forces. This guide may help them organize their thoughts and provide evidence to support their research articles in the rest of this lesson.
5. Review. Start with one of the groups and have the group present its strongest argument for the positive side. This process will be repeated for the negative side once the positive side is finished. Once the factual support has been presented and the suggested solution brought forward ask the questions:
 - A. Is this solution desirable?
 - B. Is this solution feasible (possible)?

If the answer to both questions is yes, this is a possible solution. If the answer is no, then suggest the solution be "put on the shelf" for further examination later, if needed. Repeat this process for the other groups. If an argument is repeated by another group, then it probably becomes a more favoured choice. Repeat this process for the negative arguments but the questions to be asked are:

- A. Is it possible to overcome this situation?
- B. Should we work towards overcoming it?

At this point, the students should be reminded that this process has provided a "guide" for them to use in finishing the assignment and that they should use the key steps in their assignment.



1. Organize students into issue groups of between four (4) and six (6). Assign each group one of the three issues listed at the top of **Activity Master 5.2**.
2. Distribute at least six (6) copies of **Activity Master 5.2** and one reading for each student. Half the group will read and analyze the positive perspective and the other half will read and analyze the negative perspective on the issue. Advise the students that the readings are from various print media sources and they will be asked to consider the media and the message given at the end of the activity.
3. Each half of the group will complete one copy of **Activity Master 5.2** for their perspective. Once completed, they will reassemble in the larger group and share their information on the issue for the other perspective. Each group is to exchange their completed **Activity Master 5.2** so that all members have a copy of both sides of the research on the issue.

Part 3: Synthesis

1. Students will prepare a chart (**Activity Master 5.3**) that identifies arguments, supporting facts and suggested improvements regarding each issue. Each group will then examine the positive and negative forces and plan/design ways to strengthen the constructive forces, and reduce or eliminate the unhelpful forces. For example, if they decide that sweatshops are a problem in the countries having them, what would they do to remedy or ameliorate the problem? This will be the solution under study. Record the answers in Column 1. Other charts available at:
http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/sssm/html/positiveandnegativefactors_sm.html
http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/sssm/html/justifyingmychoice_sm.html
Begin your evaluation of the issue by using **Activity Master 5.3** and posing the question, “Which of the forces listed on **Activity Master 5.2** are the strongest and which are the weakest? Record the answers in Column 1. Record supporting facts in Column 2. Record your plan to deal with the positive and negative forces in Column 3.”
2. Students will then enter into a discussion in their issue group in which they question opposing group members’ arguments and position and defend their own arguments and position.
3. Following that discussion they are to make any appropriate changes to their **Activity Master 5.2** and **5.3**.
4. At this point have the groups share their final copies of **Activity Master 5.2** and **5.3** with the groups doing the other issues so that all students have copies of the research on the three issues.
5. This information should be added to the essay preparation notes they started in Activity 2.
6. Part of the preparation for Activity 8 will require each student to develop opening statements that outline the support for the position they have been assigned on the issue. Then have the two sides prepare a one page essay research guide.



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Follow Up If you have only used print media for the above assignment, then insert “print” before media in the second bullet and the assessment topic..

Assessment Ask the students to prepare to write a written response to the following topic:

“To what extent do the media present fair and unbiased coverage of emotionally charged topics such as sweatshops, outsourcing, and child labour?”

Summative or formative assessment of essay preparation notes could be done.

- Metacognition**
- What did you learn about “information”?
 - Do you think that you will read media differently now?
 - Why is it important to be open to new ideas and views while considering an issue?
 - Explain if you would have acted the way that one of the individuals in the case studies did? Why did you select that example?

Differentiated Learning Some students will need help in understanding some of the concepts and examples provided.



ACTIVITY MASTER 5.1: From the Heart

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In a Social 33 class discussion, the topic was market economic and mixed systems, including weaknesses such as child labour and sweatshops. Most students in the discussion condemned the behaviours, and many were offering unsupported generalizations and opinions. As the moderator, I tried to get them to support what they were saying but it was very difficult.

To my surprise, a boy in the class spoke out. He was unusually serious when he said that he had worked in a Nike factory in the Philippines as a five and six year old. He worked twelve hours a day and it cost him one third of his daily wage to get to the factory on the bus. The rest of his wages went to help his family. His father had lost his right arm in an industrial accident and could not work. He had no pension or disability coverage or help. His son's wages helped support the family.

His mother got a job in Canada as a nanny and the wages she sent home to them made it possible for him to quit the factory and go to school. She was able to bring her four children to join her over the next few years. His father died just after the last of the children was brought to Canada.

He said that his memories of the factory were still quite clear. If he didn't do the job properly, he was caned by his supervisor but not too hard and in such a way that no one could see the results. He remembered very clearly leaving the factory and walking past a Macdonald's on the way to the bus. His dream was to be able to buy an ice cream cone, but he could never do it. The class laughed when he said that, but then he continued, "When I went with my mother back to the Philippines to visit my family I went to the Nike factory. I waited until the work shift for the children finished and as they came out I took 10 of them to McDonalds and bought each of them an ice cream. I told them that it had been my dream and I could not do it when I was there but I could do it for them today. I can't describe how unbelieving they were at first and then how happy they were, except for one boy. I asked him if there was a problem and he said that he wanted to take it home to his family to share, but it would melt. I didn't have a lot of money left with me but I gave him enough that he could go home and take his family for an ice cream cone. I made him promise that he would do that and not use the money for anything else. He said that he would do that but I don't know if he did or if he used the money to buy food."

- The class was silent until I asked the question, "Was the Nike factory job good for you and your family?" What do you think his answer was?

Other guided discussion questions include:

- Could the family have done without his meagre financial help so that he could go to school?
- Why would he have done what he did when they returned to the Philippines for a holiday?
- Would he have valued education in Canada?
- Does this story illustrate the complexity of whether or not factories like this, employing child labour, should be shut down?
- What would you have done if you were this boy in this situation?



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ACTIVITY MASTER 5.2: Force Analysis Chart Part 1

Reading Topics:

List the issue and perspective (focus) being studied on this worksheet.

Issue #1: Sweatshops:

Sweatshops are not as evil as many think.
Sweatshops should be outlawed worldwide.

Issue #2: Outsourcing:

Outsourcing damages a country's economy.
Outsourcing is necessary in today's economic world.

Issue #3: Child Labour:

Child labour is completely unacceptable.
Child labour is saving many families.



ACTIVITY MASTER 5.2:
Force Analysis Chart Part 1



Name: _____ Date: _____

Issue: _____

WHO IS AFFECTED?	POSITIVE FORCES	NEGATIVE FORCES
Workers and families		
Country/economy		
Multinationals		



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ACTIVITY MASTER 5.2:

Force Analysis Chart Part 1 **Answer Key**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Issue: From the Heart - Was the Nike factory job a good thing....?

WHO IS AFFECTED?	POSITIVE FORCES	NEGATIVE FORCES
Workers and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Money needed to support family ◦ “Little match girl” syndrome with ice cream ◦ Mother’s move to Canada changed the life of her children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Age of 5-6 years ◦ 12-hour shift ◦ Father had no support after injury ◦ Supervisor brutality ◦ Low wages: amount of daily wage needed for transportation to and from work
Country/economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Provided jobs for unemployed children ◦ Industrial base for production of shoes established ◦ Taxes generated ◦ Kept children off the streets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Father had no support after injury ◦ Mother had to move to Canada as a domestic nanny to support the family
Multinationals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Father had no support after injury ◦ Mother had to move to Canada as a domestic nanny to support the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ International backlash over having child labour

ACTIVITY MASTER 5.3:
Force Analysis Chart Part 2



Issue and Position: _____

Instructions: Sort your answers and determine which three are the strongest arguments/forces that you can support with factual information for the positive side. Repeat for the negative side.

STRONGEST ARGUMENT	FACTUAL SUPPORT	SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

