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Developing children's understanding of the Global Goals

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Introduction

This chapter aims to develop upper-primary and lower-secondary children's awareness and understanding of the Global Goals. It describes a child-friendly approach that integrates language learning, creative thinking and social responsibility in a way that enables children to relate key issues to their own lives. It also lays solid foundations for children becoming responsible, global citizens in the future.

We currently live in an age where, in many different countries and contexts, a standardised approach to schooling, including ELT, is increasingly the norm. This is typically characterised by low-risk, discrete-item teaching, frequent testing and dependence on measurable results and outcomes. By introducing children to the Global Goals as part of foreign language lessons, we can redress this balance and integrate a more holistic, personalised approach to children's education into our classroom practice. In addition to developing specific areas of children's English vocabulary and language skills in a worthwhile, motivating and enjoyable way, there are a number of other potential far-reaching benefits. These include:

- raising awareness of global issues that touch children's lives, no matter where they live.
- empowering children with language to talk about such issues in a confident way.
- developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills through enquiry-based discussion.
- developing social skills such as listening, turn-taking, sharing ideas and co-operating with others in order to carry out activities.
- fostering positive attitudes such as tolerance and respect for the views of others.
- encouraging the belief that it is the responsibility of everyone to meet the Global Goals and that by working together this is more likely to be achievable.

- providing opportunities for children to think 'out of the box' and come up with their own creative ideas, designs, products and solutions.
- integrating values which help to promote reflective thinking, responsible choices and principled behaviour.

The practical activities and lessons that follow focus on all 17 Global Goals and are designed for use with children between the ages of approximately 10 and 14 years, with a minimum English language level of A2. However, some of the activities may also be suitable to use with older students when introducing the concept of the Global Goals for the first time. The overarching objectives of the activities and lessons are to develop, at an appropriate level of linguistic and cognitive challenge, children's awareness and understanding of:

- i) the broad scope of the Global Goals and the social and environmental issues and themes they cover.
- ii) the connections and links between the Global Goals in terms of problems and solutions.
- iii) how the Global Goals relate to children's immediate home and school environment as well as to their local region or country.
- iv) positive action and things children can do themselves to help achieve the Goals.

Although the activities and lessons are freestanding, you may decide to teach all of them chronologically. In this case, you will find that together they constitute a topic-based unit of work on the Global Goals. This provides a coherent sequence and logical progression, leading children from an initial understanding of the names and aims of the Goals to a final outcome in which they carry out a project based on helping to achieve one of the Goals in their local context.

Activities

Activity 1: Discover and prioritise the Global Goals

Aims

- To introduce the names and aims of the Global Goals
- To prioritise the Global Goals and justify choices

Language Focus

- Naming and talking about the Global Goals, e.g. What's the aim of this goal?
- To ensure (that) ...; I think Goal ... is a top priority because ...

Creative Focus

- Thinking creatively and critically to justify choices

Level A2+
Age 10–14
Time 60 minutes

Preparation

- Select, download and be ready to project photos from Global Goals Imagery provided by Getty Images: Global Goals Resource Centre – <http://www.globalgoals.org/resource-centre/the-basics/>
- One copy of 'Global Goals – names and aims' worksheet – Materials – cut into strips for each student; scissors, glue

Procedure

- Ask students what they think are the biggest problems in the world today. Listen to their ideas and project photos you have prepared to stimulate their thinking. Use the photos and students' suggestions to pre-teach key vocabulary, e.g. poverty, health, hunger, war.
- Explain that the Global Goals are internationally agreed objectives to build a better world for all people and for our planet by 2030 in a way that is sustainable, i.e. that respects resources and the environment and will last into the future.
- Explain that there are 17 different Global Goals and give examples, e.g. No poverty, No hunger.
- Students work in pairs and predict other Global Goals.

- Students report back. Use their responses to introduce the Global Goals. Explain new concepts and vocabulary as necessary and check understanding.
- Compare the Goals with students' predictions.
- Give one strip of paper from the single copy of the worksheet to each student (or pair, depending on the size of your class) in random order.
- Explain that on the left of the strip is the name and number of one of the Goals and on the right is the aim of a different Goal.
- Explain and demonstrate that one student should start by reading out the number and name of the Goal on their strip (avoid starting with Goal 1) and ask 'What's the aim of this Goal?' The rest of the class (except the student who can identify the answer on their strip) should suggest answers starting 'To ensure ...'
- The student who has the answer on their strip then reads it to the class and has the next turn at naming a Goal and asking the aim in the same way. Be ready to check comprehension and clarify meaning as necessary. The activity continues until all the Goals and aims have been named.
- Give one copy of the worksheet to each student. Have scissors and glue available. Students cut out the names of the goals and aims.
- Explain that students should work in pairs and choose three Goals that they personally think should be top priority and stick them (with the corresponding aims) in order in their notebooks. Ask them to be ready to give reasons for their choice, e.g. 'We think Goal 16 is a top priority because war destroys homes and kills people. People can't work or earn money. Children can't go to school. There is often no food or clean water.'
- Pairs take turns to report back, giving reasons to justify their choices.
- Keep a record on the board of the Goals chosen by each pair. At the end of the activity, count up to see the class's top three Global Goal priorities.
- Finish by briefly getting students to review what they have done and learned.

Materials

Global Goals – names and aims

Goal 1: No poverty	To ensure that countries and organisations work together to achieve the goals
Goal 2: No hunger	To ensure that everyone has enough money to live
Goal 3: Good health	To ensure that everyone has enough food to eat
Goal 4: Quality education	To ensure that everyone has the right to medical care
Goal 5: Gender equality	To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to go to school
Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation	To ensure that girls and women have the same rights and opportunities as boys and men
Goal 7: Renewable energy	To ensure that everyone has safe water and healthy hygiene
Goal 8: Good jobs and economic growth	To ensure that everyone has access to reliable, sustainable energy
Goal 9: Innovation and infrastructure	To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to work
Goal 10: Reduced inequalities	To ensure that industry is responsible in protecting people and the environment
Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities	To ensure that countries have laws and societies that protect everyone equally
Goal 12: Responsible consumption	To ensure that cities, towns and villages have water and electricity, and are clean and safe
Goal 13: Climate action	To ensure the reduction of waste, for example by recycling paper or glass
Goal 14: Life below water	To ensure action to slow down the impact of global warming
Goal 15: Life on land	To ensure action to protect oceans and seas
Goal 16: Peace and justice	To ensure action to protect the environment and endangered animals
Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals	To ensure the end of violence and war and give everyone access to justice

Follow-up

- Students stick the remaining 14 goals and aims in their personal order of priority in their notebooks. Students compare and discuss the order, giving reasons for their choices.

Answer key

On the worksheet, the aim of each Goal is on the next strip, i.e. the aim of Goal 1 is on the strip with Goal 2. The aim of the last Goal is on the strip with Goal 1.

Additional resources

World's Largest Lesson – The World We Want

- This child-friendly booklet has illustrative stories and more details about the aims and plans to achieve each Global Goal. http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2016/05/The-World-We-Want-Double-Page-Booklet-style_HiRes_English.pdf

Activity 2: Global Goal icons

Aims

- To create and design an icon for one or two of the Global Goals
- To plan what you can do to achieve the Goals at home and school

Language focus

- Expressing opinions and likes, e.g. I think this icon is ... / I like this icon because ... / My favourite icon is ...; talking about what you can do, e.g. I think we can ... / should ... / Great idea! I agree.

Creative focus

- Experimenting with creative visual design

Level A2+

Age 10–14

Time 60 minutes

Preparation

- Be ready to project the official Global Goal icons: World's Largest Lesson – The Global Goals: http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2016/07/150902B_TheGlobalGoals_Logo_and_Icons_Newversion_edited_11.09.15ai-2.jpg
- Have one or two pieces of paper for each pair, rulers, felt tips or crayons.

Procedure

- Challenge the class to recall the 17 Global Goals if they are already familiar with them. If not, introduce the Goals.
- Introduce students to the concept of an icon, using ones that are typical in their context, e.g. icons for toilets or road signs.
- Discuss what they think makes a good icon, e.g. simple, clear, direct, easy to understand, attractive, memorable.
- Divide the class into pairs. Give one or two sheets of paper to each pair. Have rulers and felt tip pens or crayons available.
- In pairs, students use a ruler to draw one or two squares (10cm x 10cm) and create and design an icon for one or two Global Goals. These can be icon(s) either that you select or of their choice (but tell them to keep this 'secret' for now). If you like, set a time limit, e.g. 10 minutes.

- When they are ready, students take turns to show their icon(s) to the rest of the class who guess the Global Goal it represents, e.g. 'I think it's "Life below water".' 'You're right!' / 'No, it isn't. Guess again!'
- Stick all the students' icons on the board. Encourage them to say what they like about the different icons and why, e.g. 'I like the rhino and the elephant for "Life on land". It's attractive and clear.'
- Optionally, organise a class vote to decide which is the class's favourite icon.
- Project the official Global Goal icons. Students compare these with the icons they have designed and talk about the ones they like best.
- Ask students to work with their partner and think of things they can do to help achieve the Goals at home and in school, e.g. always put litter in the bin; wash hands before meals and after going to the bathroom; turn off lights and taps when you're not using them; use recycled paper; save water by having showers instead of baths; walk, cycle or use public transport to go to school.
- Pairs take turns to report back and share their ideas.
- Finish by briefly getting students to review what they have done and learned.

Follow-up

- Students make a collective book or poster (either digital or print) of the Global Goal icons they have designed together with a bullet-pointed list of 'Our ideas for achieving the goals at home and school'. This can be displayed either in the classroom or on a class blog or wiki.

Additional resources

YouTube – Mr Bean and the Global Goals

- This is a short animated film showing Mr Bean's humorous attempts to spread the word about the Global Goals: <https://youtu.be/s8cWM-TFZWm>

Activity 3: Create and play Global Goal games

Aims

- To create a card or board game based on the Global Goals
- To explain and play each other's games

Language focus

- Playing games, e.g. It's my/your turn. / Put the cards face up/down. / Throw the dice. / Move the counter. / I'm/You're the winner.

Creative focus

- Inventing and designing a game

Level A2+
Age 10–14
Time 60 minutes

Preparation

- Download and make copies of the Global Goal icons and cut them into sets of cards (one set for each student): http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2016/07/150902B_TheGlobalGoals_Logo_and_Icons_Newversion_edited_11.09.15ai-2.jpg
- You'll need large sheets of card, glue, counters, dice.

Procedure

- Give a set of Global Goal cards to each student.
- Explain, demonstrate and get students to play one or more well-known games with their sets of cards as below (Bingo, Memory and Snap). Use the games as an opportunity to pre-teach or remind students of language for playing games.

Bingo

Students choose ten cards and lay them out face up on their desks. Name the Global Goals in random order. Students listen and turn over the cards if they have the Goals you name. The first student to turn over all their cards says 'Bingo!' and is the winner.

Memory

In pairs, students lay out two sets of cards face down in random order on their desks. Students take turns to turn over two cards and name the goals. If the cards are a pair, they take them and have another turn. If not, they turn them back in exactly the same place. The student with most cards at the end of the game is the winner.

Snap

In pairs, students put their cards face down in a pile. They turn over the cards one by one at the same time and name the Goals. As soon as their two cards have matching Goals, the first student to say 'Snap' wins the cards. The student with most cards at the end of the game is the winner.

- Explain that students should work with their partner and create a new game either using the Global Goal cards or making them into a board game.
- Elicit or suggest the names of familiar games that might give students ideas for their games, e.g. Happy Families, Snakes and Ladders, Top Trumps, Ludo, Trivial Pursuit. Have ready large sheets of card, glue, counters and dice if students choose to make a board game.
- Students work together and create a game. They invent the rules and think of a name for their game, e.g. Global Goal Track – a board game played with dice and counters with squares consisting of Global Goals and other instructions such as 'Miss a go!', 'Go to Goal 11', 'Have another turn'. As part of the rules, students might invent that players have to, for example, say the aim of the Goal, or name one problem, or suggest a solution, or something they can do to achieve the Goal, for each Goal they land on.
- Pairs make groups of four and take turns to explain and play each other's games.
- Students report back to the class on the games they have played.
- Finish by briefly getting students to review what they have done and learned.

Follow-up

- Plan to leave 10–15 minutes at the end of subsequent lessons for students to take turns to play each other's games, with the pair who created the game introducing and explaining it each time.

Additional resources

World's Largest Lesson – Teaspoons of Change Global Goals

- This game is based on collecting 'teaspoons of change' by doing a series of actions over time to achieve all 17 Global Goals. The whole class or school can play the game collectively. <http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2016/09/Global-Goals-Bingo.pdf>

Activity 4: Global Goal themes and drama 'still life'

Aims

- To classify the Global Goals into six themes
- To create 'still life' drama scenes to convey the themes

Language focus

- Expressing opinions, e.g. I think ... goes here. / I think it's important that ... because ... / I think your scene shows the theme '...' / I like it because ...

Creative focus

- Thinking creatively and critically in relation to the Global Goals and themes; using drama to convey the themes

Level A2+

Age 10–14

Time 60 minutes

Preparation

- Download copies of Global Goal icons and cut them into sets of cards (one for each student) or reuse the cards you prepared for the previous activity: http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2016/07/150902B_TheGlobalGoals_Logo_and_Icons_Newversion_edited_11.09.15ai-2.jpg
- Download and make copies of one set of individual class-size Global Goal icons to use on the board: Goals Resource Centre – <http://www.globalgoals.org/resource-centre/the-basics/>
- Prepare six global theme cards with text as below in large-size font.

Procedure

- Review the Global Goals in a team game. Say the letters of the alphabet in random order. Students take turns to respond with keywords relating to the Global Goals and score points for their team, e.g. P! / Poverty / Peace; E! / Education / Energy; H! Health / Hunger.
- Divide the class into pairs. Give one set of small Global Goal cards to each pair.
- Name the Global Goals in turn and children hold up the correct cards.

- Explain that the Global Goals can be classified into six general themes. Stick the Global Goal theme cards in a row on the board. Read them and check understanding as you do this:
 1. Everyone has enough money to live.
 2. People are fit and well.
 3. There are opportunities to learn and work.
 4. The world is safe and fair.
 5. The environment is protected.
 6. Our way of life is sustainable.
- Explain that the pairs should work together and classify the Global Goals by grouping the cards on their desks into the six themes above. Demonstrate what you mean and give, or elicit, one or two examples, e.g. 'People get ill if they drink dirty water, so I think Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation) goes here (under number 2).'
- Monitor students as they work. Be ready to prompt, help and encourage as necessary.
- When students are ready, check the answers by inviting individual students in turns to come to the front of the class and stick the class-size Global Goal icons under the correct theme cards on the board. Encourage children to give reasons as they do this, e.g. 'I think Goal 5 (Gender equality) goes here (under number 4) because it's fair that boys and girls are equal.' Check that other children in the class agree.
 - o **Answer key:** theme 1 = Global Goals 1,10; theme 2 = Global Goals 2, 3, 6; theme 3 = Global Goals 4, 8; theme 4 = Global Goals 5, 16; theme 5 = Global Goals 7, 9, 11, 12, 17; theme 6 = Global Goals 13, 14, 15.
- Ask students which themes they think are most important. Listen to their responses and reasons, e.g. 'I think it's important that everyone has enough money because ...' Be ready to support students in expressing their meaning and recast and expand their answers as appropriate.
- Ask further questions about, for example, the theme that children think affects their city, region or country most, the theme that they think is easiest/hardest to achieve, the theme that they think they can personally do something/nothing about. Use the discussion to expand students' understanding of the broad themes of the Global Goals and to relate the Goals to their own lives. Show that you value their personal, divergent views.

- Divide the students into six groups. Give each group one of the Global Goal theme cards without others in the class seeing. Ask them to keep it a 'secret'.
- Explain that students are going to do a drama activity and that each group should work together and create a 'still life' scene that conveys the theme on their card. Demonstrate that children should be ready to 'freeze' in position as part of their group's scene. (These are sometimes called 'tableaux'.)
- Give a time limit, e.g. 3–5 minutes, for students to prepare their scenes.
- When they are ready, students take turns to show their 'still life' scenes to the rest of the class and guess the themes. Invite children to comment positively on aspects of the 'still life' scenes that they like and feel convey the theme most effectively.
- Finish by briefly getting students to review what they have done and learned.

Follow-up

- Students use the small sets of Global Goal cards to classify the Global Goals on their desks in other ways of their choice, e.g. Goals that they think are very relevant/quite relevant/not relevant to their city, region or country. Children then look at each other's classifications and try and deduce the criteria used.

Additional resources

YouTube – Numbers in Action

- This is a short animated film set to a catchy, rhythmic rap which shows the progress in numbers in tackling selected Global Goals and what still needs to be achieved by 2030. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mdm49_rUMgo

Activity 5: Global Goal connections and Project Action Plan

Aims

- To explore connections between Global Goals
- To make an action plan to achieve one Global Goal (leading to a project)

Language focus

- Talking about causation, e.g. If ..., then ...; making suggestions, e.g. Let's ... / What about ...? / Why don't we ...?

Creative focus

- Thinking creatively and critically to establish links between Global Goals; brainstorming ideas for a plan of action (leading to a project)

Level A2+

Age 10–14

Time 60 minutes

Preparation

- Make copies of Global Goal icons cut into sets (as in the earlier activities); large sheet of card (one for each group), (optional) coloured straws or pipe cleaners.

Procedure

- Divide the students into groups. Give each group a set of Global Goal icons, a large piece of card, glue and (optionally) coloured straws or pipe cleaners.
- Students stick the icons (spaced out in any position or order) on the card.
- Explain and demonstrate that students should take turns to draw lines (or stick coloured straws or pipe cleaners) to create a spidergram showing connections between the Global Goals and give reasons as they do this, e.g. 'If children are hungry (Goal 2), then it is difficult for them to concentrate and learn at school (Goal 4).' / 'If people don't have jobs (Goal 8), they are poor (Goal 1).' / 'If there isn't clean water to drink (Goal 6), people get ill (Goal 3).' If you like, set a time limit for this, e.g. 15 minutes.
- Groups take turns to report back and compare the Global Goal spidergrams they have created.
- Use the results to talk about how global problems and solutions are linked.
- Ask the groups to choose one Global Goal and brainstorm ideas for an action plan (in English or their own language) of what they can personally do to help achieve the Goal. Elicit ideas for one Goal as an example, e.g.



- Students work together and make their plans. Set a time limit for this, e.g. 15 minutes.
- Groups take turns to present and comment on each other's ideas and plans.
- Ask the groups to decide which of their ideas they would like to act on as a project (possibly working on one idea each in pairs).
- Finish by briefly getting students to review what they have done and learned.

Follow-up

- Get students to make a detailed plan for their project. Establish a timeline and success criteria for the projects. The projects can be carried out as part of several subsequent lessons and/or at home.

Additional resources

YouTube – Emma Watson Introduces the World's Largest Lesson 2016

- This is a short film showing inspiring, animated stories of children's creative achievements to meet the Global Goals in different countries. <https://youtu.be/-cEUhHTIcDU>

World's Largest Lesson – Elif Bilgin, Turkey

- This document has photos and real-life stories of the children in the 'World's Largest Lesson 2016' animated film and an invitation to children everywhere to be part of the action. <http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2016/08/Changemakers-Take-Action2.pdf>

Conclusion

The future of our planet is in the hands of today's children. By developing children's awareness and understanding of the Global Goals through engaging and creative activities, it is hoped that they will not only enrich their vocabulary and enhance their English language skills in a meaningful, creative and memorable way but also develop interest, concern, motivation and a sense of social responsibility for major issues facing all people and our planet today.

Further resources

Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL) – 2015

- This statement was made by children at the Children's Summit, New York, USA, in September 2015 as principle stakeholders in global decisions, and can be inspiring to share with children (B1/2).

Enchanted Learning – World Environment Day Crafts and Projects

- This is a subscription site but also has a lot of free ideas and activities for celebrating World Environment Day (5 June) with younger children (A1/2).
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/wed/>

Global Goals Resource Centre

- This site has a wide range of freely downloadable resources as well as links to images and films related to the Global Goals. <http://www.globalgoals.org/resource-centre/the-basics/>

Onestopenglish – Amazing World of Animals

- This is a subscription site with a project on wild animals for young learners, including an understanding of animal habitats and why some animals are in danger (A1/2). <http://www.onestopenglish.com/clil/young-learners/animals/project-amazing-world-of-animals/>

Onestopenglish – Amazing World of Food

- This is a subscription site with a project on food for young learners, including an understanding of responsible consumption and basic issues related to world hunger (A1/2).

TeachingEnglish – Promoting Diversity Through Children's Literature

- This site gives you access to freely downloadable materials based on eight picture books suitable for children which develop awareness and understanding of issues related to the Global Goals, such as equality, inclusion, racism, recycling, climate and responsible consumption (A1/2).
<http://tinyurl.com/z9pzj7n>

World's Largest Lesson

- This site is a fantastic treasure trove of freely downloadable resources and information for educators working with young people on the Global Goals. The site includes booklets, fact sheets, lesson plans, stories and comics as well as videos and animated cartoons, some of which are either suitable or can be adapted to use in the ELT classroom with children (A2+).
<http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/>