

from *chocolate*



to **o m p u t e r s**

**look behind some of the products we consume
& uncover the impact their production has on
workers & the environment**

for secondary schools



credits

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from *chocolate* to **omputers**

introduction

From Chocolate to Computers looks behind some of the products we buy, use and often take for granted, uncovering the impact their production has on the workers involved and on their environment. It aims to:

- explore human rights, interdependence and sustainability in the context of world trade
- raise awareness of some of the complexities of fair trade

The pack can be used for an interactive assembly, or as the basis for a workshop on Global Citizenship. It enables participants to explore the links we have with people across the globe, through what we consume. It:

- presents the conditions in which five different products are produced
- engages the audience in analysing different aspects of production
- develops understanding of the range of working conditions which exist within both 'fair' and 'free' trade
- encourages participants to take action for change

From Chocolate to Computers is suitable for secondary age groups (11-18) as well as adults. It is designed to involve between five and 30 'performers' with an audience who can also participate. Preparation can be minimal or more time consuming, depending on how many costumes and props are being used. In secondary schools the pack supports learning within Citizenship, Geography, English, Drama and RE; and can be used as the basis for cross-curricular work.

free or fair?

Free trade refers to conventional international trade which is controlled by trade rules which operate to the benefit of large corporations and governments, rather than those working to produce the goods we consume. Fair trade is an alternative approach to conventional world trade. It is a partnership between producers and consumers, based on reciprocal benefit and mutual respect. Fair trade ensures producers in the Majority World (countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and South America) receive a fair price for the work they do, and gain better access to markets in the Minority World. It aims to tackle the long-term problems of the Majority World through sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers. For Majority World producers, Fair trade means:

- being paid a fair price for the work they do
- commitment to long term relationships between producers and buyers, providing stability and security
- producer organisations are supported in their social development projects, such as providing health care and education facilities
- sustainable environmental projects and practices are supported, such as tree planting and farming without using harmful chemicals
- respect for people's rights, for example promoting gender equality to change the traditional low position of women in society
- producers being able to have more control over their own lives

from chocolate to computers

preparation

- ▷ Explain to the group that they are to be involved in a presentation that explores how some of the products we consume are produced
- ▷ Ask six participants to take the following workers' roles:
 - an interviewer/reporter
 - Agnes Graham, a cocoa grower from Ghana
 - Charles Darnley, a banana worker from Cost Rica
 - Maria Akamba, a flower grower from Kenya
 - Maya Pertiwi, a worker from a factory producing trainers in Indonesia
 - Vernie Pescadero, a Philippino migrant who works in a computer factory in Taiwan
- ▷ Each worker will be 'interviewed' about their working conditions. With a large group, up to six people could take each role, sharing the answers to the questions between them. They will need to read through, prepare or learn their answers, using the information on p4-14. The more they are able to ad lib the better! If time allows, participants could research additional information on each product (see **weblinks**, p18)
- ▷ Ask each individual/group to mime an action to symbolise the work they do:
 - cocoa growers use machetes to split the cocoa pods
 - banana growers wrap the bananas on the plant in blue plastic to protect them from frost
 - flower growers use handheld sprays containing pesticides
 - factory workers use sewing machines to stitch trainers
 - factory workers use solder irons on computer circuit boards
- ▷ Give the group time to prepare the costumes and props they have decided to use (see templates, p5, for ideas)

resources

- ▷ To make this visual, use props, eg bar of fair trade chocolate, fair trade banana, bunch of flowers, pair of trainers, computer mouse.
- ▷ Large target, covered initially, with six sections (p4)
- ▷ Information for the workers (p6-16)
- ▷ Questions for the interviewer to ask the workers (p4)
- ▷ Target symbols for each product (p4)

variation

If numbers of participants are low, or time is limited, the activity can be run using just three products – cocoa, flowers and computers provide the best range of experiences.

running the session

introduction

- ▷ Ask the audience to raise a hand if, in the past week, they have: eaten chocolate, eaten a banana, bought or received a bunch of flowers, worn a pair of trainers, used a computer.
- ▷ Explain that all those who have raised a hand are linked, through what they buy, eat and use, to people across the globe. Through what we consume, we are all part of the chain linking producers with consumers in the global trading system

main activity

- ▷ Tell the audience that they are going to meet some of the people who have produced the products in front of them – refer to the props
- ▷ They are going to hear about the lives of these people and assess the conditions in which they work
- ▷ As they listen to each worker they need to think about that person's work in terms of:
 - health & safety
 - job security
 - community benefits
 - environment
 - pay & conditions
 - unionisation
- ▷ Unveil the target, pointing out that it is divided into six sectors – one for each of the six criteria listed above. Depending on the age and ability of the audience, these criteria may need some explanation
- ▷ Introduce the interviewer and the cocoa grower/group of cocoa growers who should repeatedly mime their action, pausing only to answer the interviewer's questions
- ▷ Once they have heard the interview, ask six volunteers from the audience to come up and give each of the criteria a score, by placing a cocoa symbol on each section of the target. The closer to the centre, the better the conditions. When this process is complete ask the rest of the audience if they agree with the volunteers. If not, discuss and adjust the symbols as necessary
- ▷ Repeat the process, introducing the workers who produce each product. After the cocoa producers, the order of products should be bananas, flowers before and after Fairtrade auditing, trainers and finally computers to show a continuum, from 'fair' to 'free' trade. Note that the flower workers are asked the interview questions twice to demonstrate how fair trade has made a difference to their lives.
- ▷ After each interview ask for another six volunteers, give them the appropriate symbols, and ask them to score each of the criteria on the target, as with the cocoa producers. With the flowers, the volunteers may decide to change the positions of some of the flower symbols, depending on what improvements they have noted with the introduction of fair trade

conclusion

- ▷ Sum up by asking the audience to look at the target, and comment on what it shows.
- Q Which workers experienced the best/worst working conditions, pay, and job security?
- Q Were they surprised by anything they found out?
- Q What action might they take to follow this up?

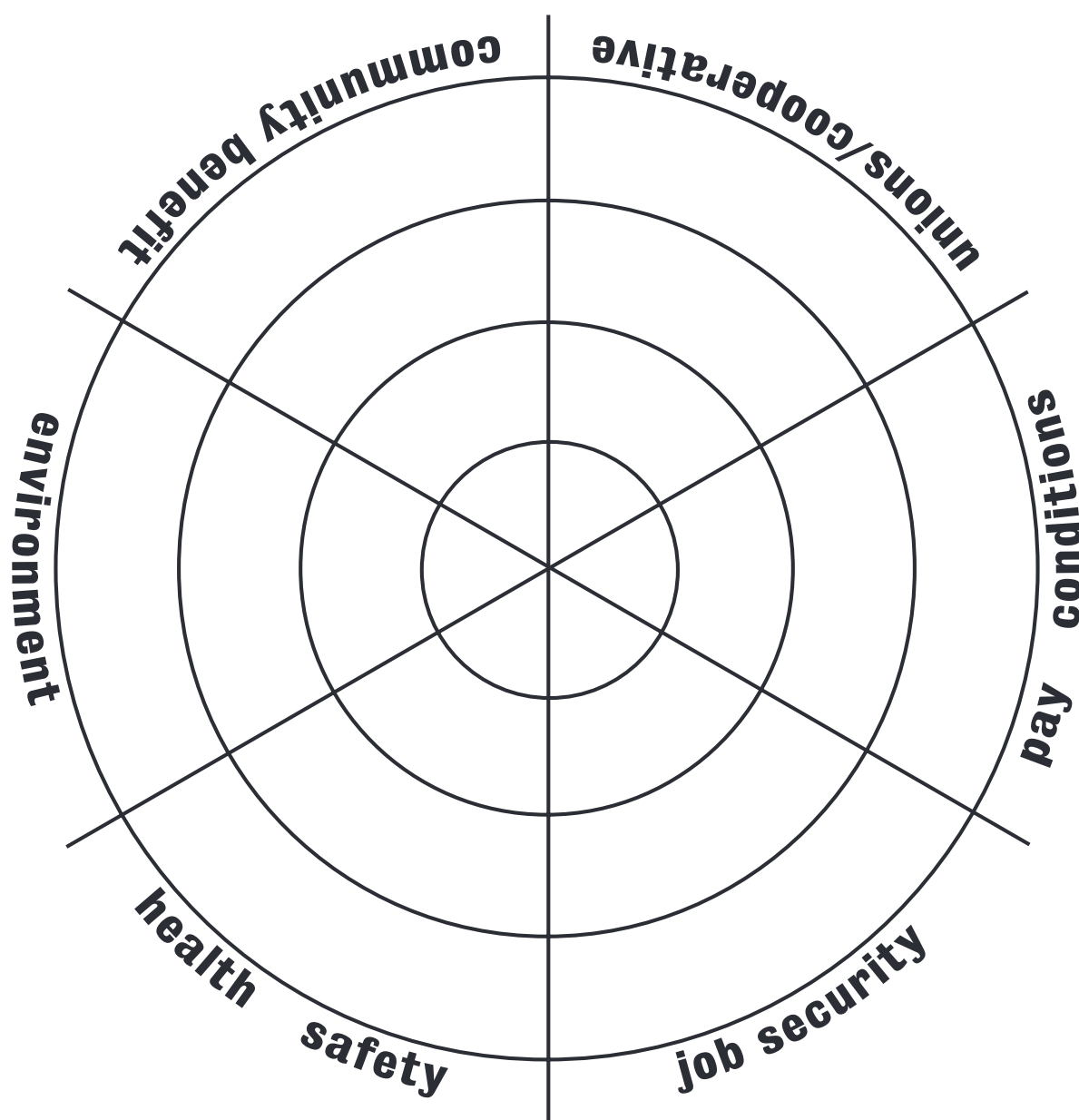
follow up action

- Make sure your school, community group or work place has an ethical purchasing policy and is committed to fair trade. Find out about becoming a Fairtrade school (www.peopleandplanet.org.uk and www.fairtrade.org.uk) or Fairtrade town (www.fairtrade.org.uk)
- Write to your local media and local supermarket to raise awareness of how unfair 'free' trade can be, asking them to stock more fair trade products
- Find out more – ask questions about where products are produced, who produces them and in what conditions before you buy them
- Tell other people and encourage them to make a commitment to support fair trade
- Join a campaign group – or set one up. See **weblis**t, p18
- Lobby your council and MP to push for change, locally and globally
- Believe we can make a difference

questions

When interviewing each producer, the interviewer should ask about:

- Health and safety, eg Is your job ever dangerous? How does your job affect your health?
- Job security, eg Are you ever afraid you might lose your job? Do you have a contract to give you job security?
- Community benefits, eg How does the work you do affect your community? Does the job bring any benefits to your community?
- The environment, eg Are you concerned about the impact your job has on your environment? How is the environment being damaged by the work you do?
- Pay and conditions, eg Do you feel you get a fair wage for the work you do? What about your working conditions? Do your pay and working conditions ever vary? When?
- Unionisation, eg Are you able to join any workers' organisations, so you can have a say in what you do? Do you feel you have any control over the way you have to work? Have you ever thought about striking to try to improve things?



Note: The closer to the centre, the better the conditions.

