



National Farmers Union *“Project Citizenship”*

Grades 6-8

Contents:

Lesson 1: Election Year Citizenship ~ 1 hour

Lesson 2: Daily Citizenship ~ 1 hour

Lesson 3*: Cooperative Citizenship ~ 1 ½ hours

Lesson 4: Global Citizenship ~ 2 hours

Optional Activities

** Lesson contains a cooperative education component.*

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Lesson Plan 1: Election Year Citizenship

- Unit Objective:** Young people will learn about the right and responsibility of voting. They will also recognize and verbalize positive traits that they possess.
- Grades:** 6-8
- Length:** 1 hour: 10 min. for Activity Sheet A, 30 min. for Campaign Craze, 20 min. for background information and discussion questions.
- Materials Needed:** Butcher paper, construction paper, poster board, pens or pencils, colored markers, tape, scissors, round stickers or safety pins for campaign buttons, something to hang the posters, Activity Sheet A and Discussion Questions. (Optional: paints, glitter, ribbons, glue, etc., for advanced poster-making, and prizes for first to complete Activity Sheet A correctly.)
- Preparation Needed:** Print Activity Sheet A and “Election Year Discussion Questions.” Prepare prizes for the Activity Sheet A.

Background:

You’ve probably seen the campaign ads and have heard news reports about the elections this year. Perhaps you’ve heard adults discussing the candidates who are running for office. On Nov. 4, Americans will be voting for the president of the United States, which we do every four years.

Many people think voting is the most important right Americans have – a chance to make a difference in their cities, counties, states and country. However, many people still do not vote. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 64 percent of the general population voted in the 2004 presidential elections.

For more than a century, people have fought for their right to vote. In the 1870s, the 15th Amendment gave American citizens of any race the freedom to vote. However, in the 1888 presidential elections, Native Americans were not allowed to vote because some saw them as not being citizens of the United States, even though they were born here. It was not until 1924 that American Indians were allowed to vote. Women were not given the right to vote until the 19th Amendment was passed in 1920.

In the early 1970s, the 26th Amendment passed which lowered the voting age from 21 to 18. So, citizens of the United States who are 18 years old have the right to vote in local, state and national elections. Although you will be ineligible to vote on Nov. 4, you have the right and responsibility as a U.S. citizen to be educated and involved in the process.

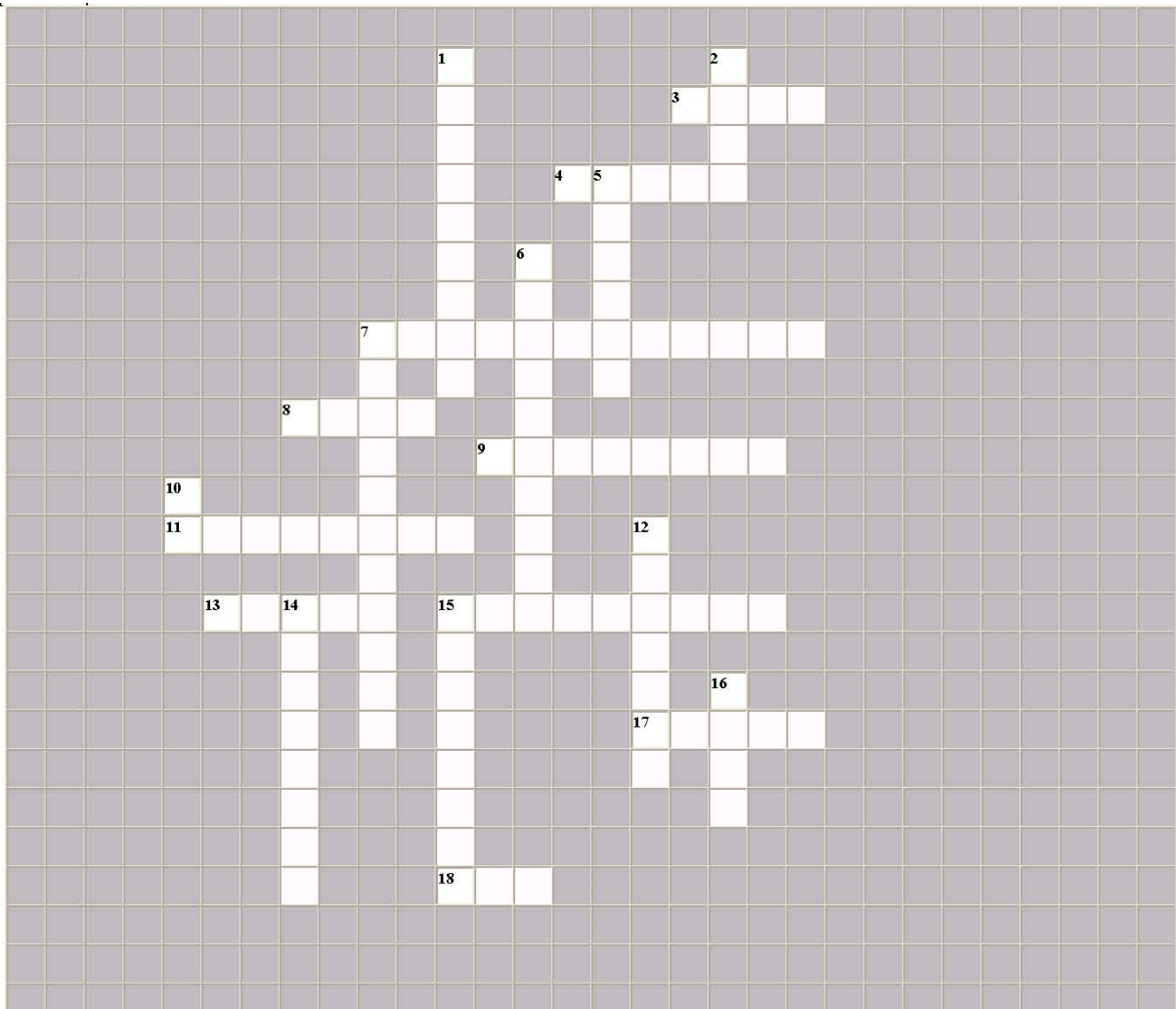
Teaching Strategy:

1. *How much do you know about citizenship? Are you a citizen? What are your rights as citizens? Test your citizenship knowledge with this crossword puzzle.* Hand out Activity Sheet A. Answer key is included in this lesson. Give a prize to the first to correctly solve the puzzle. Give enough time for all to try to answer all questions and go over any answers that they may not have gotten.
2. Introduce the concept of the lesson with an overview of the background information above. Follow with “Election Year Discussion questions.”
3. Introduce Campaign Craze as an ice-breaker activity and an introduction to the election year topic. *Many of you have probably noticed the barrage of campaign signs and ads in the last several months. When politicians run a campaign they sell themselves by telling everyone about all their successes, strong points, values and positive traits. Creating your own campaign takes guts. It isn’t easy to stand up in front of a bunch of people, brag about yourself and share your values. Today you’re each going to have the opportunity to do just that.* Inform everyone that they each will be running for an office of their choice. (It’s all pretend of course.) Each person will need to run an extensive campaign in their attempt to become elected. Each person must then create the following campaign items: a poster, campaign buttons, a one-minute campaign speech, a slogan and anything else they can think of (some might write their own song). Encourage everyone to base their campaign on all of their positive attributes and traits. Once everyone is finished, ask each person to present campaigns to the rest of the group.

4. Discuss the activity as a group. *How did you feel when you were presenting your campaigns? Was it difficult or easy for you to think of positive things about yourself for the campaign? What did you learn about others in the group when doing this activity? How many of you actually have ambitions to run for the office you made up? Why or why not?*
5. Encourage people to put their posters on the wall for all to see for the remainder of the day and to wear or share their buttons.

Sources: Campaign Craze adapted from Games for Groups.com, 104 Activities that Build.
Iowa Caucus story adapted from Wiretap Magazine coverage, www.wiretapmag.org.

Test Your Citizenship Knowledge



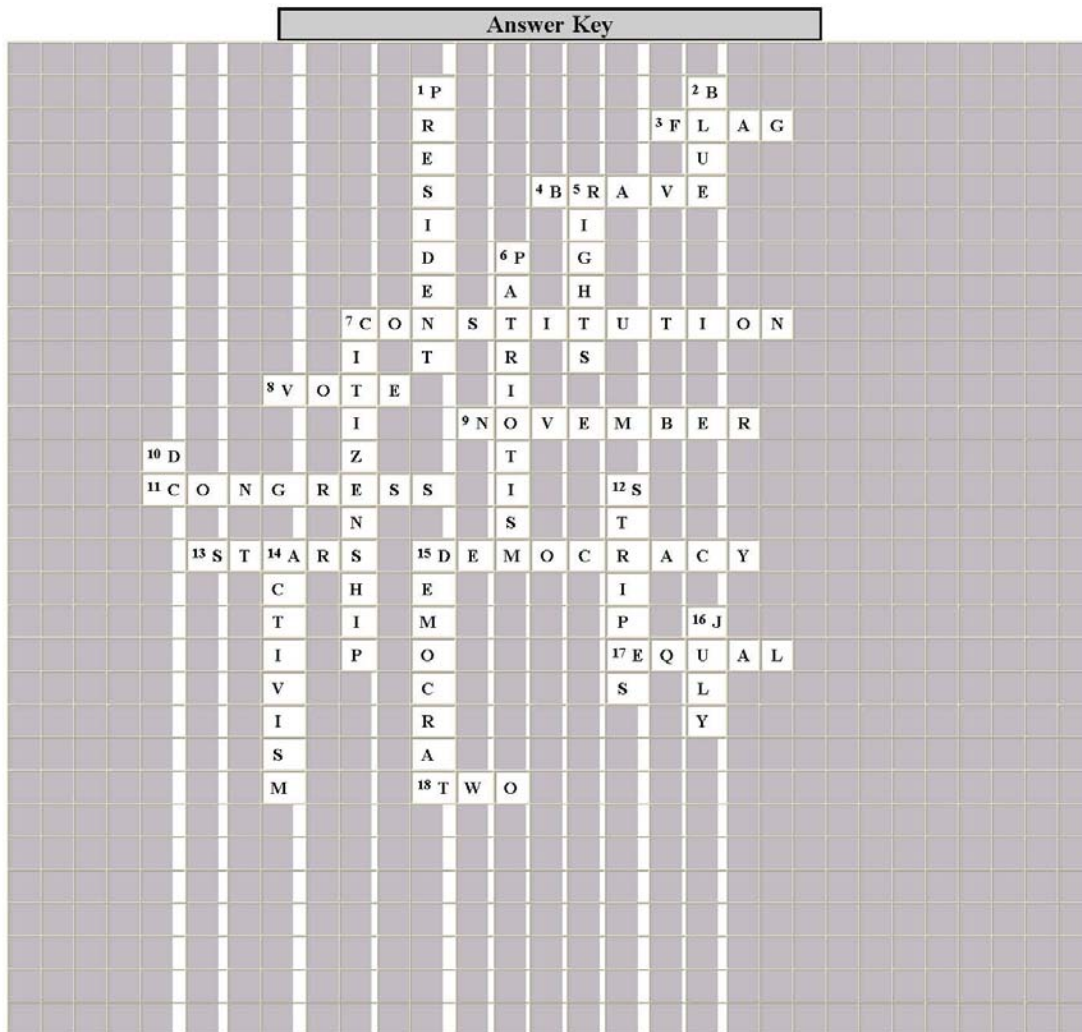
Down

1. Signs bills into law or has veto power
2. A color in the U.S. flag
5. The first 10 amendments to the Constitution are the bill of . . .
6. Pride in your country
7. Exercising your rights and duties as a member of society
10. Our nation's capitol city, abbreviated
12. There are 13 on the U.S. flag representing the original colonies
14. Action in support or in opposition of a cause
15. One of the primary political parties
16. Independence Day is celebrated on the 4th of this month

Across

3. You pledge allegiance to it
4. The last word in the U.S. national anthem
7. The supreme law of the land
8. You must be 18 to do this
9. The month we vote for President
11. The body that makes U.S. laws
13. The last of these was added to the U.S. flag in 1960 for Hawaii
15. The type of government of the United States
17. The basic belief of the Declaration of Independence: all men are created . . .
18. The number of presidential terms AND the number of senators each state is allowed

6-8 Citizenship Crossword Answer Key



Election Year Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think they lowered the legal voting age from 21 to 18 in the early 1970s?
2. Do you think 18 is a fair age? Is it time to change the age again? At what age do you think people should be allowed to vote? Why?
3. In the 2000 election only 51 percent of the population voted. In 2004, 64 percent voted, although only 47 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds voted. What are reasons to vote? Why do you think some people choose not to vote?
4. If you could vote this year, would you? Why or why not?
5. What do you think are important qualities for a presidential candidate to have? What issues are important to you?
6. Recently, candidates have begun courting young voters. Why do you think this is?
7. What are some ways young people under the age of 18 can get involved in the democratic process?

Lesson Plan 2: Daily Citizenship

- Unit Objective:** Students will learn how good citizenship fits into their daily lives.
- Grades:** 6-8
- Length:** 1 hour: 10 min. for One Minute of Words activity, 20 min. for Activity Sheet B and discussion, 30 min. for Activity Sheet C.
- Materials Needed:** Pens, loose-leaf paper, a few prizes for an individual or for enough for each member of a winning group, Activity Sheets B and C.
- Preparation Needed:** Cut out words from Activity Sheet B and place them in a hat, make enough copies of Activity Sheet B and C for every group member. Prepare prizes.

Background:

The principles of good citizenship can be found in everyday activities. They're doing your share, being responsible, serving your community, caring for the environment, being respectful and obeying the law. Good citizenship is achieved by all contributions, large and small, made by individuals and groups, with the greater good in mind.

Teaching Strategy:

1. Introduce the concept of the lesson with an overview of the background information above.
2. Hand out paper and pens and explain the rules for the One Minute of Words game. *I will set the timer for one minute and you should write as many words or phrases that you can think of that describe good citizenship. These can be personal attributes, attitudes or actions that a good citizen might display. Afterward, we'll count up the words and/or phrases and the person (or group) with the most legitimate words or phrases wins a prize. When I say stop, put your pens down immediately or face disqualification. (The prize might be a Farmers Union T-shirt or another donated gift that a young person would enjoy.)* After one minute is up, call time, and have people raise their hands if they had two words or more, three or more, four or more, etc. When you get to a handful of people left, have them come forward and state the words or phrases they have on their sheets. Ask a seated volunteer to come forward to write the words or phrases on a board or flipchart for all to see. Once the finalists have stated their words, have them state how many words they have one at a time. If there is a winner, verify, and award him or her. If there is a tie, award all equally, or have a 30-second bonus round to break the tie in which the finalists write all the words or phrases they can think of to describe Farmers Union or a cooperative. Ask those seated to share other items on their lists that have not yet been mentioned.
3. Hand out Activity Sheet B, allow five minutes for them to fill out as individuals, pairs or groups and at least five minutes to discuss questions as a group.
4. Pass around the hat and have each group member draw one of the words from the hat. Have them tell the rest of the group what they will do personally to make sure that they, and those around them, do not live without the word they drew. Depending on the size of the group, this may need to be done in groups or with partners.
5. *I'm confident each of you display good citizenship in your daily lives, and there may be other opportunities that you haven't thought about yet.* Have the students complete Activity Sheet C and ask for volunteers to share their Citizenship Autobiography with the group or divide into groups to discuss.

Sources: Principles activity submitted by Lisa Teske, Kansas Farmers Union.

Principles of Citizenship

Circle five principles from the following list that you would be most willing to live without.

Dignity

Self-control

Freedom

Respect

Courage

Trust

Integrity

Justice

Kindness

Humility

Patience

Forgiveness

Loyalty

Honesty

Honor

Responsibility

Compassion

Fairness

What would it be like to live without the ones that you chose?

Which, if any, are you living without or have less of in your life?

Put a star in front of the three principles in this list that you value most. Why did you choose these three?

Do your actions and the actions of those around you reflect these three principles that you value most? Explain.

Can you think of other principles that are not on the list that are important for a successful society and for positive personal relationships with family, friends and others?

My Citizenship Autobiography

Reflect on your development as an informed and contributing citizen by answering the questions below.

Family involvement: _____

Activism in school: _____

Organizations: _____

Involvement in the community: _____

Politics: _____

What do you see are your citizenship roles? _____

What personal skills do you have that contribute to your citizenship? _____

How did you gain the skills you need for action? _____

What are some of the issues that you care about? _____

What are needs in your community? _____

What are your citizenship goals? _____

Lesson Plan 3: Cooperative Citizenship

- Unit Objective:** Young people will learn how cooperatives are channels of citizenship and public problem-solving.
- Grades:** 6-8
- Length:** 1 ½ hours: 30 min. for “Better Together” Cooperative Activity, 30 min. for cooperative case study and presentations, 30 min. for cooperative games.
- Materials Needed:** Cups, a wide variety of candy, “Market with a Mission” sheet, “CFAM Discussion Questions,” four flip-charts, four sets of markers and materials for cooperative games of your choice.
- Preparation Needed:** Prepare cups and candy for the “Better Together” Cooperative Activity. Print one “Market with a Mission” sheet for each student and cut and fold “CFAM Discussion Questions” and place in a hat.

Background:

We are able to make a difference as individuals, yet together, we can do even more. When we cooperate, we work together for a common purpose and benefit.

Cooperatives businesses exist to benefit everyone who is involved with them as well as the communities around them. Just as the United States is a democracy, a cooperative is an economic democracy. Each member has an equal share and one vote when decisions are made. The members own it and share in the money the business spends and makes.

Another goal of a cooperative is to give back to the community through cooperative education. Because of these and other reasons, cooperatives are often viewed as good citizens.

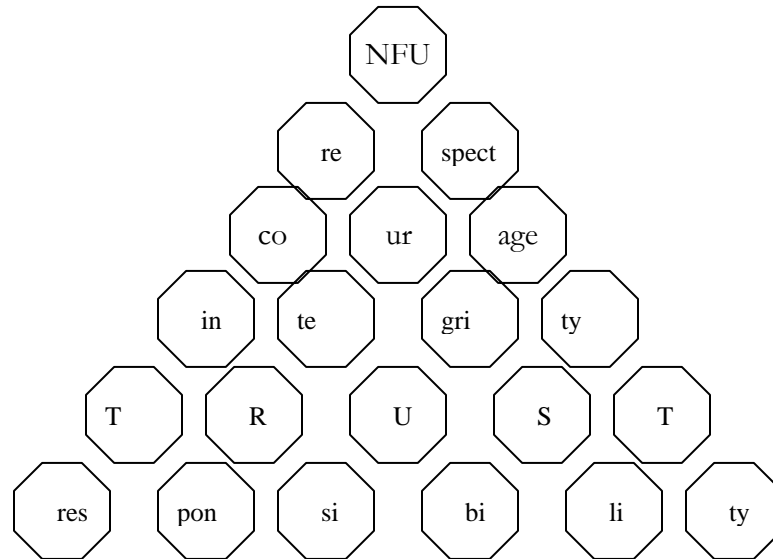
Teaching Strategy:

1. Set the lesson up by presenting the background information above.
2. Pass out “Market with a Mission.” Have volunteers read the hand-out as others follow along.
3. Divide the group into four teams and have each group draw one of the four “CFAM Discussion Questions.” Have each group prepare a presentation using the flip-charts and markers, and answering the question they drew as though they were presenting to the entire CFAM board of directors. Have the group nominate leaders to present each page of the flip-chart.
4. *Would you consider CFAM an example of a good community citizen? What is an example in your state or community of a cooperative or other business that displays good citizenship?*
5. Conclude the session with cooperative games of your choice.

Sources: Cooperative Activity submitted by Lisa Teske, Kansas Farmers Union.
Case Study submitted by Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, www.rmfu.org.

“Better Together” Cooperative Activity

- Create cups with parts of words written on the bottom. The letters on the cups will be used at the end to create principles of citizenship in the form of a triangle. Complete words might be written with the same color marker so that the puzzle may be easier put together.
- The letters on the cup could spell the following. This is an example. You may use other words depending on the size of your group and areas you would like to focus on.



- Depending on the size of the group, some may have blank cups that would not be used in the exercise. Those with blank cups can help put the pieces together. If you have a large group, more words could be added such as self-control, patience, honesty, compassion, freedom, kindness, forgiveness, honor, fairness. Also, depending on the number of people, and for added difficulty, cups might be used along the sides to form the education, legislation and cooperation of the Farmers Union triangle. Be sure to draw out the cup design before playing to make sure the pyramid will work. For the pyramid to work, you should start with one cup and build down by adding one cup per line.
- Fill the cups with a variety of candy -- jaw breakers, gum, mints, chocolates, sweet, sour, tart, etc. It is better if everyone does not have the same varieties of candy in their cups.
- Have the young people sit in groups in a circle. Pass out the cups to each person and ask them not to eat the candy yet, but for them to look only at the gift they have been given without touching the contents and without looking at anyone else's gift.
- Ask the young people to observe their personal gifts closely. Ask, *in what ways might your gift be like you?* (possible responses: sweet on the inside, made for a purpose, diverse, etc.)
- Now ask them to observe their neighbor's gifts closely. *In what ways might your gift be like the others in the group?* (same shape, all candy, etc.) *What conclusions might we draw from this observation as a metaphor for each of us?* (We're equal in many ways, we may be useful in many ways, etc.) *How do you feel about your gift?*
- Have them dump the contents and look at each piece and compare with others in their group. *Now how do you feel about your gift? Is there some candy that you like more than others? Place your favorite pieces in one pile and put your not-so-favorite pieces in another pile to give to someone else in your group who likes those best. Look at others' pieces and ask for something from their not-so-favorite pile.*
- *What happened to your gift? Did it get bigger/smaller, better/worse? The candy you like might be similar to your strengths and the candy you don't like might be similar to your weaknesses. We all have different strengths and weaknesses we bring to the table. It takes all kinds of people and that's why cooperation is so important in solving problems – we can count on the strengths of others.*
- Explain they now will need to cooperate with those in other groups to build a pyramid with their empty cups.

Market with a Mission

Frustrated with a lack of available market outlets and consumer appreciation for local food, a group of farmers near Colorado Springs banded together five years ago to form a new organization that would promote their local, mostly organic, products. The mission of this new association would be to educate consumers about local food systems and put a face on area farmers.

Early on, a group of Southern Colorado artisans asked if they could join the group to showcase high-quality regional art, for a multi-sensory experience. Thus, the Colorado Farm and Art Market cooperative (CFAM) was born.



Produce must be Colorado-grown and organic is strongly encouraged. Efforts are made to attract high-quality artists including painters, potters and jewelry makers.

A diverse mix of young families, students and retirees can be found mingling among booths overflowing with the season's offerings. New machines now make it possible for low-income consumers, who have not historically been strong supporters of the farmers market, to purchase produce with food stamps. CFAM's board of directors has been reaching out to these patrons through direct-marketing efforts,

advertising in urban newspapers and building relationships with local charities.

Members of the board see the "Wal-Mart mentality" of mainstream consumers as a major impediment to the market's continued growth. Many lower and middle income consumers are perceived to be unwilling or unable to pay a premium for the type of value-added produce that CFAM strives to offer.

Another limitation is the seasonality of local products and the inability to supply fresh product year-round. There's also competition from other farmers markets. A small promotion budget limits the market's ability to reach out to new customers.

The market has added some new features such as a Saturday market, evening markets, prepared food vendors, local chef visits, taste-testing, musicians and informational displays.

Dan Hobbs, a fifth generation Colorado vegetable farmer and former cooperative specialist with the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, helped found CFAM. Through his role with Farmers Union, he was able to assist the group with a business and marketing plan and to source legal help to get the group incorporated. The Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative Development Center provided in-kind time and helped CFAM to succeed in getting a Rural Business Enterprise grant.

Dan helped CFAM form an educational mission of informing consumers of the differences between store-bought produce and locally grown, organic products that are purchased direct from the producer. They teach customers about the importance of respecting the environment and supporting local growers. The farmers market is making their community a better place by supplying healthy foods, supporting area farmers and contributing to the local economy.



CFAM Discussion Questions

1. Consumer trends have shaped the market offerings of the Colorado Farm and Art Market cooperative (CFAM). Are you aware of any current consumer food trends? How have you seen local grocery stores or farmers' markets accommodate these changes in demand? In light of your knowledge of these trends, what recommendations do you have for the CFAM board?
2. As the number of farmers' markets in the Colorado Springs area continues to grow, the CFAM faces growing competition for consumers and a limited marketing budget. To increase patron numbers, what marketing techniques would you recommend to the CFAM board of directors?
3. According to the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative Development Center, a well-constructed business plan includes a situation analysis component that discusses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing a cooperative business. What could be some of the potential weaknesses and threats facing CFAM today and in the future? How could its member-owners prepare to strengthen these potential areas of weakness?
4. American people are increasingly demanding better community and global citizenship from the businesses they encounter. CFAM board members are interested in advertising their current role as community citizens and would like to expand the cooperative's citizenship efforts. What recommendations do you have for increasing the cooperative's citizenship efforts?

Lesson Plan 4: Global Citizenship

- Unit Objective:** Young people will learn responsibilities and issues of global citizenship.
- Grades:** 6-8
- Length:** 2 hours: 20 min. to do Activity Sheet E and discuss, 30 min. for introduction and discussion of global citizenship through Activity Sheet F, 30 min. flashlight trade game, 20 min. for Ecuador discussion, 20 min. for Ecuador fund-raiser marketing activity.
- Materials Needed:** Activity Sheets E and F, “A Voice for those Who Have No Voice,” and “Discussion Questions,” materials for making a display about the Farmers Union-CARE Ecuador project such as cardboard, material to cover the board, scissors, markers, glue, print-out photos from the CARE site, etc.
- Preparation Needed:** Print Activity Sheets E, F, “A Voice for those Who Have No Voice,” and “Discussion Questions” for each student.

Background:

Global citizenship is recognizing the connection we have with all human beings that inhabit the Earth. By recognizing that connection, we should also recognize the responsibility we have to each other and to the natural resources we all share.

There are many global issues of concern including poverty, the environment, children’s rights, diversity, labor, HIV-AIDS, etc.

Farmers Union organizations take their roles as a global citizens seriously. Farmers Union acts as a global citizen through the policies it represents, contributions to global causes, as well as through its involvement in organizations such as the International Federation of Agricultural Producers.

One of the issues that Farmers Union fights for regularly is fair trade. Fair trade is when people who grow and produce food and other products are paid a fair price for their work. This helps make sure the producers and workers have enough money to look after themselves and their families and work in safe conditions. Fair trade also ensures that U.S. producers and workers do not unfairly have to compete with imports from countries that pay little or no attention to labor and environmental standards.

Teaching Strategy:

1. Hand out Activity Sheet E and give class a few minutes to fill out and then run through the answer key and discuss the results. *Did this surprise you? Half of the entire village’s wealth would be in the hands of only six people and most of them would be citizens of the United States. What does that say about our world? When one considers our world from such an incredibly compressed perspective, the need for cooperation and understanding becomes glaringly apparent. If these are the trends, what are the remedies? What can we do?* Hand out Activity Sheet F, give five minutes, and discuss as a group.
2. *Say the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word “global citizen.” What are the qualities that you think characterize a good global citizen?* Have the group organize the traits of a good global citizen into no more than 10 characteristics. (social justice, an environmental steward, corporate responsibility, etc.) Next, have them rank the traits in order of importance as a group and discuss why they feel that way.
3. Hand out “A Voice for those Who Have No Voice” and “Discussion Questions,” then show the NDFU video about the Ecuador CARE project:
<http://www.ndfu.org/data/upfiles/video/careproject.mov>
4. If younger students in your organization will be creating seed packets for a fund-raising event (See Grades 1-2 and 3-5 Lesson 4 Service Craft), older students could create displays and other marketing plans for raising money. Photos and information from the area can be found at <http://www.care.org/vft/ecuador/journal.asp>.

Sources: CARE, www.care.org, North Dakota Farmers Union and Cindy Schlosser, NDFU member.

Summary of the World

If we could shrink the Earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all existing human ratios remaining the same, what would it look like?

- 1. How many of our village of 100 people would be from less developed countries with a yearly gross income per capita of \$3,580?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 2. How many of our villagers would be from developed countries with a yearly gross income per capita of \$22,060?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 3. How many would live on less than \$2 a day?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 4. How many would live on less than \$1 a day?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 5. How many would be from North America, including Canada?** What I think _____ Actual _____ **How many would be Asians?** What I think _____ Actual _____ **How many would be Europeans?** What I think _____ Actual _____ **How many would be Africans?** What I think _____ Actual _____ **How many would be from South America and the Caribbean?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 6. How many are white?** What I think _____ Actual _____ **Non-white?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 7. How many would mistrust their own government?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 8. How many would be female?** What I think _____ Actual _____ **How many would be male?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 9. How many would lack access to basic sanitation?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 10. How many would live in the city?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 11. How many would have substandard housing or have no home at all?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 12. How many would be under 18 years old?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 13. How many would lack access to safe drinking water?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 14. How many would be unable to read and write?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 15. How many would suffer from malnutrition?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 16. How many would have Internet access from home?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 17. How many would be citizens of the United States?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 18. How many would be near death?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 19. How many would be near birth?** What I think _____ Actual _____
- 20. How many would have a college education?** What I think _____ Actual _____

Activity Sheet E Answer Key

1. **81** would be from less developed countries with a yearly gross income per capita of \$ 3,580.
2. **19** would be from developed countries with a yearly gross income per capita of \$22,060.
3. **48** would live on \$2 a day.
4. **20** would live on \$1 a day.
5. **5** would be from North America including Canada, there would be **61** Asians, **12** Europeans, **13** Africans, and **9** would be from South America and the Caribbean.
6. **75** would be non-white, while **25** would be white.
7. **60** would mistrust their own government.
8. **51** would be female, and **49** would be male.
9. **48** would lack basic sanitation.
10. **47** would live in the city.
11. **25** would live in substandard housing or have no home at all.
12. **17** would be under 18 years old.
13. **16** would lack access to safe drinking water.
14. **70** would be unable to read.
15. **50** would suffer from malnutrition.
16. **8** would have Internet access from home.
17. **4.5** would be citizens of the United States.
18. **1** would be near death.
19. **1** would be near birth.
20. **1** would have a college education.

“My country is the *world*.

My countrymen are *mankind*.”

~ Thomas Payne, author of *Common Sense* (1776)

What does this quote mean to you?

Do you feel this way?

Do you think most people think this way?

If everyone believed this, what would be different?

How has the world changed since 1776 when Payne wrote this? Have we become more or less connected with our fellow world citizens?

How are we disconnected?

How are we connected? How many global links can we find in this room? They could be personal, friends or relatives you may have in another country, maybe someone you met on MySpace.com? Global links could also be impersonal, but very influential. The origin of our food and our fuel, for example.

How does a crisis in one country impact another?

A Voice for Those Who Have No Voice



*Cindy Schlosser, former
Farmers Union youth
photos courtesy of NDFU*

Cindy Schlosser, a 2000 Farmers Union Torchbearer, currently works at Annunciation House, providing shelter, food and work for poor immigrants and refugees in El Paso, Texas. As a fluent Spanish speaker, she was asked to serve as North Dakota Farmers Union's on-the-ground representative in Ecuador exploring a project NDFU is partnering on with CARE. CARE is an international organization present in 66 countries working at the grassroots level toward the eradication of poverty.

NDFU launched a humanitarian fund-raising effort with CARE to help rural women in Ecuador rebuild their communities through sustainable agricultural practices. The goal is to raise \$50,000 to assist indigenous farmers of the Shuar tribe in the southeastern province of Morona Santiago. Funds will be used to finance small loans to women to buy seeds or cattle and to educate them on agricultural practices that the community has lost over the years.

CARE and NDFU's project works to reintroduce the practice of Aja Shuar (Aja – the farming practice; and Shuar – the indigenous tribe) whereby farmers will receive education on how to plant and grow a wider variety of crops that were used by their ancestors. As proven in other communities that practice Aja Shuar, the level of nutrition increases as well as crop production. Excess produce is then sold which has allowed women to purchase more seeds, clean water for their families, electricity and an education for their children.

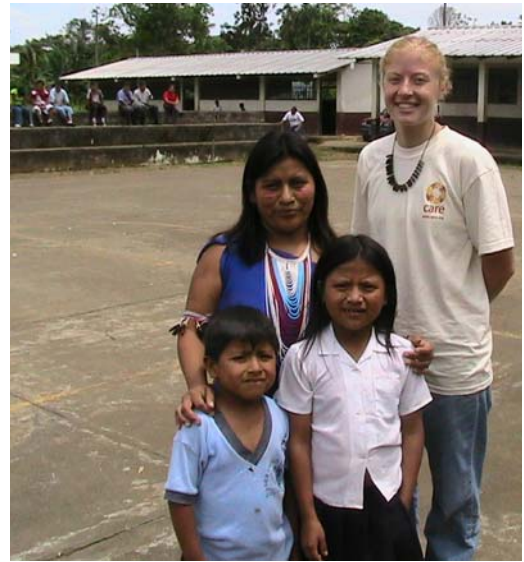
The women have been able to start a cooperative by collectively taking out loans. They use excess seeds to make into jewelry and use the excess fruit they are now able to grow in their fields to make jelly and sell it in nearby markets. It is being shipped to Germany and France through the help of CARE's connections with European markets.

The following are excerpts from Cindy's speech to the 2007 North Dakota Farmers Union Convention:

"We as farmers. . . are connected to human beings all over the earth through our connection to and dependence on the land. The realization of the strength we have in our unity is what allows us to use our voice for those who have no voice or those whose voices are falling on deaf ears.

"The commitment to social and political change from the grassroots is one commitment I highly value about Farmers Union. It has deeply affected what I do and, really, who I am. I have learned to ask questions when decisions are being made in my community. We should question the motivations behind the actions and who is being affected. I have this organization to thank for being so forward thinking, for teaching me to ask the questions, and most importantly the need to listen.

"I see Farmers Union as an organization that unites people around a culture of community. It may be a community of farmers, small business owners, families or students. Farmers Union is a model of a healthy society whose concern is the welfare of the community and even beyond to our global community. We must understand our interconnectedness with every human being on this earth, only then can we move forward to accepting our responsibilities of this global community."



Cindy with family from Ecuador

Discussion Questions

If you were given \$50,000 to try to make a difference in the world, what would you do?

What are things we can do to be good global citizens even if we, as individuals, have limited resources?

Why do you think North Dakota Farmers Union has committed to helping the Shuar community in Ecuador?

NDFU will make their donation on August 29, 2008. Do you have any ideas for how to assist in this effort in the meantime?

Cindy Schlosser, the 2000 Farmers Union Torchbearer who traveled to Ecuador on behalf of NDFU, feels that, "...the strength we have in our unity is what allows us to use our voice for those who have no voice or those whose voices are falling on deaf ears." In what other ways do we or should we take advantage of our collective strength?

Cindy also described how the lessons she learned as a Farmers Union youth have followed her into adulthood. What do you value about your Farmers Union organization? Is it impacting the person you are becoming? If so, how?

Optional Activities

The following activities could be incorporated at the end of any lesson to fill extra time.

1. Plan a group service project based on student suggestions from the lessons.
2. Have senior youth create visual aides to use in teaching the younger age groups. Have the senior youth teach the lessons to the younger age groups for a leadership component.
3. Charades or hangman with new vocabulary words.
4. See Grades 9-12, Lesson 4, for alternative cooperative case study.
5. Lead the group in the St. Mary's Paper Bag Game, which explores global citizenship and free trade issues:
<http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/YouthLeaderResources/pbag.aspx>.
6. Check out the Passport Game:
<http://www.freedomfromhunger.org/bytes/passport/>
7. Teach some Farmers Union songs.