



**Sustainable  
development  
Education through  
International  
Understanding:**

Teaching Geography through the  
lens of sustainable development.



# Breaking Barriers

As a teacher focused on breaking barriers and bringing perspectives beyond the classroom walls, my innovative, hybrid standard-project based curriculum is centered around cultural understanding and global perspectives.



# Empower Students

The strategies are cross-curricular and have been used to empower students to actively participate in a globalized world.



"I learned that many of our problems are related and we can solve them if we work together,"  
- Student reflection.



Through a step-by-step process participants will become globally focused educators.





# Step 1: Understand Sustainability



# Sustainable Development



## **Sustainability:**

Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment.

Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.

## **The 3 E's of Sustainability:**

Environment (Nature), Economics (Money), Equality (Social)

It takes all three of these concepts working together to create high quality of life for all people for all generations.

## **Sustainability Topics:**

There are many topics that can be used, however we use the following topics to teach human, physical & cultural geography:  
Water, Agriculture, Urbanization, Energy, Disaster Resilience



Step 2:  
Know the Global  
Competency Matrix



# The Global Competency Matrix



## o **Step 1: Investigate the world**

**Students investigate the world beyond their immediate environment.**

Ways my students investigate the world:

Current Events

Pen-pals/exchanges

International Pop Culture

Research

How do your students investigate the world? (Please share)

## o **Step 2: Recognize Perspectives**

**Students recognize their own and others' perspectives.**

Ways my students recognize multiple perspectives:

Context and Perspective Simulation

MUN/MEU

Student exchanges

How do your students recognize multiple perspectives? (Please share)



# The Global Competency Matrix cont.



## o **Step 3: Communicate Ideas**

**Students communicate their ideas effectively with diverse audiences.**

Ways my students communicate ideas:

Share what they learned/Ideas through:

Create Videos

Write Essay

Give Presentations

Share ideas with other students, international discussions

How do your students communicate ideas? (Please share)

## o **Step 4: Take Action**

**Students translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions.**

Ways my students take action:

Community Service

Changing individual habits

International Collaboration (Videos/ Projects)

How do your students take action? (Please share)



Step 3:  
Make Media  
Literacy a priority



# Media Literacy



Memorization and repeating is no longer a necessary skill for the 21st Century. We have access to an infant amount of information at our finger tips, I make the argument that it is more important for students to analyze information rather than memorize the information.

## **5 Concepts of Media Literacy** *according to the Media Literacy Center* 5 Key Questions of Media Literacy

- Who created this message?
- What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
- How might different people understand this message differently than me?
- What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
- Why is this message being sent?



# Media Literacy Cont.



## Five Core Concepts

- 1. All media messages are ‘constructed.’**
- 2. Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.**
- 3. Different people experience the same media message differently.**
- 4. Media have embedded values and points of view.**
- 5. Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.**

*Media Literacy Lesson* - Compare and Contrast media and propaganda in North Korea & South Korea

Media Literacy Worksheet --- PBS Frontline Documentary: "Secret State of North Korea"



# Step 4: Make Connections





# Make Connections

**Everything is interconnected**

**– help students ask questions, think critically and find the connections**

Example: Oil & Bagels – PSA Video is on next slide

**Make connections between the earliest civilizations today**

Connecting students to the past through these topics -

Early Humans: Nomadic lifestyle to Agrarian lifestyle

---> the 1st Agricultural Revolution

Humans settled near water ---> started farming --->

*gave people TIME* (Specialization) ---> build cities ---> energy advancements

---> disaster resilience

Ask questions that allow students to connect the abstract concepts of geography to real world situations:

**Give them [Students] the space to discover how these concepts are real to them**





# Step 5: Rethink Assessment



# Time for a Paradigm Shift



Paradigm shift is needed: **What does the grade represent?**

- What is it that students really need to know?
- Do students really need to memorize every country in Africa?
- Is that going to benefit them in their life?

**Teach them how to use the resources, then to think critically:**

- Why is there a climate or cultural difference?
- How does the economy, politics impact their life here in Utah? – Refugees, economy, volunteer work, your actions here can impact their resources

Breaks – NO BUSY WORK: Ask yourself,

- “What is the point of this worksheet/assignment?”
- “How will this benefit the lives of my students?”

–Meaning what are they going to get out of doing this assignment.

If the answer to any of the above is anything like: to fill time, because they need to memorize..., to repeat something they already know, I’ve been doing this assignment for... etc.

Then RETHINK the assignment.

Don’t give unnecessary assignments





# Rethink Free Time

Free time –

Korean Language practice

Proposed Project: Students work on any project of their choice: Ex. Interior design, programming (Resource: Project Proposal Form) Social Contract

Giving students space to explore, create and think is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill, its why we have Google products such as Google Drive.

<http://educationismylife.com/designing-20-time-in-education/>

Why 20% Time Is Good for Schools

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/20-percent-time-a-j-juliani>

How to Build Students' Creative Confidence – Suzie Boss

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/how-to-build-creative-confidence-students-suzie-boss>



# International Resources



International Resources:

Going Global

Institute for International Education

[lie.org](http://lie.org)

Fulbright Japan-US Teacher Exchange for ESD

American Council for International Education

<http://www.americancouncils.org/programs/>

World Affairs Council

<http://www.dfwworld.org/IEP/Teachers/Travel>



**Failure is a  
Learning Tool**





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[TeacherTravelTips.weebly.com](http://TeacherTravelTips.weebly.com)

- 2015 USC Shoah Foundation & IWitness Educator
- 2015 National Geographic Grosvenor Teacher Fellow
- 2015 PBS Digital Media Learning Innovator

