

It's just not fair

Time

60 minutes

Objectives

- To enable pupils to experience the unfairness of unequal trading relationships.
- To illustrate how trade can both benefit and hinder the economic development of different countries around the world.
- To help pupils understand and experience some existing trade rules.

Materials (for 6 groups)

- Activity sheet 1: role cards
- Activity sheet 2: produce pictures
- Activity sheet 3: money
- 8 pencils (+ spares)
- 7 pairs of scissors (+ spares)
- 6 colour pencils (+ spares)

Content

Game objectives

Assign one person in the class to be the 'banker' (or the teacher can play this role). Then split the class into six groups. The aim of each group is to make as much money as possible by 'producing' and then selling their goods. The goods are shown on Activity sheet 2 (produce pictures) in the set of materials.

Each product has its own value, as shown below. (The teacher will show this clearly on the blackboard.)

The products are cut out, coloured in, and given to the banker in sets. The banker will check them thoroughly and then pay the value of the product.

Groups should produce as much as they can. The more they produce the more money they will make.

Rules

- All products must be cut out and coloured in very neatly.
- Goods should be sold to the banker in sets.
- Only the materials provided can be used.
- There is to be no cheating or stealing from other groups during the game.

Instructions

Split the players into groups:

2 × group A	Sugar cane farmers (in the South)
2 × group B	Sugar beet farmers (in the North)
2 × group C	Sweet manufacturers (in the North)

Allocate each group a table and a set of materials (in envelopes) as indicated. Make sure that groups don't open their envelopes until the game begins. Do not tell the groups they have different sets of materials – they will probably notice soon enough.

Read out the aims and rules of the game and make sure all students know what is expected of them.

It is more than likely that some of your pupils will ask you questions: "Why haven't we got more paper? We do not have (enough) scissors. Where can we find more pencils?"

Try to resist answering these questions, just repeat the rules and encourage your pupils to play the game.

The trading should continue for about 20–45 minutes, depending on the size and the interest of the class.

Some groups will feel very important; others will experience feelings of frustration.

The teacher can choose to encourage trading by supplying more information and creating new situations (trade rules and regulations – see examples below).

Materials per group

Group A Sugar cane farmers

Sugar cane pictures
1 pencil
1 pair of scissors
1 colour pencil
Role card

Group B Sugar beet farmers

Sugar beet pictures
3 pencils
3 pairs of scissors
2 colour pencils
Role card

Group C Sweet manufacturers

Sweets pictures
4 pencils
3 pairs of scissors
3 colour pencils
Role card

Value of produce

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| - Sugar cane: | a set of 10 sells for £1 |
| - Sugar beet: | a set of 5 sells for £1 |
| - Sweets: | a set of 5 sells for £20 |

Creating new situations (optional)

- **Subsidies**

The English government helps the sugar beet farmers in the UK. The farmers receive extra money from the government. They use this to buy more or better machines that will increase sugar beet production. The teacher will give 1 extra pencil and 1 extra pair of scissors to group B.

- **Dumping**

The sugar beet farmers are now producing more because of all the help they get from the government. We do not need all this sugar in the UK so it is sold very cheaply in countries where they produce sugar cane.

This means the sugar cane farmers find it harder to sell their product and receive less money for it.
From now on the sugar cane farmers only get £1 for a set of 20 canes.