

Positive Psychology and Sustainability

A Lesson Plan by:

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- Select from among the following Global Perspectives presented in the positive psychology text, *Essential Elements for Effectiveness* by Abascal, Brucato, Stephenson, and Brucato 4th edition.
 - *Spaceship Earth* pg. 13
 - *Achieving Global Citizenship* pg. 41
 - *Sustainable Food Choices* pg. 168
 - *A Global Vision* pg. 182
 - *The Time is Now* pg. 213
 - *Reducing the Gap- A Global Win-Win* pg. 241
- At the class before the scheduled discussion assign the reading of the appropriate global perspective.
- The day of the class divide the class into working pairs for a “turn to your neighbor” exercise.
- Have students take turns softly reading alternating paragraphs of the perspective to one another. Whichever student is listening then summarizes what was read and then reads the next paragraph.
- At the end of the piece students share their cognitive and emotional reactions.
- Professor then calls on individual pairs of students to share their reactions with the class as a whole and processes the experience.
- Towards the end of the course, students understanding of concepts is evaluated through a scenario assessment such as that noted below.

Assessment Scenarios

Based upon the various Global Perspective pieces that you have read and discussed this semester, how would an aspiring global citizen behave in the following situations?

Josh is very concerned about his health and the health of Earth. He is concerned about the quality and quantity of clean water remaining in the world's aquifers. He desperately wants to make a difference by promoting less wasting of water. His best option for making a difference would be:

- A. Shower with a restricted flow shower head
- B. Bathe instead of shower
- C. Decrease the amount of meat he eats
- D. Increase the amount of meat he eats

Josh's best option to improve his individual health would be:

- A. Eat lower on the food chain
- B. Eat more fast food
- C. Buy his meat directly from factory farms
- D. Reduce his fiber intake

Josh's best option to promote the well being of Earth would be:

- A. Eat organically produced foods
- B. Buy locally grown produce
- C. Practice composting
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

Suzanne and Samuel consider themselves passengers on Spaceship Earth. With this knowledge they know which of the following is true:

- A. Pollutants released into the Atlantic ocean stay separate from those released into the Pacific ocean because of *el nino* currents.
- B. Global warming effects are felt primarily at the equator
- C. Because of the enormous amount of Earth covered by water the supply of fish in the oceans is virtually unlimited.
- D. Earth appears to regulate itself as if it is living organism.

Several students are debating whether or not they can legitimately call themselves global citizens. They argue over what characterizes a true global citizen. They finally agree that some of the following statements represent the thinking and knowledge of a global citizen.

Regarding global citizens, they all agree that:

- A. Only some people are truly global citizens.
- B. Global citizens place emphasis on collective choices being imposed upon individuals.
- C. Global citizens are reactive meaning they have an internal locus of control.
- D. Global citizens place emphasis on individual choice in a collective setting.

As the idea of global citizenship begins to enter our everyday thinking at a deeper level, they agree they will notice the following:

- A. A greater acknowledgement of our interconnectedness will begin to reduce our diversity.
- B. There will be agreed upon, single solutions to solve global problems
- C. As we celebrate diversity, we will see an increase in creative solutions to global problems
- D. People will realize that they must be focused on their own survival and not worry about how their actions affect others.

They all acknowledge that there are haves and have-nots in terms of access to resources and they agree that this disparity between these groups is:

- A. 7 to 1
- B. 10 to 1
- C. 73 to 1
- D. 100 to 1

Global citizens grasp that there is a relationship between our utilization of resources and the safety of our food supply and environment. How humans view their place on Earth is based upon some very questionable assumptions. Which of the following assumptions would a global citizen challenge?

- A. Humans are separate from nature.
- B. Our resource supplies are inexhaustible.
- C. Humans are only motivated by self-interest.
- D. Economic growth is more important than environmental protection.
- E. None of the above

Local goals compatible with a global vision are a way to begin moving toward a sustainable mode of living. Appreciative Inquiry is a method for establishing positive goals. Which of the following questions are **not** typical of this method?

- A. Where is the air most fit to breathe? How can that be duplicated?
- B. Where has war broken out between previously peaceful peoples? What happened there?
- C. South Africa has gone from apartheid to radically improved racial relations? How was this accomplished?
- D. What cities are easiest to live in with low rates of poverty and crime? What happened there?

Global citizens seek win-win solutions in order to secure a peaceful future. Which of these statements is compatible with this idea?

- A. The new paradigm for defense of the United States involves preventing poorer nations from disrupting the businesses of the more prosperous nations.
- B. We must reduce the gap between the rich and poor nations in any way we can regardless of what it does to Earth.
- C. I am what I am because of what we all are.
- D. Countries can each take as much of the shared resources of Earth, the commons, because they are virtually unlimited.