

Trading Fairly In Our World

A Social Studies Unit for Grade 6

**Description**

In this subtask students begin to look at the Fair Trade system as an alternative to the conventional trading system which they have discovered is rife with inequity and unjust labour practices. Students will examine the main principles of Fair Trade, as outlined by TransFair Canada and the Fair Trade Labeling Organizations International (FLO). Seven key principles of Fair Trade will be introduced and discussed through a whole class activity lead by the teacher. Following the class discussion, students will examine profiles of several Canadian businesses to determine if they adhere to the principles of Fair Trade. Students will also be required to find a local retailer of Fair Trade products in their community. Finally, to further deepen their understanding of these Fair Trade principles students will propose an idea for their own Fair Trade business. After deciding what product they will sell each student will complete an application to TransFair Canada requesting permission for their proposed business to become a TransFair (Fair Trade) licensee.

**Catholic School Graduate Expectations**

- CGE1d** Develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good.
- CGE3f** Examines, evaluates and applies knowledge of interdependent systems (physical, political, ethical, socio-economic and ecological) for the development of a just and compassionate society.
- CGE7e** Witness Catholic social teaching by promoting equality, democracy and solidarity for a just, peaceful and compassionate society.

**Expectations**

- 6z28 describe some of the connections Canada shares with the rest of the world (e.g., trade, history, geography, tourism, economic assistance, immigration, indigenous peoples, peacekeeping, media, culture).
- 6z29 identify products that Canada imports and exports (e.g., *imports*: fruit, vegetables, chemicals, motor vehicles; *exports*: newsprint, grain, machinery, timber, telecommunications, natural gas)
- 6z31 identify the countries from which Canada imports goods (e.g., the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, other European countries, Taiwan, South Korea, Mexico)
- 6z37 use a variety of primary and secondary sources to locate and process relevant information about Canada's links with the world (e.g. *primary sources*: statistics, field trips, interviews, original documents; *secondary sources*: maps, illustrations, print materials, videos, CD-ROMS, Internet sites).
- 6z41 use appropriate vocabulary (e.g. *technology, culture, immigration, tourism, physical features, indigenous peoples, export, import, parallels, meridians, Pacific Rim, economics, media*) to describe their inquiries and observations.
- 6z51 describe Canada's participation in international efforts to address current global issues (e.g., peacekeeping, environmental initiatives, world health initiatives, disaster relief, regulation of child labour, human rights violations, acceptance of refugees).
- 6e9 frequently introduce vocabulary from other subject areas into their writing
- 6e15 understand specialized words or terms, as necessary (e.g., medieval in a historical novel)

**Groupings**

- Students Working As A Whole Class
- Students Working In Small Groups
- Students Working Individually

**Teaching/Learning Strategies**

- Brainstorming
- Collaborative/Cooperative Learning
- Note-Making
- Directed Reading

**Assessment**

BLM 6.3 and 6.5 will be assessed for accuracy and completion. BLM 6.7 will be assessed for depth of understanding of Fair Trade principles

**Assessment Strategies**

- Observation
- Performance Task

**Assessment Recording Devices**

- Anecdotal Record

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**Teaching/Learning**

1. The teacher will begin this subtask by introducing students to the basics of the Fair Trade system, through a reading of an OWL magazine article out loud to the class ('Square and Fair', OWL magazine, January/February 2005, p16-19). If this issue of OWL magazine is unavailable in the school or at the public library, a text-only copy of the 'Square and Fair' article has been included with this unit (see B.LM. 6.1). After sharing the article with the class, each student will be given a copy of BLM 6.2 and the teacher will read through and explain the main goals and principles of the Fair Trade alternative. Students are then led through a whole class discussion of the goals and main principles of Fair Trade and how they try to address some of the trade and labour problems discussed in previous subtasks. The classroom teacher might also use this time as an opportunity to discuss some key areas of related background information from TransFair Canada's "Fair Trade: A Teacher's Guide" (Appendix A). The sections titled 'Who Benefits and How?', 'What is the Impact of Fair Trade on Children and Young People?', and 'Which Products are Fair Trade Certified?' may be of particular interest.  
*Note:* The picture book 'Stop, Don't Eat Me!' may be quite useful as part of this introduction as well. A copy can be purchased from Peace Diviners at [www.peacediviners.org](http://www.peacediviners.org).
2. After the whole class discussion, students will be assigned BLM 6.3. Once completed this worksheet will provide an opportunity for teachers to assess students understanding of the principles of Fair Trade. Students will be required to explain and demonstrate an understanding of these Fair Trade goals, principles and values as part of their culminating assignment.
3. Students will now apply their knowledge of the goals and principles of Fair Trade to some stories of real Canadian businesses in order to determine whether they can apply to become licensed by TransFair Canada, in order to put the Fair Trade Certified logo on their product. The business profiles (BLM 6.4a, 6.4b, 6.4c) are given to students to be read and evaluated. These Fair Trade businesses will provide models/examples of good corporate citizenship to the students. The business profiles will also help them in the final component of this subtask, which requires each student to apply for their business to become a TransFair Licensee. After reading the profiles, a worksheet (BLM 6.5) will be assigned requiring the student to briefly explain at least 3 reasons why each business does qualify as a Fair Trade business and a TransFair Licensee. This assignment can also be completed in the student's unit folder, journal or notebook without the use of BLM 6.5. Students should also be allowed to research these businesses in more depth at their respective websites ([www.lasiembra.com](http://www.lasiembra.com), [www.equator.ca](http://www.equator.ca), [www.justuscoffee.com](http://www.justuscoffee.com)). Students are also required to try and locate a local retailer of Fair Trade merchandise as part of this assignment. A list of licensees and retail stores can be found on the TransFair Canada website or students can simply investigate local food and grocery retailers in their community.
4. For the final component of this subtask, teachers will instruct students to imagine they are the operator of a small business and that they are interested in advertising their products and business as being fairly traded. To do this they must become a licensee of TransFair Canada and use the official TransFair Fair Trade logo on their products. At this time students will be introduced to the logo (BLM 6.6) and encouraged to look for it on products as a way of ensuring the product has been produced, marketed, and sold according to the principles discussed (refer back to BLM 6.2 if necessary). Students will then be required to complete a written application (BLM 6.7) that describes their business, demonstrates how the business adheres to principles of Fair Trade, and outlines their intent to continue as a supporter of Fair Trade principles. The teacher will evaluate the completed assignment and determine whether the applicant has earned the right to become a TransFair (Fair Trade) licensee. If successful, a student will be granted a TransFair license in the form of a TransFair Logo sticker (see BLM 6.8)

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**Resources**

BLM 6.1 - Square and Fair Owl Magazine Article  
 BLM 6.2 - The Fair Trade System  
 BLM 6.3 - Fair Trade Principles Worksheet  
 BLM 6.4a - La Siembra Co-operative  
 BLM 6.4b - Equator Coffee Roasters  
 BLM 6.4c - Just! Us Coffee Roasters  
 BLM 6.5 - Fair Trade Businesses worksheet  
 BLM 6.6 - TransFair Logo  
 BLM 6.7 - Application to obtain a license from TransFair Canada  
 BLM 6.8 - TransFair Logo 'Stickers'  
 Appendix A: TransFair Canada's resource 'Fair Trade: A Teacher's Guide'  
 TransFair Canada's website ([www.transfair.ca](http://www.transfair.ca))  
 Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International ([www.fairtrade.net](http://www.fairtrade.net))  
 La Siembra Co-operative ([www.lasiembra.com](http://www.lasiembra.com))  
 Equator Coffee Roasters ([www.equator.ca](http://www.equator.ca))  
 Just Us! Coffee Roasters ([www.justuscoffee.com](http://www.justuscoffee.com))  
 United Nations website 'Cyberschoolbus' ([www.cyberschoolbus.un.org](http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org))  
 'Square and Fair', OWL magazine, January/February 2005, p16-19  
 'Stop, Don't Eat Me!' picture book (<http://www.peacediviners.org>)

**Teacher Background Notes**

Teachers should review TransFair Canada's resource 'Fair Trade: A Teacher's Guide' (Appendix A) before beginning this subtask. Student notes could be derived from this resource and from the TransFair Canada website. Local Fair Trade businesses could be located through this website and contacted for further information on running a Fair Trade business.

The picture book called 'Stop, Don't Eat Me!' on Fair Trade chocolate may be useful as part of the introduction. You can view the story on the Peace Diviners website (<http://www.peacediviners.org>)

**Relevant Excerpts from Church Documents****Relevant Scripture Passages**

Teachers may find **1 Corinthians 12:12-16** a useful passage for student journal reflections, guiding class faith discussions, or for making connections to the faith dimension of this subtask. This scripture passage focuses on community and the interconnectedness of all God's people which is a theme underlying the concept, principles and values of the Fair Trade system.

The full text of this passage can be found in Appendix C.

**Relevant Excerpts from Church Documents*****Catechism of the Catholic Church***

**2439** Rich *nations* have a grave moral responsibility toward those which are unable to ensure the means of their development by themselves or have been prevented from doing so by tragic historical events. It is a duty in solidarity and charity; it is also an obligation in justice if the prosperity of the rich nations has come from resources that have not been paid for fairly.

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**2440** It is also necessary to *reform* international economic and financial *institutions* so that they will better promote equitable relationships with less advanced countries. The efforts of poor countries working for growth and liberation must be supported.

***Centesimus Annus***

**8** (There is) another right which the worker has as a person. This is the right to a "just wage", which cannot be left to the "free consent of the parties, so that the employer, having paid what was agreed upon, has done his part and seemingly is not called upon to do anything beyond" ...A workman's wages should be sufficient to enable him to support himself, his wife and his children. "If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice"...

***Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church***

**339** All those involved in a business venture must be mindful that the community in which they work represents a good for everyone and not a structure that permits the satisfaction of someone's merely personal interests. This awareness alone makes it possible to build an economy that is truly at the service of mankind, and to create programs of real cooperation among the different partners in labour. A very important and significant example of this is found in the activity of so-called co-operative enterprises, small and medium-sized businesses, commercial undertakings featuring handmade products and family sized agricultural ventures. The church's social doctrine has emphasised the contribution that such activities make to enhance the value of work, to the growth of a sense of personal and social responsibility, a democratic life and the humane values that are important for the progress of the market and of society.

***USCCB Documents***

The obligation to "love our neighbor" has an individual dimension, but it also requires a broader social commitment to the common good. We have many partial ways to measure and debate the health of our economy: Gross National Product, per capita income, stock market prices, and so forth. The Christian vision of economic life looks beyond them all and asks, Does economic life enhance or threaten our life together as a community?

***Economic Justice for All, Pastoral Message of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986***

***OCCB Documents***

It is precisely this solidarity and interdependence that are at the core of Catholic social teaching and that are so necessary if we are to begin to change those unjust global attitudes and structures that keep the South poor and the North rich.

***Celebrating An Education for Justice and Peace, Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1996***