

When sugar was just a stick

Time

45 minutes

Objectives

- To show the differences between raw materials produced in the South and the manufactured goods we consume.
- To encourage children to make links between their own lives and the lives of other people.
- To create a better understanding of the products supply chain.

Materials

- Following items: bananas, orange juice, rice, coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar
- Photos of raw materials (**see PowerPoint slides linked from the Scheme of Work**)
- Activity sheet: 'When sugar was just a stick' (**see link from the Scheme of Work**)

Content

- You could bring in a piece of sugar cane or sugar beet. Ask the children if they know what food item this is, or what food is made from this. You could state that 'some of you eat this daily.' You can choose to introduce the concept of raw material and manufactured product if you wish.
- Introduce the photos of the raw materials and the items you brought in. Are there any photographs the class are unsure about? What do they think it could be?
- Ask the children to choose one photograph. What can they see in the photograph? What questions would they like to ask about the product?
- Ask the children to pair the raw material photographs with the items. Suggest to the children that they do the ones they are sure about first. (You don't have to use the words raw materials and manufactured products.)
- What are the similarities/differences? Why is this? What happens with the products? How does the raw material change? Does it change shape and colour? Do the children think it is cooked, heated, cooled, refrigerated, mashed, cubed etc. Brainstorm as a class and let your pupils explain their answers.
- Explore the sugar supply chain (use the Activity Sheet 'When sugar was just a stick') with the whole group and compare this chain with your pupils' (above) answers and solutions.

Extension

- Divide the children into small groups. Each group chooses a product (tea, coffee, cocoa) and tries to find as much information as possible about that product's supply chain. They can share their findings and create a display, painting, or newspaper article.
- Divide the children into small groups. Each member of the group could draw a different part of the sugar supply chain.

Key ideas

Although many raw materials come from developing countries in the South, they are manufactured in Britain or other Northern countries. The original product looks quite different from the manufactured goods we buy in our supermarkets. This expensive packaging results in, amongst others things, high retail prices.

Perhaps it is worth stating that we get most of our sugar from sugar cane (70%) and a smaller proportion (30%) from sugar beet production.