

6D – International Cooperation

MCCC Unit 7 lessons 5 and 6

6th Grade Social Studies Network – 2015-6
Part D of Unit 6 – Political Geography

GLCEs: 6G221 Human characteristics, 6G4 Dividing land, 6G442 Cooperation and conflict,
6Civics431 Governments address international issues; 6C433 treaties and international agreements

1. Scaffolding activity: Is this a local, state, national, international, or global issue?

Geography in the News: <http://geo.appstate.edu/research/geography-news>

Scale of an Issue activity and TG

2. Scaffolding activity: Addressing International Issues.

The Basic Structure of the United Nations

3. Activity: Representation in the UN.

Students learn that one of the big barriers to effective action by the United Nations is the simple fact that its formula for representation has an obvious flaw – a country like Tuvalu, population less than 10,000, has exactly the same vote in the General Assembly as China or India, which are a hundred thousand times larger. “That isn’t fair!” This activity uses an interactive map to explore the consequence of different formulas for assigning votes to countries. (30-50 minutes)

6th 6D What’s Fair? United Nations activity and TG Interactive map – Voting in the UN

4. Extension Activity: Charity Navigator.

This website allows students to evaluate charities and non-governmental organizations. Specifically, they can find answers to these questions:

How much of the contributed money actually goes to the stated target? And

How much goes to pay for fundraising, administration, and, in some cases, lavish salaries for the “employees” of what should be described as a particularly slimy kind of fraud (10-30 minutes, depending on how many charities students “investigate” and whether they do it in class or at home with their parents/guardians; more if used as a way to describe the work and value of some important NGOs (non-government organizations, like Habitat, Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, World Wildlife, etc.)

<http://www.charitynavigator.org/>

<http://charitycheck101.org/>

Pages from MCCC

MCCC SuppMaterials.SS060705 word cards, examples of treaties, other international action

MCCC SuppMaterials.SS060706 word cards, descriptions of United Nations, NGOs

MCCC SS060705.Powerpoint includes a useful section about treaties in Antarctica – this could be a model for independent investigation of other treaty arrangements.

MCCC SS060706.Powerpoint has some useful information about the United Nations, though we also recommend going directly to the websites of both government agencies and non-government organizations.

Takehome: International issues are being addressed by a wide variety of institutional, governmental, and non-governmental groups, as well as businesses and many individual entrepreneurs. The result is a great deal of creativity and dedication, but also a lot of overlap and gaps between programs. The United Nations is hobbled partly by the ineffectiveness of its General Assembly, where tiny countries with fewer than 100,000 people have the same voting power as giant countries like China, India, or the United States. A 6th grade student should learn about some of the basic forms of international cooperation, as well as how to investigate the effectiveness of NGOs that often put heart-tugging commercials on television and internet sites to ask for contributions.