



What is Global Education?

Definitions:

Global Education is an educational model where teachers creatively develop lessons to help students gain global competence, and broaden their worldview. Teachers give students the knowledge and skills needed to collaborate on student driven projects. Experience with Global Education can open doors of opportunity for students, so that when they are grown they can do meaningful work, and live full and joyful lives in an increasingly globalized world. Ideally students will have a general understanding of international trade, and diplomacy, along with real-world experience working toward solutions for local and global problems. What we do in the classroom, teaching students to articulate their thoughts, to listen, to engage with information, and take action against inequities will have a direct impact on the world, both now and in

the years to come; increasing empathy and humanitarian action, and reducing xenophobia, bias, and intolerance.

- According to the article, “What is Global Competence? Essential Skills for Navigating a Complex World”, “Global competence refers to the skills, attitudes and behaviors necessary to thrive in an ever-changing and complex world. It’s a transformative lens through which we can reimagine our education system and ensure that every student is future-ready.”
- According to ASCD, “Global competence is the capacity to examine local, global, and intercultural issues; to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others; to engage in open, appropriate, and effective interactions with people from different cultures; and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development.”

Resources:

Five organizations that I encountered through my Fulbright experience that offer tools, resources and opportunities to support educators in bringing global education into our own classrooms are:

- [United Nations](#) The United Nations provides extensive materials for teachers, and for students to familiarize themselves with the “United Nations Sustainable Development Goals”, (the SDGs), and further their understanding of global problems. Having a clear understanding of the SDGs was the first step for me, in developing Global Competency, and developing goals prior to implementing Global Education lessons with my students. The SDGs provide a foundational framework for teachers and students interested in

integrating Global Education, intercultural connections and service learning into their classrooms. Getting started in global education, and planning action projects felt daunting for me at first. Gaining a clear understanding of the global goals through the resources provided on the UN Website gave me clear direction and clarified my purpose. The SDGs break global issues into 17 succinct, clearly articulated goals, providing structure, and breaking down global issues into more manageable “chunks”. It was important for me to spend several hours reading articles and ebooks, and watching videos on the UN website prior to brainstorming or beginning on lesson planning. I have returned to this website over and over again over the past year, and have found countless resources for students. The resources I found most useful on this site for teaching students about the SDGs were the:

1. [Go Goals Board Game](#)- My students really enjoyed the game and it gave them a nice overview of goals in an engaging way.
2. [Sustainable Development Goals ebook for kids](#) This is a clear and accessible resource for an overview of the 17 goals.
3. [The 17 Goals Infographics and Fast Facts](#) Once students have selected an SDG goal to focus on, they can read a one page article, and look at the “Fast Facts” and “Infographic” posters at the bottom of each article. I printed the Fast Facts and Infographics for each SDG so that students could refer back to while speaking with the mayor and other stakeholders.

- [Link to Oxfam's Global Citizen's Guides](#)

This resource can help you learn more about The United Nations Sustainability Goals & how to use them in your classroom. My favorite part of this resource was the section with reflection questions for teachers (embedded in the planning framework). These questions helped me to reflect on my current practice, and why it was worth it to make changes to my existing curriculum, as I was planning lessons.. There were also some helpful activities that could be used in the classroom on pages 12-19 of the guide.

This resource also has a section with information you can use to communicate with your administrator. Thankfully, I have a very supportive administrator, so I didn't have to "make a case" for my experimentation with Global Education last year. This section could be useful if your administrator is asking for research data proving the value of this educational model, because the rationale is clearly stated, and examples of successful programs are given.

- [Link to Video "What Are the Global Goals?" by Earth Cubs](#)

My 8th grade students felt that it was a bit too "young" for them, due to the graphics, but the information was clear and thorough.

- [Class2Class.org](#) is an organization that connects teachers and students from various continents. It allows teachers to collaborate and co-plan, as well as do collaborative projects with students, centered around the UN Sustainable Development Goals. I connected with a teacher in Tanzania, and had some wonderful conversations via whatsapp video about projects we could do with our students. We had a hard time, however, due to the time difference, coordinating times for our students to meet on zoom, so the project fell apart. I have recently connected with a teacher in Colombia, and will attempt to create pen pal correspondence

and SDG project collaboration with her class this year. Other teachers I met on my Fulbright TGC trip have used this app successfully.

- [Radio Garden](#) is a fun and interactive tool that I use at the start of each unit in my World History class. With this tool, students can rotate a globe, zoom in on the area we will be studying, and listen to live radio broadcasts from that area. This is a great tool for increasing global awareness, cultural appreciation and geographical understanding.

Five Resources to familiarize yourself with the foundational underpinnings of global education are:

- [The Asia Society and OECD's Report, "Teaching for Global Competence in a Rapidly Changing World"](#) was one of the most valuable resources for me, in terms of learning how to implement Global Education in my own classroom. It showed that small paradigm shifts can be powerful and transformative. As I read, I took notes about what I was already doing in my classroom that aligned with the SDGs and service learning, and jotted down ideas for enhancing and shifting lessons. The most powerful quotes from this publication were, "When kids feel overwhelmed, teach efficacy through local issues," and "We need a generation of young people who possess the skills and the will to take informed and collective action on issues of global significance." My goal while lesson planning shifted from simply informing my students to empowering my students to gather information and put it into action. Last spring, rather than simply learning about contemporary and historical problems and changemakers, students became empowered as changemakers themselves. They

brainstormed collaborative conversations with students in Utah (interschool activity). They discussed potential action plans related to SDG Goals 1 and 2 with college students at UCSC, as well as with the local mayor and director of the local food bank. They discussed Goal 14 with a dolphin biologist. They then developed projects to implement locally. Instead of simply gathering information, they took an active role in the community and had their first experience doing advocacy work.

My students' projects were small-scale last spring (a food drive, a beach clean up, a volunteer day at the food bank). However, "Efficacy is the best thing we can teach our students," If they know that if they do something, that they can change something, even if it is a small thing, the next time it will be something bigger" (Hachemer).

- [Harvard Project Zero's Report "How to Educate the Whole Person for an Interconnected World"](#) This resource offers more in-depth explanations of the underpinnings of Global Education, with examples of what students in classrooms around the world are learning. The most useful section I read was on pages 63- 64, "Designing quality Experiences for Global Learning and Agency".
- Global [citizenship is now a radical idea, but one we need James Yoonil Auh 13 June 2025](#) from University World News is an article that addresses the "elephant in the room" for teachers who are worried about getting started with "global education" in this uniquely fraught political climate. This article was helpful for me, in terms of calming fears, and solidifying my commitment to this important work.

- [Cult of Pedagogy Podcast: Why White Students Need Multicultural and Social Justice Education \(interview with Sheldon Eakins\)](#). I highly recommend listening to this episode if you would like to get started with global education, particularly if you teach white students. I am delighted that a Cult of Pedagogy blogpost was included in our TGC online course. I have since listened to numerous episodes of the podcast, and find it an invaluable resource. Not only does Jennifer Gonzalez interview educational thought leaders, content area experts and veteran teachers who have changed my perspective, and caused me to reflect deeply on my practice. I listen to this podcast while taking walks, working out or gardening. There are multiple episodes related to global education, multilingual education, race and equity, in addition to the one linked above that you could listen to in order to prepare yourself for implementing Global Education strategies.
- [The Global Competence Matrix developed by World Savvy](#) This resource gives you a quick snapshot of the core concepts of Global Education and what its goals are for students. The Matrix details the behaviors, skills, values and attitudes that one would expect to see in a globally competent individual. This resource offers a helpful, condensed explanation of complex Global Education ideas in practical, bullet-pointed lists. I referred back to this matrix often after reading longer articles in order to clarify my thinking and stay focused on desired student outcomes.