

Two line summary: Primary School Introduction to Fair Trade

Petal: Purchasing and Waste

Specialist: Rita Godfrey

Type of school: Primary

Size of school: 42

Brief description of the project (max 1 side A4) Armed with Fair Trade bananas, coffee, nuts and of course chocolate (oh and an old chair!) our intrepid purchasing specialist went to talk to the children to make them more aware of how what we buy impacts on other people around the world. As part of Fair Trade fortnight and the school's Rainforest project the children were able to see how we can 'buy better' and about the 'fairness' of Fair Trade.

1. Context: This is a small school which means that we could involve all the pupils in the 'show and tell' – and touch and sniff. As the children are primary pupils, it is important how the message of 'Sustainable Purchasing' is introduced and that it is at the right level. The head is very keen to introduce all the issues of sustainability to the children in an enjoyable way.

2. Background/starting point: The teachers wanted to introduce the issues of Fair Trade to the children as part of the Rainforest project that was being run throughout the curriculum during the term. So we developed a session that looked mostly at the types of products that are produced in the Rainforest, including an old chair that was most likely made from unsustainable mahogany. So the starting point was a reminder of the animals and people they had learned about and how the rainforest was diminishing.

3. Goals and objectives: The aims were to introduce the children to the fact that what we buy affects people and the environment elsewhere in the world and make them question where things come from.

4. What did they do? We introduced the children to the subject by talking about the history of the old chair and how in the past people weren't aware of how buying this wood meant that trees were cut down in the Rainforest then looked at the alternative, a new chair made from Forest Stewardship Wood and talked about the farmers, stewardship of the forest and fairness. We then had an interactive session where the children identified the foods with the Fair Trade mark and had a chance to see coffee before and after roasting. Then they were given the mission of seeing if they could identify Fair Trade products when they next went shopping with their parents. The Fair Trade chocolate was donated to the staff room!

5. Curriculum areas: 1/ Global citizen ship – being aware of other people and how they live, 2. Language – vocabulary in context, stewardship and fairness, 3/ Geography – reference to the Rainforest

6. Lessons learnt: Food is always a good starting point and the idea of fairness is one the children of this age can relate to easily.

7. Key points of transferability: Fair Trade and other sustainable buying issues can be transferred easily. The background of Fair Trade fortnight can be built on.

8. What's next for this school? The head has been working on buying in local catering and we will be working with the school secretary on how they can measure their sustainable buying using the Schools Guide to Sustainable Purchasing (available on the grid for Learning). Watch this space!

9. Resources used: An Engauge specialist ran the assembly and generated the resource.

Props: An old mahogany chair and something made from new FSC wood

A variety of food products most of which were Fair Trade

Coffee beans roasted and unroasted

This could be extended to other fair trade products to look at other aspects e.g. Fair Trade cotton clothes, Fair Trade sports balls.