Learning About Global Literacy

GRADE
7-8

LEARNING GOAL
Students explore how different factors will influence and affect literacy in different parts of the world. Students will learn that education opportunities are not the same in other parts of the world.

SOCIAL STUDIES CONCEPTS
Cause and Consequence Students determine the factors that affect or lead to something as well as its impact or effects

Interrelationships Students to explore connections within and between natural and/or human systems

TIME
Two periods

MATERIALS
Access to a white board or chalk board, photocopies of the graphic organizer, access to the Internet and computers.

KEY TERMS
The following terms will allow students to easily contribute to discussions.

Literacy Rate	The percentage of people (older than 15 years) who can read and write basic statements. For example, in Canada the literacy rate is 85%.
Geographic/Environmental	Factors based on geography and climate that can impact how people live, how they grow food, how they make a living, how they travel, etc.
Social	Factors such as religion, culture, or language, or how people organize themselves in the community that impact how they conduct their society.
Economic	Factors such as selling and buying products, making an income, access to jobs, and money spent on public services, such as education.

A) Discuss

Introduce the term, *Literacy Rate*. Explain that this means the percentage of people (older than 15) who can read and write simple statements. For example, perhaps in your classroom every student can read and write. Therefore, the literacy rate in your class is 100%. The rate does not look at an entire population because very young children have not yet learned to read. However, there are people who have not been able to become literate and so it is not likely that a country would have a 100% literacy rate. In Canada, our literacy rate is 85%.

Do you think countries in different parts of the world have different literacy rates? Why? As students list reasons, write them on the board.

If students are unsure, ask 'How do people learn to read and write?' (from their parents or school). Afghanistan is a country with a very low literacy rate. Only 32% of people older than 15 can read and write. What might impact the literacy rate here? What might impact its school system?

B) Research

Students will conduct research on three different countries, with the goal of comparing their literacy rates. The Global Literacy Graphic Organizer will direct students in their research. Students can find the information on CIA World Factbook, which uses the same terminology and order as the Graphic Organizer https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/.They can find information on specific countries using the drop down menu on the right-hand side.

This exercise is most interesting when students chose three countries from varied backgrounds. You may want to suggest they chose at least one lesser developed country (for example from Sub-Saharan Africa or Central Asia).

Some students may have difficulty with the amount of information to be collected. In this case, you may want some students to work in pairs, or limit the number of rows they must research.

C) Discuss

Once students have finished researching, bring the class together for a follow up discussion.

- What kind of differences did you find between your countries? (area, literacy levels, GDP, Internet access etc.)
- Looking at the information you collected, what connections do you see? For example, which country has the higher GDP? What impact would that have on education?
- How many languages are there in your country? How would that impact how people learn to read and write?

D) Making Connections

The second side of the Graphic Organizer challenges students to make connections between the information they've collected and the impacts this information has on literacy.

You may want to use this as a written assessment of their understanding of cause and consequence. You could use this as a basis for a class discussion where you investigate economic, environmental and social implications on education and literacy.

E) Reflection

Close the lesson with asking students to think about the impacts of illiteracy.

- What daily activities would be difficult if you did not know how to read or write?
- What should Canadians be doing to help children who are not learning to read and write?

This can begin a future discussion about the role Canada plays in international aid and development.

CODE's Work in Literacy and Education

At CODE, we know that in order to develop a love of reading, children must be able to access interesting, well-written books that appeal to them. For this reason, we support local authors and illustrators to write books in local languages. We partner with local publishing companies to ensure that these books get into the hands of children who

need them most. If your students are interested in global literacy, suggest that they look into the various programs we have on our website.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Make a plan with your students to promote literacy in your school or community!

- **Share the love of reading** Schedule time for your students to read to younger students, to visit a hospital or elderly care center and read to others.
- **Declare your love of books** Make a pledge to take care of library books and ensure they are returned to the library, or set individual reading goals for each month.
- **Promote reading of global books** Introduce books from international authors or that are set in different countries.
- **Meet an author** Invite a local author or an author on a book tour to come into your classroom.

Have a global impact Do your students want to do more? If fundraising is an option at your school, your class can have an impact on a classroom in Africa. If this is something you are interested in, contact us at codehq@codecan.org to learn more.

Global Issues Discussions

To extend the discussion, ask students to conduct further research on their countries to understand the social, political, environmental and economic factors that influence education. Challenge them to create a snapshot of the country and present it to the class. These can lead to many interesting discussions; remind students that to participate they must show respect of other cultures and points of view.

Environmental Issues Ask students to research the climate, challenges to environmental sustainability and infrastructure of their country. Do issues such as heavy rains, lack of roads, or deforestation impact the country? How? How would they impact education?

Economic Issues Ask students to look into average annual earnings of citizens, the main industries, or the value of the currency on the global scale? If a child's parents do not have a job, how will that affect him or her as a student? If the country does not have a strong industry, how will that affect the building of schools, or providing teachers with an income?

Social Issues Ask students to review any social issues such as language, religions, or the entry of immigrants and refugees. What impact do the many languages of a country have on the publishing industry or the promotion of literacy? What language do you think their national newspaper is written in? What about the issue of immigration and refugees? If there are many people entering a country who speak different languages, what do you think must be done to help them integrate?

Comparing to Canada Does Canada face some of these challenges as well? What do we do here to help students and schools overcome environmental and economic challenges? How do Canadians use diversity as a positive way to promote learning in schools and in our communities?

code | Rewriting the story for global literacy

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Global Literacy Comparison

Using the CIA World Factbook website, research the following information for three countries in different parts of the world at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/

Information	**Country:**	**Country:**	**Country:**
GEOGRAPHY			
Continent			
Capital			
Area (in km)			
Climate			
Environment: Current Issues (list a few)			
PEOPLE AND SOCIETY			
Languages			
Population			
Life expectancy at Birth: Total Population			
Literacy: Total			
Literacy: Male			
Literacy: Female			
ECONOMY			
GDP (Official exchange rate)			
Population below the poverty line			
COMMUNICATIONS			
Internet Users: Percentage of population			

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Making Connections

1. Which of your country's has the highest literacy rate?

2. What are other positive factors you've discovered about this country?

3. How could the climate and environmental issues impact education in these countries? What statistics in your chart could provide evidence to this?

4. What does the economic information that you collected suggest about people's opportunities in these countries? (ie. Levels of poverty, access to jobs, funding for schools…)

5. Why would access to Internet make a difference to someone's education?

6. Using the information you've collected, name and justify three main areas that influenced the higher literacy rate of the country in Question 1.
   a.

   b.

   c.

7. The term *barriers to education* can be used to characterize factors that prevent youth from accessing an education or succeeding in their education. Looking at the information you researched, what are some potential barriers to education?

8. Do you think there are any barriers to education in Canada? If yes, what would they be?