Learning About Global Literacy

GRADE
5-6

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

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

Interrelationships Students 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 computers and the Internet.

KEY TERMS

Literacy Rate	The percentage of people (older than 15 years) who can read and write in a specific country For example, in Canada the literacy rate is 85%	***Barriers to education***	Factors that may prevent children from attending or succeeding in school
		GDP (Gross Domestic Product)	Total value of goods and services produced by a country in a year (like the country's yearly income)
Population	The total number of people in a country.	***Out-of-school Rate***	Percentage of children who are not attending school

It may be helpful to introduce some or all of these terms before the lesson.

A) Minds On

Tell your students that you will be looking at education throughout the world. Ask them what they think are some factors that influence education.

As students list ideas, write them on the board. If they are unsure, ask them how they get to school, what does it take to make a school work, what does a school need to function? (building, teachers, supplies, bus system, roads, custodial staff, etc.)

Show them the term, *literacy rate*. Explain that this means the percentage of people (aged 15-65) 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%. This measurement only looks at adults because very young children have not yet learned to read. However, there are people who have not been able to learn how to read and write, so no country has a literacy rate of 100%. In Canada, our literacy rate is 85%.

Literacy rates often reflect a country's education system. If a country is unable to provide education to its citizens, then they may not be able to learn to read and write. Ask your students how they think some of the factors they listed earlier might influence a country's literacy rate.

B) Research

Students will conduct research on an African country in the world, comparing some key factors to Canada. The Global Literacy handout below will direct students in their research. Students can find the information on CODE's website in the Where We Work section (http://codecan.org/where-we-work), where information on eight African countries is highlighted with interesting statistics and photos.

Some students may have difficulty with the amount of information to be collected. In this case, you may want to have them work in pairs or reduce the number of areas they need to research.

C) Discuss

Once students have collected information in the Graphic Organizers, come back together for a group discussion.

- What kind of differences did you find between your country and Canada? (area, literacy levels, GDP…)
- 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. Once you have had an opportunity to discuss as a class, give them time to fill out the questions. For some students, it may be helpful for you to fill in the blanks for Part B, giving them three specific areas to compare. For example, GDP, number of languages, and literacy rate.

E) Reflection

Close the lesson with a reflection on 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 is an important actor within Canada's work overseas in promoting literacy and education.

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?

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Global Literacy Country Comparison

Using CODE's Website (www.codecan.org) research the following information for the country you have chosen.

Country Information	**CANADA**	**Country:**
GEOGRAPHY		
Area: Total	9,984,670 sq km	
Capital City	Ottawa	
Barriers to Education	In some rural areas students must take long bus rides to school; Some weather conditions in remote areas prevent children from travelling to school (ie. Ice storms)	
PEOPLE AND SOCIETY		
Number of Languages	Two official languages English, French	
Population	35,851,836 [1]	
Literacy Rate: Total	85.4% [2]	
Literacy: Male		
Literacy: Female		
Rate of out-of-school children	0.5% [3]	
ECONOMY		
GDP (Purchasing power parity)	$1.596 trillion [4]	

[1] Statistics Canada, January 2016
[2] Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey 2003
[3] UNESCO, 2015
[4] CIA World Factbook, January 2016

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Global Literacy Country Comparison

A. Comparing to Canada. Describe three differences between the information of your research country and Canada?

1	2	3

B. Look at the information you collected on your research country. Explain how three of

the areas of information could have influenced the literacy level in your country.