

Science & Humanities – El Oriente

Overview: Using the Sustainability Compass, students will analyse complex systems in news and media sources about the rainforest of El Oriente, Ecuador.

Grade: 6-12, Science & Humanities

Estimated duration: 60-90 minutes depending on age

Key Concept: Systems

Related Concepts: Change & Interaction

Global Context: Globalization & Sustainable Development

Statement of Inquiry: The environment is supported and sustained by the interaction of organized systems.

Outline: It is often challenging to understand how individual events, such as news stories, connect to and represent larger issues. Students use the Compass to gain access to some of the systems at work that could better guide long-lasting, global decisions.

1. Students read [“An Open Letter to President Correa”](#) from Laura Rival, and discuss what is happening.
2. Students use the Compass to research and organise their thoughts on what resources El Oriente, Ecuador provides.
3. Students make connections to find which resources we could focus on to sustain El Oriente (leverage points). With this information, students can then reevaluate what should be considered when making difficult decisions about very complex, global issues.
4. With this new perspective, students write their own letter. (Note: Instead of writing to President Correa again, often students choose to instead address it to the UN, the people of Ecuador.)

Teacher’s Notes:

The use of Ecuador's rainforests often headlines in the news. Historically and globally, El Oriente is a rich resource for many groups of people, and the use of it's resources is often a source of conflict. Students can quickly and easily access useful and reliable information as they think more deeply and systemically about the events.

This work provides great models to for future (and more independent) application of the Compass tools.

To further supplement, the book “Rethinking Globalization: Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World” by Bill Bigelow and Bob Peterson provides a fantastic case study and role play



What the compass does:

- Helps students analyse complex systems that are not obvious in news and media sources.
- Helps students organize their thoughts and justify their reasoning by communicating relationships clearly.
- Supports students as they focus deeper inquiry and investigation into complex issues.
- Empowers students to think deeply at an issue and communicate their ideas clearly without too much guidance or instruction.

Compass Education

- Empower & Connect Learning Communities to Educate & Act for a Sustainable Future -

