



BRIDGES THAT UNITE

An Exploration of International Development

A teaching resource for use in Grades 5–8
Social Science, Social Studies and Geography

Supporting education about

- Canada and the world
- Global citizenship
- Democracy, action and participation
- World geography, cultures and economies

www.bridgesthatunite.ca



CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

This resource was initiated by Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) and developed by Classroom Connections. The activities are designed to be used on their own to help students explore global issues and international development, and they can be used to support and enhance class visits to the Bridges that Unite touring exhibition.

AKFC (www.akfc.ca) is a non-denominational, non-profit international development agency that supports social and economic development initiatives in Asia and Africa. As a member of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), AKFC works to address the root causes of poverty, finding and sharing effective solutions to improve the quality of life in poor communities. Programs focus on four core areas: health, education, rural development and building the capacity of non-governmental organizations. Gender equity and protecting the environment are integrated into every program.

For 25 years, Canada, AKFC and the AKDN have helped to create democratic, village-level institutions that value and build on the resources and ideas of communities in the developing world. Working primarily in resource-poor and marginalized regions, programs address the multifaceted nature of poverty and recognize the need for a long-term commitment to finding sustainable solutions. This approach has achieved measurable results, including sharp reductions in poverty, dramatic increases in per capita income and impressive gains in literacy rates, and has generated considerable knowledge and lessons for Canada and the world.

The Bridges that Unite exhibit is a bilingual, interactive exhibition that invites visitors to explore Canada's role in international development through the lens of the 25-year partnership with the AKDN. The exhibit comes alive with the creative interplay of audio, video, computer kiosks and stunning photography. Students will see how the process of social change begins in a simple ring of chairs and hear the voices of people in communities from around the world. They will meet Canadian Agents of Change, who are working to address the roots of poverty, and will be inspired to think about their own potential as global citizens. For more information, visit www.bridgesthatunite.ca and consult the Bridges that Unite insert (provided with this resource) for ideas on maximizing the learning opportunities offered through the exhibit.

Classroom Connections is a non-profit organization that creates and distributes innovative educational resources free to publicly funded schools across Canada. Our goal is to inspire youth to reach their full potential as informed, socially responsible and engaged citizens. Since 1997 we have developed and delivered more than 15 free resource packages to schools, communities and faculties of education across the country. To download our full range of materials, please go to www.classroomconnections.ca. To order additional copies of this resource, contact us at info@classroomconnections.ca or 1-888-992-8865.



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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

What difference will this resource make?

This resource encourages students to deepen their understanding of global poverty—to see our connections to the rest of the world, to explore the roots of inequities and to understand the importance of assistance that preserves human dignity, values diversity and unleashes the inherent power of community. Experience has shown that successful development is possible—if initiatives invest in people and ensure that beneficiaries over time become the owners of the development process. This means addressing the intertwined causes of poverty and helping communities mobilize their resources so that they can help themselves. Ultimately, it means providing a **hand up instead of a handout**. The stories contained in this resource draw on the long-term experience of Canada and Canadians in the developing world, and encourage students to see themselves as part of the bridge of hope that unites us as global citizens.



Pedagogical approach

This resource uses a student-centred, activity-based education model founded in the perspective that youth learn best when they are encouraged to construct meaning for themselves—learning *through* experiences, not just learning *about* facts. The activities incorporate multiple learning styles as students move between individual, pair and group work, scaffolding understanding and enhancing the ability to internalize complex concepts within a short time frame. This approach also encourages teachers to act as facilitators and co-learners, minimizing the need for extensive knowledge or expertise in international development. Where helpful, suggested facts and responses are included to assist in leading class discussions or to provide the concrete source material needed to maximize the potential outcomes of the learning opportunities provided.

Tips for using this resource

The lessons in this resource have been created as a unit that builds foundational understanding and encourages exploration of key concepts and critical global issues to allow for deeper learning and meaningful attitudinal change. While we recommend that the lessons be used together, each set of lesson activities can also stand alone to provide learning opportunities around a particular aspect of international development. The term “lesson” does not imply that it can be completed within one class. Class periods vary with timetables, and experience in co-operative learning, language levels and group dynamics can all affect the time needed to complete these activities. The teacher is the best judge of these factors.

Curriculum connections

The themes and concepts presented provide excellent links to Ministry of Education curricular objectives/expectations in Social Science, History and Geography programs across the country. Activities also maximize a variety of specific skill-based objectives/expectations and competencies such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, social skills and map analysis. Each lesson outlines general objectives/expectations to assist teachers in program planning. The activities can easily be adjusted for grade and level by providing varying degrees of support, allowing additional time and adjusting expected outcomes.

Assessment

The focus of assessment within this resource is on providing examples of real problems where a “right answer” is not always the goal. Attitudinal shifts as well as the acquisition of knowledge and the development of critical thinking are key outcomes. Throughout the resource, students’ work from lesson activities and extensions can be used in formative assessment, providing a variety of methods for demonstrating learning. Rubrics, observation sheets, and peer and self-assessment are recommended to help students take responsibility for their own learning.

LESSON	OVERVIEW	HANDOUTS
 <p style="text-align: center;">1 BRIDGES THAT CONNECT Page 3</p>	<p>This lesson helps students to build a bridge between life in Canada and life in the developing world. The activities raise awareness of our global interconnections and examine inequities in quality of life as an introduction to the concepts of poverty and development. Learning opportunities help students to recognize commonalities and reduce “us versus them” perspectives.</p>	<p><i>Handout 1:</i> My Story</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">2 BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING Page 7</p>	<p>This lesson encourages students to explore fundamental human needs in order to expand their definition of poverty beyond simply a lack of economic resources. Through examination of international measures and goals relating to world poverty, students begin to build an understanding of the multiple and interconnected causes of poverty that need to be considered in building effective solutions.</p>	<p><i>Handout 2:</i> What Do I Need?</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">3 BRIDGES OF ACTION Page 11</p>	<p>This lesson challenges student perceptions of what it means to “help” others. By analyzing school and community level scenarios as well as international examples, students will identify key factors in providing effective assistance. Activities will clarify concepts such as helping people help themselves (capacity building), the need for community leadership, disaster relief and development.</p>	<p><i>Handout 3:</i> A Helping Hand</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">4 BRIDGES OF PEOPLE Page 14</p>	<p>This lesson explores creative methods for building capacity and looks at some of the less visible ways that poverty affects individuals, communities and countries. The activities provide opportunities for students to make a human connection with development, culminating in the chance to interview a Canadian “Agent of Change” working in a developing country. Students will apply what they have learned about helping others to creating their own action projects.</p>	<p><i>Handout 4:</i> Kabul to Cairo</p>

LESSON 1: BRIDGES THAT CONNECT

Objectives/Expectations

Students will:

- develop awareness of the multiple ways that Canadians are linked with the rest of the world
- understand that quality of life varies greatly for children globally and within Canada
- deconstruct “us versus them” thinking by recognizing core commonalities they share with other children wherever and however they are living
- begin to build initial awareness of global issues such as poverty, water safety/scarcity, access to education, lack of infrastructure, food security, etc.



Activity 1: Making Connections

1. Give students 15 minutes to interview classmates and find as many connections as they can to countries outside Canada. Have students record the countries and the connections in a two-column chart. If they are stuck, have them ask about favourite foods, music, travel, sports, etc., and suggest checking belongings—shoes, school supplies, lunch items—for marks of origin.
2. Gather students in front of the **A Developing World** map (included with this resource) to share connections, list countries represented and locate the countries identified. As connections are shared, group them into like items, and have students categorize the types of connections found (e.g., *trade, immigration, travel, cultural influences*).
3. Get feedback from students and debrief with the following questions:
 - What surprises you most about the connections we have?
 - How do you think these connections influence us as individuals?
As a country?
 - Do you think our class list or map would look different if we lived in a bigger/smaller city or in another province? How? Why?
(*There is greater immigration to large cities—especially Vancouver, Toronto and Montréal. Smaller rural areas have fewer new immigrants but may share a similar immigration history.*)
 - Do you think Canadians in general have a lot of connections to the rest of the world? How? (*Point out the people connection: almost 20% of our population was born outside Canada and over 200 languages are spoken here.*)
 - It has been said by many people that “the world needs more Canada.” What do you think they mean?
What strengths do you think we could share with the rest of the world?
4. Have students collect media stories that show Canada’s connection to the rest of the world. Post stories around the **A Developing World** map, and use push-pins and string to make connections to the locations identified.

