

Oxfam Education

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Find Your Way Through Trade Lesson 6: Show me the money

Age group: 4-11

Time: 45 minutes

Objectives

To raise awareness of who and what is involved in the different parts of the sugar trade. To promote an understanding of world trade and to encourage pupils to think about issues of global justice.

Materials

- Paper for making notes
- Pen/ pencils
- Pack of sugar
- Activity sheet 1: 'Show me the money' without 'Price you actually receive' column. A
 copy of this Activity sheet should be drawn on a whiteboard or a large sheet of paper
 and displayed so that everyone can see it. (below)
- Activity sheet 2: role cards (below)

Content

Divide the players into four groups. Explain that each group will play the role of people who are involved in the sugar supply chain. Give out the role cards, so that the players in each group all have the same one (ie one group are farmers, one group are factory directors etc).

Ask the groups to read their cards and give them 5–10 minutes to think about their roles. How do they feel about it? Is everything clear?

Now hold up the pack of sugar. Tell the class this pack costs about £1.04 in the supermarket. Ask the groups to discuss how much of the selling price they should get. (NB. This should not be a discussion about how much the players think people do get, but rather how much is due to them for the work that they do.) This should take no longer than 10 minutes. Make sure pupils understand what they are discussing and 'coach' them if necessary.

Ask each group to tell you and the other groups how much they think they should get. Encourage them to justify their claim. Record each amount on the chart in the 'price you think you should get paid' column. Add up the amounts and you'll find that they are likely to total quite a lot more than £1.04.

Finally, announce the actual proportion of money received at each stage of the production process, by revealing the 'price you actually receive' column. Give your pupils time to reflect on how they feel about this. Is there anything they can think of that they could do to improve their situation? Why do they think the money is so unequally divided? What do they think can be done about unfair trade?

Teachers can choose to make this a whole class activity if pupils are too young to follow the instructions on the role cards.

Key ideas

The farmers in the South receive only a small amount of the money we pay for their products, and can hardly make a living.

The largest proportion of the retail price of most of the products we consume goes to processing, transport, and retailing companies in the North.

Find Your Way Through Trade Activity sheet 1: Show me the money

	Price you think you should get paid	Price you actually receive
Farmer		2р
Shipper		7p
Factory director		67p
Supermarket director		28p

Find Your Way Through Trade Activity sheet 2: Show me the money

Role cards

The farmer

You live in a very rural part of Honduras. You have a small plot of land, which you farm. Your main source of income comes from growing sugar cane.

You do the planting and the weeding of the fields, which takes up a lot of your time. In harvest time the work gets even harder. Cutting the sugar cane by hand is very difficult. Progress is slow and you get painful blisters on your hands.

After the harvest you crush the cane to get sugar juice, which you then boil to sticky syrup and put in moulds.

You will sell the sticky sugar to visiting buyers.

You work very long days, and when you come home you're too tired to work in your own garden. This means that most of the money you make goes on buying food and other products, and there is hardly enough money left to pay for your children to go to school.

The shipping company manager

You buy the bags of sticky sugar from the farmers, load them onto your ship, and transport them to the UK where you sell them to the factory directors.

You have to pay for qualified people to work on your ship, as well as for fuel. Of course anything can happen during the journey from Honduras to the UK, so you have to take out insurance for the ships and the cargo.

The Factory Director

You buy the sugar from the shipping company and bring it to your factory. You have to clean the sugar before making it into a fine sugar. You then sell it to other factories who use it for the production of drinks, sweets, etc, or you put it into attractive jars and boxes and sell it to supermarkets, cafes, and restaurants. You spend a lot of money on advertising your product in newspapers and commercials to influence the public. The more people who have heard of your brand of sugar, the more people will buy it.

The super-market director

You buy the sugar from the factory. Once the sugar arrives at your supermarkets you price it, put it on display in the right aisle, and sell it to customers. You have to make your shop attractive for the customers so they will enjoy their shopping and hopefully buy more. Therefore you use expensive decoration and trained staff who will provide good customer service.