



Sample Lesson Plan 3: Human Rights from Field to Fork

“It’s Just Not Fair!”

For children ages nine and up. (The alternative activity in Option B can be used for a much younger age group.)

Note: Part of this lesson plan is adapted from a longer activity for the same age group. It can be found at oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/find_your_way_through_trade/files/lesson5_doing_business.pdf.

Other sample lesson plans are available at uusc.org/resource/field_to_fork_lesson_plans.

Overview

This lesson plan is about how farmers and shippers interact. It also helps children think about how lack of fair trade affects the lives of farmers by talking about it, visually expressing their ideas on paper, and engaging in an interactive game in which they pretend to be farmers or shippers. By the end of this game, children will better understand why fair trade is important (it helps farmers to live a more decent way of life) and also understand how fair trade ultimately impacts them.

Objectives

The students will do the following:

- Understand that food comes from farmers
- Learn about the different resources that farmers need in order to produce food
- Learn about the various reasons that farmers need money to survive
- Recognize the injustice that occurs when it comes to equal pay between buyers and producers
- Understand why farmers need to be paid fairly
- Realize that they can help farmers by getting involved in UUSC’s Field to Fork project

Materials

- Copies of “This is a Fair Trade Poem,” a poem about fair trade available at freespace.virgin.net/sound.houses/poetry/fair_trade.htm [Andrew Rudd, *One Cloud Away from the Sky* (2007), business.virgin.net/sound.houses]

For Activity Option A

- Copies of cocoa-pod pictures: approximately 12 pods for each group of 4 children (http://homeschooling.about.com/od/freeprintables/ss/chocolateprint_7.htm)
- Copies of money pictures: approximately one sheets of paper money for each group of 4 children (<http://www.crayola.com/free-coloring-pages/print/play-money-coloring-page/>)
- Scissors
- Colored pencils
- White construction paper
- Regular pencils/pens

For Activity Option B

- White construction paper
- Colored markers/crayons
- Regular pencils/pens
- Pictures to color (can be found on websites listed below)

Focusing activity (5 minutes)

Open the lesson with the concept of fairness. You can either lead the discussion by asking the student what being “fair” means to them or can lead an “unfair” activity as an example. For example, you can call two students to the front of the classroom and give each one a piece of a cookie, one bigger than the other. You can then ask each student how they feel about have unequal cookie sizes. Then ask the other students how they feel being left out of receiving any cookie.

You can then lead into a discussion about unfairness with the following questions:

- What do you think makes a situation unfair?
- How did this activity make you feel? Why do you believe it was unfair?

Activity (20 minutes)

Option A: Play a game

Please note that the size of group can be adjusted. As an example, you can have two shippers and add more cocoa-pod farmers. However, it is always important to have more farmers than shippers in order for the game to work properly.

- Divide the class into small groups of four and assign each group a color.
- Each group should be made of three cocoa-pod farmers and one shipper.
- Give the children cocoa pods and money: four cocoa pods for each farmer and one sheet of paper money per group.
- Tell the children that the farmer has been working all year long growing cocoa pods. The shipper is waiting to buy the cocoa pods and take them to the factories to make chocolate. They will not accept any cocoa pods that look ugly.
- The farmer has to make sure they sell all of their cocoa pods.
- The farmer has to try to sell *all* of their cocoa pods, so they have to be fast! They have to cut out the pictures of the cocoa pods and color them in their group color nicely or else the shipper can decide not to buy them.

You should not answer any of the students' questions during the game. Play this game for about 12 minutes, or until at least one group has sold their cocoa pods.

Activity A discussion

Engage students with the following questions:

- Did the farmers ask for money? How did you decide at what price to sell your cocoa pods? What do you think is a good price for the cocoa pods?
- Was the farmer able to pick the price they wanted, or did the shipper decide?
- Which group was the first to sell all of its cocoa pods?
- Who won in the end — the fastest group, the one that made the most money, or the one with the best-looking cocoa pods?

You may wish to focus discussion only on who had the power to set the prices, and how this worked out for different groups, possibly connecting it back to the earlier discussion about fairness. Or you can also discuss who was fastest and connect that to the idea that the students were competing to sell to the shipper — and if the system was fairer, they would be able to afford to take the time and money (in real life) needed to make a better quality cocoa pod.

Activity A, Part 2

Play the same game, but this time have the shipper pay \$2 for every 10 cocoa pods s/he gets. Let the kids know it usually is \$32 for 10 cocoa pods, but you can't pay them that. If

they ask why, tell them that if they don't accept what the shipper offers s/he will just buy pods elsewhere.

Activity A, Part 2 discussion

Engage students with the following questions and ideas:

- Do you think the game was fair? Why or why not?
- When there are many farmers who all need to sell their food, the system does not always work out in a way that is fair for them.
- Farmers have to work very hard to make money. We all need money to live. What are some things that farmers need to be able to buy? Can a farmer buy food and clothes if s/he doesn't get any money for his/her crops?
- When farmers are paid a fair price for their crops, they can buy the things they need for themselves and their families.

Option B: Draw a farmer

Divide the students into pairs or larger groups and give each group a piece of paper. Tell them that in their groups they will draw a picture together; they should take turns drawing and share the colored pencils. They will be drawing a picture of a happy farmer. Depending on the age of your students, you may wish to direct them when to give the colored pencils to another child, or simply let them work together in their groups. After the children are done drawing, lead a discussion. What things does their farmer have that is making him/her happy? How are they being treated by people who are buying the food they grow? Ask students to discuss the difference between farmers who are being treated badly and ones who are being treated well? (For example, their kids have clothes for school and they are healthy.)

Alternative activity

You can ask kids to color in pictures showing what farmers do or how they help us to get the food we need. Pictures can be found at honkingdonkey.com/coloring-pages/farm-life/02-farms-09.htm and edupics.com/coloring-pages-farmer-c362.html.

Discussion (10 minutes)

Lead a discussion on how farmers are negatively impacted when they are not paid a fair wage. Depending on the ages of the students in your group, you may wish to share some of the following information:

- Cocoa-bean farmers are some of the poorest people on earth and can make as little as \$80 a year.

- The average cocoa farmer in Africa earns just 80 cents a day. (See care2.com/causes/how-much-should-chocolate-cost.html.)
- Children are unable to get a decent education and families are unable to have access to important services such as proper healthcare because they are not paid equally with a decent living wage.
- Farm work involves hard physical labor and long hours, and cocoa farmers have little access to resources more commonly available to workers in urban areas, like health care for their families or education resources for their children.

Introduce UUSC's work (10 minutes)

Share the following: "The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is a group that works with people around the world to help make their lives better. It does this by helping people defend their human rights. One of UUSC's four main programs focuses on economic justice. Through this program, UUSC can help farmers get paid fairly for their important work growing food for us to eat. This way everyone can be happy. One project under this program is called Human Rights from Field to Fork. (This is part of UUSC's Choosing Compassionate Consumption campaign; see uus.org/cc.) Through this project, UUSC teaches members and supporters just like you to support the rights of people who grow food and help us get food in our stores and into our own homes!" If you have not already done so, this is a good time to introduce the specifics of the project your congregation is planning.

Plan a project (10–20 minutes, depending on whether you do one of the activities above)

This is a great time to discuss the idea of a fundraising project, so that students can help support this human-rights work and become active members in making a difference. You might prefer to begin planning in place of some of the aforementioned activities, or choose to do it at this point, after you've introduced UUSC's work.

Other congregations have hosted events such as the following:

- A bake sale at coffee hour
- An ice-cream social
- A pancake breakfast
- A presentation to the congregation led by the youth
- A table at coffee hour and an announcement during the service

Closing (5 minutes)

Option A

Stand in a circle and have all the children recite the fair-trade poem out loud. You can recite it more than once and each time say it louder and louder with more energy and with joy that they have learned so much about fair trade today! “This is a Fair Trade Poem” can be found at freespace.virgin.net/sound.houses/poetry/fair_trade.htm [Andrew Rudd, *One Cloud Away from the Sky* (2007), business.virgin.net/sound.houses].

Option B

Have the children stand in a circle and have each child say how fair trade helps improve the life of a cocoa farmer (e.g., “A child will be able to go to school because of fair trade.”).

What Is Human Rights from Field to Fork?

The Human Rights from Field to Fork initiative is an effort to raise awareness and to mobilize UUSC members and supporters in support of the rights of workers in the food sector. It falls under the umbrella of our Choose Compassionate Consumption campaign (see uusc.org/cc). Workers often face discrimination and dangerous working conditions. UUSC works with grassroots partner organizations and UU congregations to help these workers defend their rights through organizing, political lobbying, training each other, and building their own capacity as workers and organizers.

You can read more about these programs at uusc.org/cc/fieldtofork and uusc.org/economicjustice.