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International Education Project Plan: Methods of Teaching International-Mindedness

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Introduction

There should be no doubt that in order to prepare students to be successful and productive citizens they should understand, be tolerant of, and be prepared to communicate with other cultures. Americans are not isolated from other countries and modern technology has only contributed to the shrinking of the world. In one instant, students can be connected to other individuals and groups in faraway places, learning and sharing information. This fact has expedited the process of globalization, requiring teachers to respond to not only curricular demands, but to teach students to be internationally-minded, where they are aware of the larger world around them, respect and value diversity, and are conscious of not only their point of view but those of others. Citizens in a democratic society should be reflective, moral, and active citizens in a global world (Banks, 2004). This project plan will present and analyze the various methods by which international-mindedness has been taught to students over time, beginning with the problem of name and definition, and then consider the ways in which the method that this topic is considered by different groups including the International Baccalaureate, specific subject areas including current practitioners, a non-governmental organization, teacher educators, and one secondary school.

The Question of the Name

When working with the question of international-mindedness, the first stumbling block that teachers and researchers run into is the question of name and definition. What exactly constitutes international-mindedness? Is that the best name for the ideas that educators want to transmit to students? What is the difference between international-mindedness, global education, international perspective, global awareness, global citizenship, and international understanding? Does the name actually matter or are teachers simply trying to convey the same ideas to students

no matter what the overall concept is called? Different sources also have different ideas concerning what makes an internationally-minded learner.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) defines international-mindedness in terms of the ways that their programs might lead to the goal of an internationally-minded learner with a focus on the student rather than the curriculum. In their mission statement, "These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right" (Quist, 2006, p. 3) IB is focusing on the behaviors that will make students internationally-minded instead of establishing a clear definition. Instead of emphasizing behavior, Fisher and Hicks (1985) define global education as "education which promotes the knowledge, attitudes, and skills relevant to living responsibly in a multicultural, interdependent world" and the stress with this definition is with the curriculum rather than on the student. Still another group, Oxfam International, uses the term 'global citizenship' instead of international-mindedness and defines attributes that global citizens should have including:

- An awareness of the wider world and a sense of the role of a global citizen;
- A respect for diversity;
- An understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, technically, environmentally, and culturally;
- An outrage when faced with social injustice;
- Willingness to make the world a more sustainable place and;
- Participation in the community on a variety of levels. (Quist, 2006, p.3)

Perhaps the single largest problem with teaching international-mindedness to students is not the name but the definition. Educators, organizations and even specific subject area specialists, do not seem to agree on what comprises a good definition of international-mindedness. In addition,

since there are many names for the concept, students may become confused by the various terminologies of the different stakeholders. If this is a concept that both educators and organizations, such as Oxfam, agree will result in productive citizens of the world, then why is it so difficult to come to consensus on the components of an internationally-minded person? What are the skills that someone should attain to be considered internationally-minded in today's current global community? "We can be Californian and American, British and European, Nigerian and African, citizens of a country and of the world" (Skelton, Wigford, Harper, & Reeves, 1994, p. 52).

Teaching International-Mindedness in the 1930s

For the purposes of this international education project plan, the starting point of this study was determined by two early references to international-mindedness in scholarly literature, both in the year 1933 with interesting timing before the start of World War II. Historically, this was attractive as the time period was pre-Atomic Bomb, pre-Cold War, and before the concerns of quasi-states, global terrorism, and the world economic and humanitarian crises that some areas of the world experience today. Both articles (Barnes, 1933; Campbell & Stover, 1933) used the terminology of 'international-mindedness' with Barnes (1933, p. 478) focusing on "the unobtrusive teaching of good feeling". The writer also provided an extensive list of pedagogical ideas for teachers of middle school literature students to promote the ideas of international-mindedness including:

- Exchange gifts which indicate customs;
- Make a special study of ancestry;
- Place much emphasis on the interdependence of peoples;

- Make biographical studies of peace-time heroes and heroines. Examples given included Louis Pasteur (France), Charles Steinmetz (Germany) and Etsu Sugimoto (Japan); and
- "Break down racial hatreds through building up fair considerations for other peoples and what they have done; but avoid like the plague basing such a program on sentiment. Let it all come naturally, skillfully, joyfully" (Barnes, 1933, p. 479).

What strikes this writer about Barnes' treatment of international-mindedness at the time are the suggestions that seem superficial in the ideas of a student being able to reflect on the world around them. If international-mindedness is some combination of both the ideals in the IB mission statement and the attributes of a global citizen outlined by Oxfam (and this writer is not ready to concede that point) the teaching ideas put forth by Barnes and the ones that were in Campbell & Stover run in the realm of "the five 'Fs' – food, festivals, famous people, fashion, and flags" (Skelton, et al. 1994, p. 53). Education concerning international-mindedness should be much more than that.

In Campbell and Stover, a study was conducted to determine whether students in geography classes could be taught to be more internationally-minded using travel talks complemented by materials from publications including *National Geographic*, *Lands and Peoples*, and various books dealing with different races. Students were shown pictures of cultures from other parts of the world and asked to discuss and consider similar culture traits, kindness and congeniality traits, dependability within the culture, and certain races as victims of oppression and persecution. The study found that visual aids added "appreciably to the effectiveness of education for international and interracial liberalism" (Campbell & Stover, 1933, p. 248). These approaches did not mention anything about social justice, taking action, or being concerned about another nation's sovereign identity. The overall feeling of international-mindedness presented as multicultural 'Show and Tell' seems to override these approaches with the subtle (or not so subtle) message that American educators taught international-mindedness in

the 1930s as if they really did not believe the message that they were trying to convey to the students. Was the American educational system looking to establish itself as a strong nation over others due to the historical and economic time period or was it really concerned with producing global citizens? Was the idea of learning about other cultures tied to the idea of people traveling via air? Was this a response to anti-Semitism and intolerance starting to spread in Europe?

Teaching International-Mindedness in Modern Times: Primary Education

As this analysis moves into the modern era, international-mindedness is best discussed in terms of either the subject area or the age of the students that educators are working with. Montessori education teaches international-mindedness under the auspices of peace education. At one Montessori school in Virginia, students "are encouraged to consider how people across the globe meet their physical, spiritual, emotional and social needs" (Duckworth, 2006, p. 43). In addition, students make cultural differences "fascinating, rather than right or wrong" (Duckworth). For young children, global education should be infused with regular curricular objectives. Themes and topics that lend themselves to global connections need to be selected by teachers and incorporated into authentic activities for children so that the message will be retained. Global education should be integrated into practice as "a point of view, a perspective, a way of dealing with an issue, a stance for evaluating the consequences of an action, or an involvement of peoples, laws, organizations, or natural resources generally beyond the scope of any locality" (Swiniarski, Breitborde & Murphy, 1999, p. 133). Teachers need to develop the primary school child, make them secure in their surroundings and then raise their confidence to take on the world beyond. Issues like hunger and poverty can easily be studied by primary children and there are many activities that teachers can do to raise students' awareness of local and global issues and make them more internationally-minded. Many are also developmentally

appropriate. For example, discussions of school lunch menus, recycling, local food drives, and water resource research activities are proactive actions and get the same results as older students campaigning or conducting research on an international level about hunger issues. Since some curricular topics have come under scrutiny in American schools, it is even more important to make sure that discussions of global issues are age appropriate and within the framework of the cognitive development of the students being taught. For example, a lesson concerning Pol Pot's genocide in Cambodia with graphic details, even if not presented visually, would not be appropriate for a class of third grade students. The same discussion, and perhaps even student-driven research of such atrocities might be appropriate for a group of high school seniors (Diaz, Massialas, & Xanthopoulos, 1999).

Teaching for a Better World: International-Mindedness in Foreign Language Courses

For many teachers, the concept of foreign language instructors specifically thinking about teaching international-mindedness seemed not to be necessary. By nature of the subject area, students who learned a foreign language were already learning about other cultures and diversity. But in the United States, foreign language education has long been based on learning language skills so that students can be good tourists, not so that students can gain lifelong fluency in the language they are being instructed in. In many countries outside of the United States, instruction in a foreign language starts earlier in students' educational careers and the emphasis is placed on fluency, and not on the "five Fs" (Skelton, et al., 2002) as noted earlier. In the area of language education, there has been an attempt to deal with language instruction and teaching international-mindedness through UNESCO's Linguapax Project. This project promotes plurilingualism by presenting the learner with language traditions different from their own and offering a method of promoting peace education (Linguapax.org). The first Linguapax conference was held in 1987 in

Kiev. From that conference, four recommendations concerning global education were made to foreign language educators including:

- Be mindful of your responsibility to further international understanding through instruction;
- Increase language fluency so as to enhance respect and peaceful coexistence between nations;
- Use extracurricular activities to develop international understanding and;
- Lay the foundation for international cooperation through classroom cooperation using approaches to learning based on student interest and need.

In terms of pedagogy, this can lead to teachers using class simulations and role-play to explore global issues, for instance, "language teaching lessons in which students practice their foreign language skills while role-playing blacks and whites in apartheid South Africa, or acting as UN ambassadors in a model UN simulation" (Cates, 1990, p.45). Teachers can also promote global education by using guest speakers for student-driven global issues.

International-Mindedness and Global Citizenship in Teacher Education Theory

As with other disciplines, teacher educators and perhaps, teacher education programs also grapple with the problem of definition when it comes to discussing international-mindedness. Noddings (2005, p. 2) calls a global citizen, "one who can live and work effectively anywhere in the world, and a global way of life would both describe and support the functioning of global citizens". When students graduate, they must be prepared to function economically, culturally, and politically not only in their own nation, but internationally, because their jobs can take them abroad (Diaz, et al., 1999). From the teacher education point of view, global education of students must go far beyond presenting contrasts between developed societies and the developing world. Students must be taught to reflect on the world's issues, make thoughtful choices, and

consider actions that would be appropriate for societies to combat and solve issues of social justice, cooperation, security, diversity, as well as others. NCATE, one of the two teacher program accreditation agencies, defines global perspectives as "the viewpoint that accepts the interdependency of nations and peoples and the interlinkage of political, economic, ecological, and social issues of a transnational and global nature" (NCATE, 2008). The concerns of global citizens extend beyond economic justice to social and political concerns and rights that individuals demand for themselves should be offered to others worldwide (Noddings, 2005). Teacher education programs have various philosophical ideas about what content should be placed in a global education program and because of this program debate, the idea of what constitutes international-mindedness or global education is inevitably carried into the classroom when pre-service teachers complete teacher preparation programs and begin teaching their own students.

According to Merryfield, et al. (1995), there are several elements which make up a global education. Although teacher education programs may pick and choose what exactly to emphasize on the following curriculum plan, eight elements for teaching international-mindedness are presented for teacher candidates:

- Human Beliefs and Values – This can include self-reflection, consideration of multiple perspectives, and role that human beliefs and values fit into language, aesthetics, literature, history, science, and governance.
- Global Systems – Study here can focus on economic, political, technological, or ecological systems, planet awareness, or the interconnectedness of global systems.
- Global Issues and Problems – Instruction can deal with population, self-determination, human rights, immigration, hunger, peace studies, conflict resolution, prejudice, and other ideas.
- Global History – Here, Merryfield et al. discuss the evolution of systems over time including the development of cultures and changes in conflict resolution.

- Cross-Cultural Understanding/Interaction – This section focuses on understanding oneself, with emphasis on working with other cultures and people.
- Awareness of Human Choices – Instruction in this area focuses on choices by individuals, organizations, communities, nations, regions, and alliances. It also recognizes the complexity of human behavior.
- Development of Analytical and Evaluative Skills – In this area, the focus is on critical thinking and analysis.
- Strategies for Participation and Involvement – This section includes opportunities for making and implementing decisions, collaboration, and addressing real-life problems. (Merryfield, et al., 2005, p. 8-9).

In addition to the above global education curriculum, teacher educators can model strategies that are particularly compatible for getting pre-service teachers to think about international-mindedness. Using problem posing and problem solving, negotiation, and mediation, teacher educators can have students work with the skills that they will eventually transfer to students in the years to come (Merryfield, et al., 2005). Case studies from other cultures and role-play simulations may be as valuable in teacher education programs as they are in foreign language classes to convey the ideas of international-mindedness and social justice. The strategy, however, for effective teaching of international-mindedness, whether it be to pre-service teachers or to students in primary and secondary classrooms, is a positive classroom climate (Diaz, et al., 1999). A welcoming inquiry-based classroom with a teacher who is knowledgeable about global issues is the best way of teaching international-mindedness.

The Use of Literature to Teach International-Mindedness

Many educators advocate the use of art and literature to teach cultural sensitivity and international-mindedness to students. Virginia Woolf in 1938 explored the idea that literature might be used to persuade the public against war and Wilfred Owen in 1916 wrote his poetry while at the front of World War I, in an effort to make people at home understand that the true

nature of war, the horrors of poison gas and trench warfare that the soldiers were experiencing on the battlefields of France and Belgium were not to be glorified. Despite this, educators should be careful, "there simply is no guarantee that even the most powerful art will have the desirable moral effects" (Noddings, 2005, p.132). If literature is to be effective in shaping social attitudes and teaching international-mindedness, it needs to make students feel something. World literature courses allow teachers to instill not just tolerance for but respect for other cultures. In some schools, world literature courses are also combined with classes on world civilization or world culture so that first, discussion of the two disciplines reinforce each other and second, students start to make connections between a culture and its literature when taught at the same time (Kerschner, 2002).

In order for students to get a cohesive message of international-mindedness a thematic approach to instruction can also be used in literature classes. This approach to designing curriculum, although time-consuming at the beginning for educational professionals, can provide students with a common thread that they can see throughout their entire literature study. One such model incorporated cross-cultural understanding and social justice issues into a largely British literature curriculum, teaching it through the philosophy and pedagogy of global education (Bender-Slack, 2002). The classes start with an examination of what it means to be human, looking at the concept of humanity through the eyes of the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and reading about humanitarians like Eleanor Roosevelt. Bender-Slack's students also used Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* to discuss ethical issues of genetics and reproduction and T.S. Eliot's poem, "Hollow Men" to consider materialism over spirituality. Students were presented literature within the framework of a research project concerning human rights violations in other areas of the world and students were asked to look at

the following questions as they began individual units of inquiry: 1) Who has the power? 2) Why do they have the power? and 3) How do we change it? By asking students to consider their work in light of these guiding questions, Bender-Slack was framing international-mindedness for her students.

Teaching International-Mindedness in an IB World School

In terms of providing students with a global education or teaching the concept of international-mindedness, do schools succeed or fail in this undertaking? Thomas A. Edison High School is an IB World School and was first approved in July 1998. The first Diploma year was the 1990-2000 academic year. As an IB World School, Edison upholds the mission statement of IB and through various IB class offerings, supports the development of students through the IB Learner Profile. But is international-mindedness really being taught to students in the IB program as IB intended or do teachers simply impart the "five Fs" (Skelton, et al., 1994) with a smattering of critical thinking and inquiry-based instruction as appropriate? In an effort to understand how my colleagues teach international-mindedness, I queried IB faculty asking them to detail activities and methods that they use to teach international-mindedness to students. I asked the following questions of the IB faculty:

- In what ways do you teach international-mindedness to your students?
- Have students reacted to this instruction?
- Is this an important concept/idea to convey to students? Why or why not?

In response to my questions, Diploma Coordinator and Theory of Knowledge (TOK) teacher, Dr. Linda Blair said she approaches "issues from an American perspective and then expand them to include perspectives and assumptions from the immigrant/second generation students in the class" (L. Blair, personal communication, 3 December 2008). Journal and writing assignments

always focus on students' personal backgrounds before instruction is expanded to include the rest of the world. Other methods that Blair uses in her class include: connecting the U.S. presidential campaign to international current events, discussing President-elect Barack Obama's speech about race and connecting his Kenyan heritage to his multi-ethnic background, and an analysis of the film, *Casablanca*, through the eyes of the many ethnic groups during World War II and the melting pot vision of Rick's café (L. Blair, personal communication, 3 December 2008).

Another department that provided information on the teaching of international-mindedness was Edison's IB math faculty. Two teachers of IB Math Studies discussed the fact that the book they use is not published in the United States and is published in Australia. "Many of the problems are built around situations an Australian student would find very familiar but our students don't" (J. Adelman, personal communication, 28 November 2008). The exposure the students receive to other terminology, spellings, and mathematical situations, makes them realize that math is something that students all around the world experience together, albeit with different modes of measurement and perhaps different vocabulary. "Since the history of mathematics is largely that of Hindi, Persian, Greek, and European mathematicians, the stories told [in class] about the discovery of particular concepts are implicitly international" (R. Coppock, personal communication, 25 November 2008).

Our Latin teacher maintains that it is easy to teach international-mindedness to students in his subject area. Done by "pointing out the social, economic, and health differences through the ages from ancient to medieval to modern times," (J. Murray, personal communication, 25 November 2008) students also compare literature of the ancient world by discussing their influence on Shakespeare and more modern writers. On a personal note, Murray said that he also

shows students a video that concerns the adoption of his son from Russia and discusses the lifestyle and struggles of the average Russian as he and his wife spent time in the area of the orphanage from which their son was adopted.

In the History of the Americas program, the faculty struggles to find Canadian and Latin American perspectives for the students. This is due to a major curriculum overhaul and the requirement that there is an even greater emphasis on international perspectives in history (C. Karayannis, personal communication, 10 December 2008). The department introduces readings (both primary and secondary sources) that have allowed the students to be exposed to a different perspective surrounding the various issues related to the historical time period they are studying. Some examples of this include international influences on revolutions in the Americas and international policies and actions related to slavery and the European impact on the American Civil War. "Teachers discuss the external perspectives at length to provide enough opportunity for the students to construct a comparative and analytical framework of understanding" (C. Karayannis, personal communication, 10 December 2008).

In terms of my own curriculum, I have developed an English curriculum for my senior IB students that follows a thematic approach and progression. Students consider the question of international-mindedness by considering guiding questions that complement each text selection. Each guiding question is meant to have students consider their relationship with themselves and the rest of the world. The appendix of this paper provides the guiding questions that I use for each text. I believe that by following this approach to teaching international-mindedness students are getting the most complete picture possible, at least through my course.

But the question remains. Are these approaches to teaching international-mindedness putting forth the ideals of global citizenship for students in the way that IB has originally

envisioned? Is the IB faculty at Edison missing the mark when it comes to educating our students in this regard? What can be done better? Although I put the concept of international-mindedness into my entire curriculum, I am not surprised that other Edison faculty approach this concept in less complete ways. Simply using a text from another country does not promote students to be concerned about the world around them; teachers must encourage students to develop skills that make them critical human beings thinking about not only their individual communities but those of the larger populace.

Conclusions

In terms of this international education project plan, the changing climate of the world demands that students be aware of the diversity around them. It also demands "an education fit for the needs of our time is a vital key to a viable human future" (Quist, 2006, p. 1). Teaching international-mindedness is paramount to producing students and adults who will not only become productive citizens but thinking citizens who will work to make a difference on this planet, attacking the more difficult questions and solving the challenges of the 21st century. The question of semantics is an interesting one and teachers, teacher educators, and others should perhaps focus on the overall objectives that we are trying to see students obtain rather than getting into debates about names and labels. What does seem more than apparent through my work is that international-mindedness is best taught through inquiry-based methodology, hands-on activities, student-initiated or driven rather than teacher-led activities and active learning over passive book instruction. Students need to read, view, research, evaluate, consider, debate, and plan solutions to problems put before them. This is a far better approach than learning about other cultures through the "five Fs" (Skelton, et al., 2002) or through the antiquated overhead projector and *National Geographic* pictures.

Appendix I - International-Mindedness through Curriculum
IB English A1 HL – Second Year
Thomas A. Edison High School - Kimberley Daly

For each work, there are several guiding questions designed to make students think about the concept of international-mindedness and what it means to be internationally-minded. Senior year is divided into two parts according to IB regulations. Students complete Parts 1 and 4 during their junior year and Parts 2 and 3 during their senior year.

Part 2: Detailed Study

Richard III by William Shakespeare
- What are the implications of Richard's thirst for power? How does it affect his relationships with other people?

The Pickup by Nadine Gordimer
- What are the cultural implications of Julie's and Abdu/Ibrahim's relationship?
- What cultural and religious rules must Julie learn and observe when she is in Ibrahim's country?
- Compare and contrast the gender roles of men and women in both South Africa and in Abdu's unnamed Muslim country.
- What is each character's concept of home and how is this defined?

Climate of Fear by Wole Soyinka
- What does Soyinka mean by a "climate of fear"?
- Is it possible to enact a universal response to breeches of moral conduct?
- Has humanity been desensitized to tragic events in faraway places? If so, what can be done about this?

Selected poetry by Wilfred Owen and Seamus Heaney
- How does war affect those who are fighting at the front as well as those at home?
- What are the long-term effects of war on nations?
- Why is it important to understand our historical past?
- What is the effect of divisions within a culture, either through religion, politics, or other causes?

Part 3: Groups of Works (Drama)

Death and the Maiden by Ariel Dorfman (WL)
- What happens when human beings lose the ability to see others as human?
- How do nations (and people) atone for crimes of the past?

Incident at Vichy by Arthur Miller

- When humanity and dignity are lost, what remains?
- How can fear guide behavior?

A Man for All Seasons by Robert Bolt

- Are there principles that people should be willing to die for?
- How is Henry's relationship with Thomas More tested by More's refusal to come to Henry's way of thinking?

A Number by Caryl Churchill

- Are cloned beings the equivalent to human beings?
- Should cloned persons be treated with the same dignity and protections as non-cloned persons?

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