

Lesson Plan 1: Buy a banana – Who’s affected?

Pupils carry out an investigation into the production of a particular product made in another country. They consider how production affects the different people and organisations involved: producers (small farmers as well as large companies), employees and customers.

STARTER

Hold up a banana. Ask pupils to jot down how much they think this banana cost, and why it was priced at this amount. They have only two minutes and the person who guesses the cost correctly, with the most accurate summary of the reasons (see below) will win the banana. *NB Be careful not to give away the reasons with too much accuracy at this stage!* [5 mins]

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Activity One Divide the class into groups of five. One person should also be chosen as spokesperson for each group. Give out The Banana Split Game. Explain that a ‘dollar’ banana (ie. an intensively produced banana from Latin and Central America where powerful US companies control production) is sold for 30p. Each group must work out how much of the 30p goes to the banana worker, plantation owner, shipper, shop-owner and the importer and ripener. Explain that each person in the group should read and assume one of these roles, and argue his/her case for receiving a fair share of the money. When each person has spoken, the group must come to an agreement on what proportion of the 30p each should receive. The spokespersons will then be asked to present each group’s views. [20 mins]

When all the groups have given their feedback, reveal the true figures (banana worker 1p, plantation owner 5p, shipper 4p, shop-owner 13p, importer and ripener 7p) and ask for reactions. [5 mins]

Activity Two Give out Summary Sheet: Windward Islands Bananas. This contains details of the Windward Islands’ banana industry and of how the ending of a quota system, which guaranteed the Windward Islands a market in Britain, could mean the end of its banana industry. (See Teacher’s Background: Windward Islands Bananas for more information.) Ask half the class to read the information and to list bullet points on why, in their own opinion, the quota system should be continued. Ask the other half of the class to list bullet points on why it should be discontinued. Feedback and discuss. [20 mins]

PLENARY

Show the image of a banana farmer from Uganda. Ask pupils for one minute in silence to imagine being a banana farmer whose livelihood is threatened by world trade rules or transnational companies. Ask them to write on a flip chart/whiteboard notepad one word to describe how they feel in role, and one thing that they have learnt during this lesson. [2 mins]

Alternative Lesson 1: Cover the same learning objectives by using the video “The Luckiest Nut” and activities in the accompanying teacher’s notes, available from CAFOD. This video of animations and film clips is an engaging explanation of how trade rules affect developing countries.

Objectives

Pupils should learn:

- About the one industry and how it affects different people and organisations: producers, employees and customers
- About the interdependence of different countries and places

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- know the main elements of the production process of one product
- show an understanding of some of the ways that trade in one product affects small producers, large companies, employees and consumers
- show an understanding of how some companies use cheap labour in less developed countries
- reflect on their learning

You will need:

- A banana
- Plenary image, either downloaded from this pack and copied/enlarged for the class, or projected electronically.
- Copies of The Banana Split Game, downloaded from CAFOD’s website.
- Summary sheet: Windward Islands Bananas