

The Lowdown

Decoding the news

KQED
Education

The Global Textile Economy [Educator Guide]

By David Ko

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Photo: Art Cummings/Flickr

Common Core Reading/Writing Standards

RL4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

California Content Standards

10.11 Students analyze the integration of countries into the world economy and the information, technological, and communications revolutions (e.g., television, satellites, computers).

Language Objective

Students will be able to define globalization and explain the connection between buying clothes and workers wages, using “if/then” and “therefore/because”.

Relevance and Rationale

Students will use media and current events to understand the effects of globalization.

- Who suffers from globalization?
- Who benefits?
- If globalization hurts workers in both rich and poor countries, why is it happening?

Vocabulary

- Globalization
- Free trade
- Industrialization

Activity

1. Warm-Up: Check your clothes labels to see where they're made. Discuss with your neighbors.

2. Show comic on income inequality

<http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2014/04/25/income-inequality/>

3. Show Prezi slideshow. Emphasize the interconnected and international nature of the things we buy <http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2013/06/04/making-your-t-shirt-a-journey-around-the-world/>

4. Give students handout to read, emphasize the impact of globalization on workers in poor countries like Bangladesh

<http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2013/05/17/who-made-your-t-shirt-the-hidden-cost-of-cheap-fashion/>

5. Show students read , emphasizing the disappearance of American manufacturing:

<http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2013/05/24/madeinamerica/>

F. Synthesize what you've learned today, explaining why you would or wouldn't be willing to pay more to guarantee the people who made your clothes were paid a fair wage.



The collapsed Rana Plaza in Bangladesh, where more than 1,100 garment workers were killed. (Wikimedia Commons)

Modifications for students with IEPs:

- Reduce text from blog
- Provide Venn diagram graphic organizer with example

Modifications for ELA students:

- Reduce text from blog
- Provide Venn diagram graphic organizer with example

KQED Lowdown Globalization Lesson: Student Worksheet

Name:

A. <http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2014/04/25/income-inequality/>

1. What is outsourcing?

2. What is globalization?

3. Why do workers generally like manufacturing jobs more than service jobs?

B. <http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2013/06/04/making-your-t-shirt-a-journey-around-the-world/>

1. What surprises you about the map? Why?

2. Why do the clothes travel tens of thousands of miles?

C. <http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2013/05/17/who-made-your-t-shirt-the-hidden-cost-of-cheap-fashion/>

1. What is life like for the people who make clothes in Bangladesh?

2. Why are there so many Bangladeshi factories making American clothes?

3. How do clothes companies benefit from low wages?

4. How do consumers (YOU) benefit from low wages?

5. What are some ways globalization actually helps Bangladesh?

D. <http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/2013/05/24/madeinamerica/>

1. From 1960 to the present, what's the general trend for percent of money spent on clothes?

2. From 1960 to the present, what's the general trend for percent of clothes made in the U.S.?

3. What are three reasons why clothes (and most other things) are less likely to be made in the U.S.?

1.

2.

3.

E. On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph answering this prompt: are you willing to pay extra to make sure the workers who made your clothes were paid a decent wage? Why or why not? Cite at least 3 of the posts (A), (B), (C), and/or (D).