

## Grade 5 Social Studies (Global Issues), Service Learning Project, Whole-school PD

*by Dallas Giroux*

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| <b>Tool(s) used:</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Compass</li> <li>• Systems Mapping</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Purpose of using tool:</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Generating Questions</li> <li>• Synthesizing Thinking</li> <li>• Guiding Discussion</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview:</b><br/>I used the Sustainability Compass tool in various ways.</p> <p>Example 1: Introductory/Closing Activity for year to organise our year's topics and make connections</p> <p>Example 2: Service Learning decision-making tool to help my SL students decide on activities for fundraising</p> <p>Example 3: School-wide Professional Development session to introduce Systems Thinking to the entire ASFG staff</p> |
| <b>Context of lesson/case study:</b>  | <p>Example 1: Global Issues (Social Studies) classroom</p> <p>Example 2: Service Learning project</p> <p>Example 3: Whole-school PD session</p>   |
| <b>Participants (# and description):</b>  | <p>Example 1: 5th grade students (106)</p> <p>Example 2: 15 service learning team members (5th grade students)</p> <p>Example 3: up to 150 staff members (teachers)</p>   |
| <b>Topic, Theme, or Key Understanding of unit/project:</b>  | <p>Example 1: migration, food supply, health, energy resources, globalisation, standard of living, pollution, population growth, human rights, water resources, climate change, habitat preservation</p>  |
| <b>Length of unit/project:</b>  | <p>Example 1: Year long</p> <p>Example 2: Year long</p> <p>Example 3: 1-2 hr PD session</p>   |
| <b>Resources/materials &amp; setting required:</b>  | <p>Compass tool, string, nodes of a current event, floor &amp; table space for movement and mapping, recently I created large reusable Compass tools with the Middle School Social Studies teacher team, they are all currently trying out the Compass tool in a unit of study, our SS teacher team will then be Aubrey and my helpers on the PD day for teachers.</p>  |
| <b>Lesson Plan/Description of the Project:</b>  |   |
| <p><b>EXAMPLE 1:</b></p> <p>When we began the school year, I had my 5th graders organise our 12 global issue topics (similar to the global sustainability goals) into the 4 quadrants and then make connections between them. These connections are posted in the classroom, we will revisit these posters at the end of the year and add new connections so that</p> |   |

students can see their growth of knowledge and recognise that all of these issues are connected in many complicated ways.

**EXAMPLE 2:**

When deciding on a Service Learning fundraising activity I had the students choose a fundraiser that they wanted to do and then chart it on the Compass tool. I added to each quadrant a + and - section so that they could chart the positives and negatives of their activity how it related to each NSEW. Then we shared our findings and chose the fundraiser that had the most positive effect on all 4 sections.

**EXAMPLE 3:**

Aubrey and I will be hosting a 1-2 hr session with our entire ASFG staff in February. We will have each teacher table team choose a current event and then use the Compass tool to chart out the effects on NSEW. Pre-PD day: We will take a current event, create nodes for that system. On the PD day, we will do the Systems Mapping with the string activity with a few larger group of teachers. This will be a simple introduction showing them how to use the systems thinking tools. Then we will have a brainstorming/sharing session at the end so that teachers can think of ways to integrate and use systems/sustainable thinking in their classes. I will also provide templates for teachers to take and experiment in their own classrooms.

**Reflection**

**Plusses:**

Example 1&2 went wonderfully so far. I will continue to use these Systems/Sustainability tools so students continue to look at events/crisis from the larger perspective and are able to break them down and understand them on a deeper level. Kids are becoming better at seeing connections between things like our global issues we study in my Social Studies class. At the end of the year when we look back at our issues and the primary connections they made I expect to see students diving in to add new and more complex connections and cause/effect relationships to their Compass poster. In Service Learning the Compass Education format is helping guide my students in how they plan on accomplishing their various SL goals. I hope to see them succeed in some ways and also fail in others so that they grow and problem-solve without my direction and solutions.

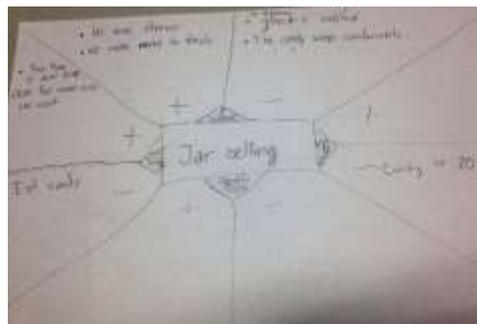
**Challenges:**

My goal in the future is to expand and use other compass tools like the Iceberg and Ladder tools to delve even deeper into the systems that surround us. I am finding it challenging to know when and how to bring these processes and work with them efficiently with my students. Hoping that Level 2 would help me with this.

**Suggestions for other practitioners and educators:**

Just dive in and try it! We all ARE and CAN BE systems thinkers once we step out of our comfort zones and really break down events that occur in our everyday lives. Systems make the world so it is imperative that we start understanding them! As a teacher, you know your students, you know what tools they will be able to handle and understand. The key is to start introducing these tools into your classrooms so that students become equipped with the analytical and problem-solving skills they need to succeed in the future.

**Evidence and Resource:**





*Lesson plan submitted by: Dallas Giroux, 2017, while serving as 5th Grade Global Issues teacher (Social Studies) at American School Foundation of Guadalajara*

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