

GlobalTribe Educational Curriculum

Philippines Lesson: Smoky Valley

January, 2003

www.pbs.org/globaltribe

GlobalTribe is a PBS series that combines the spirit of travel with a meaningful exploration of the global issues that affect us all. On our journeys to remote corners of the world, we seek to understand in human terms the universal struggles of our planet: from healing racial wounds to saving the environment to improving the lives of the poorest among us. Our quest is also to find solutions and to meet the unsung heroes in every country who offer us hope and a path to a better tomorrow.

For more information, contact:

Creative Visions
1223 Sunset Plaza Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90069
www.creativevisions.org

Developed by:

Creative Visions &
Jennifer New

Introduction / Pre-viewing

1. Provide students with the following details one by one and ask them to guess the country being described:
 - This country experiences cyclones, landslides, earthquakes, tsunamis, and destructive volcanic action.
 - 83% of the population is Roman Catholic.
 - This country gained independence from the United States on July 4, 1946.
 - 40% of people in this country live on less than a dollar a day.
 - It is comprised of about 7,100 islands.
 - The aboriginals of the islands are called the Aetas and are a pygmy people.
 - There are approximately 70 distinct indigenous languages in use throughout the country.
 - The navigator Ferdinand Magellan was killed while trying to lay claim to the islands in the name of Spain. Spain eventually controlled the islands for nearly four centuries.

Once you have divulged that the country in question is the Philippines, ask students which of these facts surprise them. What comes to mind when they think of the Philippines? What are they curious to learn about this country now?

2. Ask students if they know where their garbage goes? If you have a landfill near your town, have they been to it? If so, ask about the sights and smells of that place and whether they could imagine living near it.
3. If you have a student or faculty member who has been snorkeling or scuba diving, especially around coral reefs, ask them to describe the experience to the class. You might also visit:
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0101/feature2/zoom1.html>. Talk briefly about the value of coral reef using some of the information available at:

As a class, make a list of examples of aspects of indigenous cultures that the students know to have been lost or are in danger of being lost. This might include various Native American languages or Appalachian folk songs. Then have students write in their journals about how such information as language, arts, and stories are passed down from generation. What can break the chain of communication from one generation to the next? Why are these traditions valuable?

Smoky Valley

Objective: Working in teams—Producers and Receivers—students will understand what happens to our garbage (including so-called recyclables) after it leaves our homes, schools, and workplaces. They will gain some preliminary understanding of alternatives to the most standard current practices.

Time: Lesson can be adapted to between 4 and 10 in-class hours.

Grade Level: 9-12

1. As Amy briefly mentions in *GlobalTribe*, Smoky Valley collapsed in 2000, killing more than a hundred people. Share the following accounts of that catastrophe with students and then ask them why they think families like Rosemary's remain there. Web sites:
<http://boes.org/world/asia/philippines/unep000719.html> and
<http://www.corpwatch.org/news/PND.jsp?articleid=1248>.
2. Ask the students if they've ever considered how much garbage they produce a day, and what steps, if any, they take to reduce that waste. Do they know what happens to their garbage after it leaves their house, school, work place, or place of recreation? What about items they've recycled, such as paper, plastics, and glass; what happens to them?

Put the students in four investigative teams to track some of these answers. Two groups will be Producers: School Producers and Home Producers. Their task is to learn how much garbage and recycling on average your school (and/or your school district) and homes in your town produce per week, or month, or year. Your school district office, the city's department of waste management, or a recycling center may be able to help students. The groups may also have to devise their own criteria for figuring out amounts.

The other two groups are Receivers: Recycling Receivers and Garbage Receivers. These groups learn what happens to your recycling and garbage after it leaves your home or school. Be sure to cover all bases and to dig deeper than simply saying, "It goes to the recycling center." What happens to each recycled good from there? Does it travel out of state? How much recycling leaves the center and how often? If there's a landfill for your garbage, what does and doesn't go into it. What about those items, such as painting supplies, computers, and tires, that don't go into it? What happens to them? Does any of your garbage eventually get shipped out of state?

All groups should produce a graphical aid to explain their findings to the class.

3. Working in the same groups, assign students one of the following topics: hazardous and toxic waste, nuclear waste, incinerators, and landfills. Each group

should create an easy to read fact sheet about their topic, providing a definition, an explanation of how it works (if applicable), identifiable products associated with this topic, facts and figures about topic's prevalence, and alternatives to products or methods.

4. Combining the graphical aids made for #2 and the fact sheets produced for #3, have students present their findings to others. You might set up an information booth in the school commons, give a presentation at a school board meeting, or offer the information for use by the city waste management department. Whichever you choose, find a way for the students to know that their findings are reaching a larger audience and doing some good.

Assessment

1. Have the groups swap their presentation materials with another group and ask them to do spot fact checking. Each group should provide citations to help make this task easier. The groups should also provide feedback for each other on how the material is presented: Is it easy to read and understand? Does it catch a viewer's attention?
2. Return to a conversation about Smoky Mountain and Rosemary. What do they see as the similarities and differences between the waste management issues affecting their home/school/community, and those at Smoky Mountain? How does the garbage we create in the US affect people in other countries?

Extending

Provide students with some of the resources below about children in other parts of the world who live and work on garbage dumps. Ask them to write a story, perhaps aimed at younger children, about this issue and some possible solutions.

Visit your landfill along with the science class. Learn about how your city manages its waste, talking firsthand to the people involved. Back at school, have a conversation about the politics and science involved. How do the politics effect the science of landfill management and vice versa? Do students feel more or less hopeful about the future of garbage after their visit?

Resources

Basic Information

United Nations System-Wide Earthwatch: Solid Wastes
earthwatch.unep.net/solidwaste/wastedisposal.html

The Basics of Landfills

<http://www.enviroweb.org/issues/landfills>

Annenberg/CPB: Garbage

<http://www.learner.org/exhibits/garbage/intro.html>

People Who Have Made a Difference In How We Think About Garbage:
<http://www.astc.org/exhibitions/rotten/rthome.htm>

EPA's Recycle City
<http://www.epa.gov/recyclecity/>

Envirolink's waste management info:
<http://www.envirolink.org/topics.html?topicsku=2002112190849&topic=Waste%20Management&topicitype=topic>

Waste Management Options
<http://www.perc.ca/PEN/1994-02/s-mussell.html>

Children and Garbage Dumps

Out of the Dump
<http://www.oneworld.org/media/gallery/guatemala/1.html>

UNICEF campaign
<http://www.socioambiental.org/website/parabolicas/english/backissu/52/articles/p03.htm>

The Children of the Dong Thanh Garbage Dump
<http://www.unicef.org/vietnam/workchild.htm>

**Out of the Dump: Writing and Photographs by
Children of Guatemala**

Editors Nancy McGirr and Kristine L. Franklin

Standards

Understands the physical and human characteristics of place
(<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=8&StandardID=4>)

Understands how human actions modify the physical environment
(<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=8&StandardID=14>)

Uses various information sources, including those of a technical nature, to accomplish specific tasks
(<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=24&StandardID=2>)

Displays effective interpersonal communication skills
(<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=22&StandardID=4>)

Knows how to use structures (e.g., sensory qualities, organizational principles, expressive features) and functions of art

(<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=13&StandardID=2>)

Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

(<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=7&StandardID=7>)
