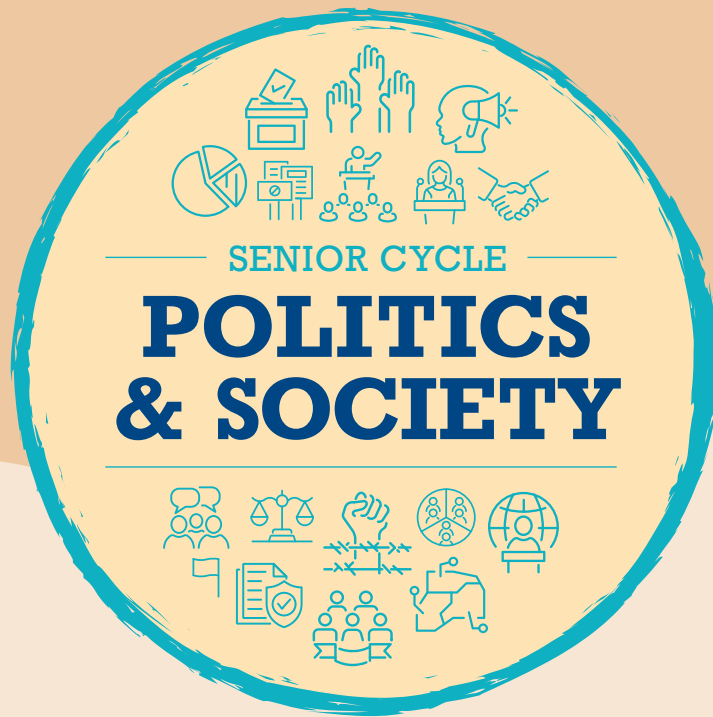




UNIT 4

EDUCATION



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A. Thinking about Education

In this lesson learners begin to unpack education and consider the purpose of education from various sources. As part of unlearning and reconstructing ([WWGS Guiding Principle for GCE](#)), learners relate their new thinking to prior learning and experiences of education. The lesson concludes with learners creating their own statements on the purpose(s) of education. These statements are then used for a Walking Debate.

Learning Outcomes: 4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 6.2.

Time: 45-60 minutes

Materials needed: PowerPoint Thinking about Education and the document Mainstream Notions of Education, both available on the [Politics and Society subject page](#) of the WWGS website.

1. Warm-up Activity (10 mins)

- Display [slide 2](#) and ask learners to consider “which of the statements most closely resembles your ideas of education?” Discuss as a class or in pairs:
 - o Who is education for? The individual or society?
 - o What is education for? The future, work, enrichment, reflection?
 - o Are education and learning the same thing?
- Ask learners to jot down their own ideas, words or statements on ‘education’. Keep this for later in the lesson.

2. Notions of Education (30 mins)

2-minute Interview

Ask learners to think about an experience in, or memory relating to, education. This could be in a formal or informal setting, based on a learning experience, a subject, a relationship with an educator or peer, and it could be serious or fun.

Pairs share their experiences in a 2-minute interview format; learners walk around the room, teacher gives a prompt, learners stop, find a partner and share their experiences. The teacher can model this exercise or participate in the 2-minute interview.

Bring the class back together and emphasise the variety and diversity of educational contexts, relationships and practices discussed.

Teacher Tip: Before sharing, emphasise that the classroom is a safe and inclusive space, where everyone is heard, valued and respected. For more on Creating Safe(r) and Inclusive Classrooms see the [WWGS Teaching and Learning Activities Resource](#) which has advice and tips on creating safe spaces for open dialogue in classrooms.

Transforming Education Survey (2023)

Display [slide 3](#), which presents some background information on the Transforming Education Survey (2023). [Slides 4 and 5](#) are copied from the Transforming Education Survey Report and include findings on young people’s views on the purpose of education.

Learning to Read through Other Eyes: Notions of Education

Access the document 'Mainstream Notions of Education', available in the supporting materials for Unit 4 available on the Politics and Society page of our [website](#). This is a learner-friendly one-page document summarising a range of discourses and questions concerning 'what is education' (taken directly from 'Learning to Read through Other Eyes: Notions of Education' by Vanessa Andreotti and Lynn Mario T. M. de Souza (2008) available [here](#)). The one-page document can be digitally displayed or printed and distributed to learners or groups of learners.

Discuss the questions on [slide 6](#) in pairs or as a whole class. (These questions build on the questions posed in the introduction).

Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World

This strategy encourages learners to recognise how the ideas presented in the lesson connect to their prior learning, their lived experiences and the wider world. For more detail see [Facing History and Ourselves](#).

See [slide 7](#) for instructions for learners. If there is time, learners can use concept maps to show multiple connections. If time is limited, they may make just one connection under each heading.

3. Walking Debate (10-15 mins)

Based on the learning in the lesson and building on their own statement created in the introduction, ask learners to create a statement on the purpose(s) of education. Encourage learners not to overthink this and only allow 3 minutes to create a short statement.

Learners write down their statement on a piece of paper, fold it and place it in a hat/box. These become the statements for a Walking Debate; see [WWGS Activities Resource](#) for step-by-step instructions on hosting a Walking Debate.

4. Closure: (5 mins)

Use a 3-2-1 strategy to close the lesson. Ask learners to jot down their 3-2-1 responses on a piece of paper and to place it in a box/hat as they leave the room/at the end of the lesson.

- o 3 things you have learned from the lesson
- o 2 questions arising from the lesson
- o 1 aspect you found challenging

B. Universal Education

In this lesson learners explore education as a universal human right, a Sustainable Development Goal and as a global agenda in the form of Education for All. An article from the New Internationalist is used to highlight the gains and remaining challenges for universal education. A video excerpt from the Carol Black documentary *Schooling the World* is used to draw attention to neoliberal aspects of global education agendas. The lesson concludes with a visionary discussion on what universal education *should* look like.

Learning Outcomes: 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 6.2, 7.5.

Time: 60 minutes (depending on learners' prior engagement with the topics)

Materials needed: PowerPoint Universal Education available in the supporting materials for [Unit 4](#).

1. Introduction (5 mins)

Learners individually create a mind-map on *what is universal education?* After 3-5 minutes they feed into a whole class mind map.

2. Education: Rights and Goals (10-15 mins)

The time spent on this activity largely depends on learners' prior knowledge of rights to education in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as well as Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 Quality Education.

- Display [slide 2](#) which presents rights to education as set out in the UNCRC and the UDHR in [slide 3](#). For more on the right to education, see the UNESCO document [What you need to know about the right to education](#).
- Display [slide 4](#) which presents SDG 4.
- Display [slide 5](#) which is a summary of Education for All taken from [United Nations Academic Impact](#).
- Ask learners to consider what universal rights, global goals and global agendas on education mean in practice.
- To unpack this question, ask learners to consider what universal rights, goals and agendas on education mean for themselves as students in their classrooms in the here and now. Think about students all over Ireland, then within Europe, the Global North, extend it to students in the Global South, children from Indigenous communities, minority voices. What do universal rights, goals and agendas mean for education in practice for these different groups?

If time allows, carry out the same process of extending the thinking from local to global and consider what it means for educators, for policy makers, for governments.

- Learners can use a Consequence Wheel as a tool to structure their thinking here and deepen connections. They can use their concept map from the introduction as a starting point for their consequence wheel. See [WWGS Teaching and Learning Activities](#) for step-by-step instructions and more information on this method.

3. The State of Education (15 mins)

The September 2017 issue of the New Internationalist is entitled *Bad Education: Time to Fix it*. While the data is now dated, the issues remain largely similar. This activity is based on an article in the September 2017 issue by Hazel Healy. [The State of Education: Leaving Many Behind. How far is the world from the dream of universal education?](#)

Print off the short article and distribute to learners or provide internet access so that learners can read it online (approx. 5 min read). [Slide 6](#) has questions for learners based on the article.

Learners answer questions through a Think-Pair-Share method whereby they share their responses and then come to a group consensus on the answers.

Suggested answers are included for teachers in green below.

Q1: Who remains marginalised from education?

- *The poorest, children with disabilities, girls, and those from cultural or linguistic minorities.*

Q2: What progress was reported? Give specific examples from 2 different countries.

- *The number of out-of-school children dropped by 30 million.*
- *The biggest victory was increased enrolment – primary school attendance went up from 83 to 91 per cent by 2013.*
- *Widespread abolition of school fees and sweeteners such as cash transfers to parents and free school meals.*
- *Participation in secondary school also accelerated, for example Senegal's transition rate from primary to secondary leapt from 24 per cent in 1990 to nearly 90 per cent by 2011.*
- *Pre-schoolers did well.*
- *Girls' enrolment is claimed as the biggest victory, with two-thirds of the Global South reaching gender parity.*

Q3: What challenges remain?

- *730 million adults still illiterate.*
- *Fixing access to education is 'not like a polio shot, the problem needs to be thought of more like treating cancer' – something that requires complicated, ongoing interventions.*
- *When enrolment numbers went through the roof, quality went out the window. 'There was a huge expansion in access but not in financing'.*
- *Enrolment figures mask high drop-out rates, and poor outcomes – some 20 per cent of school children still cannot read by the age of 10.*

Q4: Identify some reasons to be hopeful in terms of education for all. If possible, add your own suggestions or ideas.

- *Mother tongue teaching - High-quality bilingual schooling has been shown to result in higher attendance, lower drop-out rates and higher scores in all subjects, including mastery of non-indigenous languages.*
- *Identifying the complexity is an important step.*

4. Education for All (20mins)

Video Excerpt (10mins)

Access the Carol Black documentary [Schooling the World \(2010\)](#). Begin the video at 20:34mins, the chapter 'Education for All'. Play up until 26.10mins.

Slide 7 contains a link to the video and questions for discussion.

Note for Teachers: caution is advised in advance of playing the video from 24.10mins-26mins. Given the emphasis in the video on youth mental health, it may be triggering for some learners.

Neoliberal Reforms (5mins)

Display **slide 8**, an excerpt copied from the opening section of a New Internationalist article by Hazel Healy [Bad Education: Why our Systems need Fixing](#)

This includes the question for learners, 'what characterises neoliberal approaches to education?' Answers can be given orally in the whole class context.

Suggested answers from the article are in green below. Learners may have other answers based on the video excerpt and learning outcomes 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7.

- *education as a commodity*
- *free-market logic, the 'product' must be measured and compared*
- *managerialism, privatisation, standardisation*

Systems Change (5mins)

Slide 9 and 10 contain excerpts copied from the same New Internationalist article by Hazel Healy [Bad Education: Why our Systems need Fixing](#). Ask learners to pick out words or phrases from this slide which point to solutions and possibilities for delivering Education for All.

5. What should universal equitable education look like? (10-15mins)

With the aim of ending this lesson on hope and solutions, this closing activity is a visionary one, whereby learners are asked to visualise what universal, equitable education *should* look like. Encourage learners not to limit their thinking to current systems and approaches but to think outside the box.

Concentric Circles (10 mins)

Use a concentric circles method as a discussion tool (alternatively, or if more time is available, a Fishbowl method could be used). For more on both of these discussion tools see the [WWGS GCE Teaching and Learning Activities](#).

Suggested prompts for discussion:

- What is key for education to be equitable for all?
- What aspects need to be included?
- Universal equitable education is built on what values?
- Who is involved in the decision making?
- How does it connect with other aspects of a person's life (e.g. gender, religion, class, ethnicity, i.e. the intersectional focus)?
- How can diversity and inclusivity be ensured?

Exit Ticket (3mins)

Before learners leave the room/lesson ends, ask them to complete an exit ticket' by responding freely (words, statement, question, drawing) to the same question, *what should universal education look like?*

C. Measuring Education

This lesson begins by exploring the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) carried out by the intergovernmental organisation and policy forum the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). A *BBC Global Story Podcast* on education is used to consider the role of PISA and the OECD in shaping educational policy. A Fishbowl method is used to discuss two contrasting policy narratives which impact the lives of young people. The lesson concludes by revisiting this unit's opening question on the purpose of education.

Learning Outcomes: 4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 6.2, 7.6.

Time: 45-60 minutes (depending on time spent analysing PISA data)

Materials needed: PowerPoint Measuring Education, available in the folder for [Unit 4](#) on our website.

1. Introduction (5 mins)

Use a round robin to ask learners to complete the following 2 sentence starters (do one at a time):

- Testing is a necessary aspect of education because...
- Testing is not a necessary aspect of education because...

2. Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (10-20mins)

This section focuses specifically on PISA, the international assessment carried out by the intergovernmental organisation and policy forum the OECD.

- Display [slides 2 and 3](#) which provide background information and a video on PISA.
- If learners have access to the internet, allow them time to explore the OECD website which has [background information on PISA](#) and the [World Population Review website](#) for up to date and comparable PISA scores by country. If learner internet access is not possible, show the website and data on the whiteboard.
- There is an option here for learners to use the data to create 2 country profiles, see [slide 4](#) for details and a table to complete. (As an extension activity, learners could also explore data from the Human Development Index (HDI) compiled by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and add this to their country profiles. See below for more information and links on the HDI).

3. Which country has the best education in the world? (30mins)

This activity is based on a [2024 BBC Global Story Podcast](#) hosted by Lucy Hockings who speaks to BBC education correspondent, Sean Coughlan and Professor John Jerrim, from University College London's Institute of Education. The full interview is 22.12 minutes, the questions and tasks for learners will focus on specific excerpts of the interview.

Q&A (5mins)

Questions for learners are presented in [slide 5](#). Learners can work individually or in pairs with answers fed back to the whole class. Suggested responses/answers are provided for educators in [green](#) below.

i) Start the video at 1.50 mins and stop at 3 mins

Question 1: Describe PISA in your own words (@1.50)

- *about 80 countries participate, taken by 15 year olds*
- *the tests are in key areas of reading, maths and science*
- *ranking education systems in terms of their level of achievement*
- *when first introduced, it was contentious, due to fears concerning cultural, geographical, political differences*

Question 2: What approach to understanding education does PISA take? (from @2:14-3mins)

"...the people who introduced these tests weren't from education. They were from an economics background (@2:36). It was the OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. And they approached education the way they might look at GDP or look at measuring inflation. And it was a very different way of looking at it"

ii) Re-start the video at the second chapter 'How do you measure good education' at 5.10 mins and play until 8.15 mins.

Question 3: Based on the discussion, what type of education does the OECD and PISA measure?

- *(@5.33), they've really focused on the academic side in their kind of history, maths, reading and science.*
- *moved the dial a little bit and measured more of these kinds of softer skills- creativity tests and questionnaires to 'capture kids' wellbeing and how confident they are. So that does become part of it..'*
- *future-focused...*
- *economic model..*

iii) Contrasting Narratives (20 mins)

The aim here is for learners to discuss and debate 2 contrasting narratives on how young people are represented in education.

- Divide the class into 2 groups. Explain that each group will prepare to debate their narrative as (part of) the 'best' approach to education.
- Group 1 is given the narrative 1, 'young people as future-adult citizen-workers' and group 2 are given narrative 2, 'young people as citizens and learners in the here and now'.
- Create sub groups within group 1 and 2 so that learners can discuss their narrative in smaller groups of 3 or 4.
- Give group 1 [slides 6 and 7](#) and give group 2 [slides 8 and 9](#); the slides can be printed off and distributed to groups. [Slide 10](#) has prompts for discussion which both groups can use. Remind learners that they will need to argue and defend their position.
- Allow the subgroups 5-10 minutes to discuss their narrative and prepare to defend it as the 'best' way to represent young people in education.
- Carry out a Fishbowl discussion to structure the debate of the 2 narratives; for step by step instructions, a video and an option for discussing contrasting narratives, see the [WWGS Fishbowl Activity](#).

iv) Money and Resourcing (5 mins)

Re-start the video at the last chapter 'Money and Resourcing' at 19.24 mins and pause at 19.42mins, after Lucy Hockings asks: *'Is there just not a fundamental here, that in order for kids to get the best education, quite a lot of money needs to be spent? It does come down to money and resourcing'*.

Ask the class for short snappy responses to Lucy's question; encourage them to suggest additional factors that are required to provide the 'best education'.

Re-start the video and play until the end.

Display [slide 11](#) which is the closing transcript of the interview and some questions for reflection.

Ask learners to reflect individually and privately on these questions.

4. Closure: Education is.... (5 mins)

Based on the issues raised in this lesson and relating back to the first lesson in this Unit, display [slide 12](#) and ask learners to reflect on the statements.

Learners complete the unfinished statement 'Education is...'. They write it on a Post-it and place it on the whiteboard, a wall or window. Allow time for learners to read each other's responses and have a short discussion among themselves. If learners have access to devices, this could be completed as a Mentimeter or word cloud.

Additional Activity: Analyse the Data

Education and associated themes have been widely researched resulting in a large body of data on education at national and international levels. The suggestions below allow for comparative case studies, longitudinal analysis, or a deep dive into a particular aspect of education, see for instance:

- [Human Development Index](#)
See slides 13 and 14 in the PowerPoint Measuring Education for background information, links and a video.
- [OECD Education at Glance](#) - Quantitative Annual Reports
"Education at a Glance is the authoritative source of information on the state of education worldwide. It offers comprehensive data on the structure, financing, and performance of education systems across OECD countries and partner economies".
- [Eurostat: Statistics Explained](#)
Statistics Explained presents statistical topics in an easily understandable way. The section 'Education and training in the EU' provides facts and figures on a range of different areas in education.
- [UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Browser](#)
Explore various themes including education and access a wealth of data for different areas of interest including SDG4 Monitoring and Education policy relevant indicators.
- [Growing Up in Ireland Study \(GUI\)](#)
GUI is the national longitudinal study of children and young people, a joint project of the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) and the Central Statistics Office (CSO).
An extensive body of data exists from the GUI including quantitative and qualitative reports, infographics, policy impact statements and more. See for instance, an infographic on [Inequalities by Educational Attainment or Education Training and Development at age 20](#) or the Key Findings Series which include many topics on education such as [School Experiences among 13 year olds or Education and Early Work Experiences](#) and much more.
- [Children's Rights Alliance Report Cards](#) - Qualitative Report
The annual Report Card tracks how the Government is delivering on its commitments to children in the Programme for Government. Most cards include a full chapter on education.

D. Schooling the World

This lesson is based on the documentary *Schooling the World* by Carol Black. In the first activity, learners analyse political cartoons and photographs relating to education as a tool for colonial power and imperial agendas. The second activity is based on video excerpts from the documentary; questions and learner tasks are offered to explore the videos.

Learning Outcomes: 5.7, 6.2, 6.3, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 8.2, 8.3.

Time: 45 - 60 minutes.

Materials needed: PowerPoint *Schooling the World*. Human Bingo Cards printed and distributed to each learner (the A4 page contains 5 copies of the bingo cards). These are available in the supporting materials folder for [Unit 4](#).

1. Introduction (5 mins)

Human Bingo: provide each learner with a Human Bingo card. Learners move around the room trying to find someone who fits the description of each statement. The first person to tick all 6 statements, shouts Bingo! For more on Human Bingo, follow the [link here](#).

- I have attended more than 3 different education settings
- I have been to an education setting in a different country
- I am related to an educator
- I would like to be an educator
- I know a song about education or schooling (e.g. [Another Brick in the Wall](#) by Pink Floyd, [Youth of a Nation](#) by P.O.D, [Schools Out](#) by Alice Cooper, or see this Guardian article [Readers recommend playlist: your songs about education](#)).
- I know a novel, play or poem about education or schooling (e.g. *Educated* by Tara Westover).

2. Analyse the Images (20-25 mins)

This activity is based on a number of political cartoons and photographs. Images make an excellent stimulus for discussion, developing empathy, challenging stereotypes and more. See the [WWGS Activity Analysing Images](#) for suggestions on how to use images to explore global justice issues, step by step instructions and links to more ideas for using images.

After analysing the images, there is an option to watch the opening section (up to 4.12mins) of the documentary [Schooling the World](#) 2010 by Carol Black. This section of the video presents some of these images and offers some background detail. This activity may also stimulate learner research into these images or the topics raised.

Slides 2-9 contain the images; in efforts not to influence learners, there are no titles or background information included, teacher notes are included below.

Notes on the images for educators

Slide 2: American Progress by John Gast, 1872 oil painting. Currently held by the Autry Museum of the American West in Los Angeles, this iconic image represents the 19th-century belief in American expansion. No copyright issues, in the public domain, see [here](#) for more details.

Details below copied from Google search:

Central Figure (Columbia): Often referred to as "Progress," this woman wears a "Star of Empire" on her forehead, symbolizing the westward expansion of the United States.

Symbols of Progress: She holds a schoolbook (education) and unspools telegraph wire (communication), she brings technology (telegraph, trains), while leading farmers, miners, stagecoaches and, significantly, steam trains.

The Westward Movement: The painting illustrates a progression from east to west, with light in the east representing civilization and darkness in the west representing the unknown, uncivilized frontier.

Manifest Destiny: It serves as a visual representation of the belief that American expansion across the continent was divine, inevitable, and justified.

Impact on Indigenous Peoples: Native Americans and wildlife are depicted in the dark, left-hand side of the painting, retreating westward, illustrating the forced displacement that accompanied westward expansion.

Slide 3: The Philippines circa 1901. Source Facebook and available on Schooling the World.

The first American teachers (the "Thomasites" because they travelled aboard the ship called the USS Thomas) arrived in the Philippines in 1901 to 'bring' education to public schools. Almost 600 teachers arrived at this time to civilise and modernise the population, by introducing a Western curriculum with English as the medium of instruction. The Philippines, a former Spanish colony, proclaimed its independence in 1891. The United States did not recognise its independence as legitimate (in the context of the Spanish-American War) and moved to annex or invade the Philippines. The Thomasites were part of the American agenda of colonialism at the time.

[From Wikipedia:](#) 'The war and subsequent occupation by the U.S. changed the culture of the islands, leading to the rise of Protestantism, disestablishment of the Catholic Church, and the adoption of English by the islands as the primary language of government, education, business, and industry. The U.S. annexation and war sparked a political backlash from anti-imperialists in the U.S. Senate, who argued that the war was a definite example of U.S. imperialism, and that it was an inherent contradiction of the founding principles of the United States contained in the Declaration of Independence'.

Slide 4: The White Man's Burden

The editorial cartoon 'The White Man's Burden' is inspired by the Rudyard Kipling poem of the same name about the Philippine-American War (1899–1902). No copyright issues, in the public domain.

[From Wikipedia:](#) In the poem Kipling encouraged the American annexation and colonisation of the Philippine Islands. *"As an imperialist poet, Kipling exhorts the American reader and listener to take up the enterprise of empire yet warns about the personal costs faced, endured, and paid in building an empire; nonetheless, American imperialists understood the phrase "the white man's burden" to justify imperial conquest as a civilising mission that is ideologically related to the continental expansion philosophy of manifest destiny of the early 19th century. With a central motif of the poem being the superiority of white men, it has long been criticised as a racist poem"*.

The cartoon shows John Bull (U.K.) and Uncle Sam (U.S.) delivering the world's people of colour to civilization (Victor Gillam, Judge magazine, 1 April 1899). The people in the basket carried by Uncle Sam are labelled Cuba, Hawaii, Samoa, "Porto Rico", and the Philippines, while the people in the basket carried by John Bull are labelled Zulu, China, India, "Soudan", and Egypt. *"The United States used the 'white man's burden' as an argument for imperial control of the Philippines and Cuba on the basis of moral necessity. It was now the United States' moral duty to develop and modernize the conquest lands in order to help carry the foreign barbarians to civilization"*, ([Wikipedia](#)).

**Slides 5 and 6 are best shown one after another with analysis and discussion after seeing both images.*

Images in slides 5, 6 and 7 are downloaded from Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center website, these are in the public domain and have no copyright restrictions.

Slide 5 [Chiracahua Apaches from Fort Marion, 1886 \[Before\]](#) attending the Carlisle Indian School, a government run boarding school aimed at cultural assimilation of Native Americans through education. General Richard Pratt, founder of the Carlisle Indian School, said 'let all that is Indian within you die' (part of the commencement speech at the school).

Slide 6: [Chiracahua Apaches from Fort Marion, 1887](#) [After] four months after their arrival in Carlisle Indian School (in Pennsylvania, America). The Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center website has an extensive record of 'contrast' photographs documenting the so-called 'progress' in 'civilising Indian children' under the experiment 'Education for Extinction'. See their [website](#) for more photos and a lesson plan.

Slide 7: before and after 'contrast photo of Tom Torlino, a Navajo student at the Carlisle Indian School, 1882. Screenshot from *Schooling the World*, also available on the Carlisle website.

From Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center: "Under the authority of the US federal government, Carlisle was the first federally funded off-reservation Indian boarding school. Founded in 1879 by Captain Richard Henry Pratt, it enrolled over 10,500 students by the time of its closing in 1918. Pratt believed that American Indians were the equals of European-Americans, and that Native American children immersed in mainstream Euro-American culture would become assimilated. To document his experiment, what scholar David Wallace Adams has referred to as "Education for Extinction," Pratt commissioned John N. Choate to take before and after "contrast" photos to document the progress they were making in "civilizing" the Indian children".

Slide 8: Screenshot from *Schooling the World*. Imperial education by America in Cuba and Philippines.

Slide 9: Poster: The Administration's Promises have been Kept

This is a 1900 Republican campaign poster for the US presidential election, with portraits of President William McKinley and Vice Presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt. On the left side "Gone Democratic" shows the US in economic slump and Cuba shackled by Spain; on the right side "Gone Republican" shows the US prosperous and Cuba being educated under US tutelage (for a clearer image of sections of the poster and more information see [Jeff R Bridgman](#) or [Wikipedia](#) for more background).

The text '*the American flag has not been planted in foreign soil to acquire more territory but for humanity's sake*' demonstrates the strong tones of superiority and rationalising of colonial agendas.

Licensing - in the public domain.

3. Excerpts from Schooling the World (20-25 mins)

This activity is based on excerpts from the full documentary [Schooling the World](#) 2010 by Carol Black. Video start and stop times are given, along with questions and tasks to explore the topics raised.

Traditional v Modern Forms of Education

Find the excerpt beginning at 12.45mins where Helena Norberg-Hodge compares traditional and modern forms of education.

Before playing the video, prepare learners to listen and record some key points about traditional and modern forms of education. Play the video from 12.45mins and pause at 13.49mins, before Wade Davis begins speaking.

Suggested answers from the video transcript are offered in green below:

“traditional forms of knowledge fostered sustainability, all these cultures were not perfect but they did know about their own specific climate, soil, water and they did manage to survive independently in charge of their own lives for generation after generation”.

‘In the modern economy and with the modern educational system the children learn nothing about that but instead they learn how to use essentially corporate products in an urban consumer culture, so once they’ve been educated in modern schools they literally don’t know how to survive in their own environment’.

Education as a Way of Being

Explain that Wade Davis is going to describe how he sees education and ask them to identify one key point, what resonates with them?

Restart the video at 13.49mins and play until 16mins.

- Ask for responses from the class.
- Display [slide 10](#), an excerpt from Wade Davis. Ask learners to think about, what type of human being does our current education system promote? What type of relationship with the planet and with nature does our current education system promote?
- In pairs, ask learners to think of something other than a mountain and conceive of it in different ways. For example,
 - o a tree: something to give shade, a wooden chair, or firewood/energy, a provider of apples, or a spirit?
 - o a car: transport or a metal box or a container for energy transfer or a greenhouse gas emitter or resource drain etc?
- Display [slide 11](#). Ask the class to consider what unlearning and reconstructing might be happening for them having engaged with the idea that education is an ‘*indoctrination of a child into a certain way of knowing, a way of learning, a way of being*’.

Mahatma Gandhi - real freedom 1909

Ask the class if anyone knows what Mahatma Gandhi’s ideas on education were? Play the video from 51.23 mins up to. 54.50mins.

As inspiration, display slide 11, the quote from Gandhi.

Carry out a **Why-Why-Why activity** on the question ‘why is western education a barrier to freedom in non-western cultures?’. This whole class, group or individual activity gets learners thinking about the root causes of global injustices and encourages them to go deeper with their understanding. Access the [WWGS Activity Resource on the Why-Why-Why](#) method for step-by-step instructions.

4. Closure (5 mins)

Play the video from 'The Bottom Line', with Wade Davis speaking (from 1.01.30mins to the end @ 1.04.49mins including the song). Alternatively, play the closing song only, Little Boxes, from 1.02.50mins-1.04.49mins.

Ask for class responses to the song, how did it make you feel? What do you think the people were laughing at? What do you think the closing message of the film is?

Additional Activities

1. Creative Response

Ask the class what images come to mind when they hear the words 'schooling the world' or what images come to mind when they think of the documentary. Learners respond creatively by sketching responses, drawing a cartoon, writing a poem, a rap, a song.

2. Watch the full documentary

The full documentary is just over 1 hour long and it covers a range of global justice issues connected to Politics and Society. For instance: globalisation, sustainable development, Key Thinkers, poverty, development and aid, volunteerism, charity versus solidarity, Indigenous knowledge and more.

E: Key Thinkers

In this lesson learners explore Key Thinkers relating to education. A jigsaw strategy is used to develop knowledge on these theorists and their arguments. This is followed by a role play activity to encourage learners to vocalise their learning. Learners identify which theorist their thinking aligns with and offer a rationale for their position. The lesson begins and ends with some quotes from Key Thinkers to stimulate new ideas and reflections.

Learning Outcomes: 4.2, 4.3, 5.7, 6.2, 7.7, 8.3.

Time: 45 - 60 minutes. Time needed for this lesson is dependent on learners' experience of relevant Key Thinkers.

Materials needed: PowerPoint Key Thinkers in Education, available in the supporting materials for [Unit 4](#). Access student resources on Key Thinkers from the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) [Politics and Society Key Thinkers](#), or the [NCCA Big Thinkers](#).

1. Introduction (5 mins)

Ask the class if they know of any famous quotes or phrases on education or schooling. These do not have to be limited to the Key Thinkers.

Access the documentary [Schooling the World](#) 2010 by Carol Black, find the chapter McCauley's Children starting at 16.31mins and play up to 20:30 mins. This includes quotes on education from Key Thinkers John Stuart Mill and Vandana Shiva, who are both covered in Politics and Society. Alternatively use [slides 2 and 3](#) which present these quotes.

Ask learners to consider:

- What Politics and Society topics do these quotes relate to?
- What global justice issues do these quotes relate to?
- What questions do these quotes raise?

2. Key Thinkers: Jigsaw (40-45mins)

This is a Jigsaw activity where groups become experts on Key Thinkers relating to education (for more on Jigsaw see the [Teacher Toolkit](#)).

Access the student resources in the PDST or NCCA documents on 4-6 of the suggested Key Thinkers (John Locke, Robert Nozick, Paulo Freire, Martha Nussbaum, Kathleen Lynch, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Vandana Shiva, Noam Chomsky, John Dewey or John Stuart Mill). Ensure each learner has one printed Key Thinker document.

- Divide the class into 4, 5 or 6 'expert' groups, depending on the number of learners in the class and Key Thinkers chosen for this activity. For the purposes of explanation, we will use 4 groups of 4 learners and 4 Key Thinkers:

Group A - Robert Nozick

Group B - Paulo Freire

Group C - Martha Nussbaum

Group D - Kathleen Lynch

- Assign each 'expert' group one Key Thinker, either A, B, C or D.
 - Allow learners adequate time to individually read their document and to highlight points relating to education.
 - In their expert groups, learners work collaboratively to come up with 4 points on their theorist's position on education. Learners take note of these. Encourage learners to consider if they can relate the theory to any other Key Thinkers or ideas they have encountered in Politics and Society or elsewhere.
 - Ask each 'expert' group to prepare 2-3 questions they can put to other 'experts' (in the next step of jigsaw).
 - After 10-15 minutes of becoming 'experts', create 4 new groups ensuring that each group includes at least one 'expert' on each Key Thinker (4 groups made up of one expert on Key Thinker A, B, C and D).
 - 'Experts' now take it in turns (max 5mins per learner) to explain what they have learned to the learners in their new group. Encourage learners to ask and answer questions of each other. This step can be done as a role play, where learners take on the position of their Key Thinker and answer questions in character.
 - Compile the learning using concept maps on each Key Thinker: this can be done as a whole class, small group or as an individual task. Learners provide ideas, words, sentences, thoughts triggered, and/or questions they may have on each Key Thinker.
 - To close out the activity, ask learners to take turns in their group to state which Key Thinker (if any) resembles their own position on education and why. Encourage learners to give a one sentence rationale or statement for their choice.
 - Call out Key Thinkers and take a show of hands to see which Thinkers resonate most with the class. Invite individuals to provide a rationale for their choice.
-

3. Reflection

Read out or display [slides 4 and 5](#), the quotes from Paulo Freire and John Dewey.

Ask the class how they feel about these quotes. Does the current education system teach them to resist injustice? Or does it impose ideas? Is it oppressive? How? In what ways? Through which forms, modes, systems?

Display [slide 6](#), extracted from the [New Internationalist 2023](#).

Ask learners to respond to slide 6 and the quotes via a method of their choosing, for instance through their thinking, by journalling, in dialogue with a partner, by drawing, writing, posing a question or writing a quote.

These quotes and the article can be used as a stimulus for a follow-on lesson exploring the ideas of Paulo Freire or Michael Foucault, or reading and summarising the New Internationalist article, or linking to Unit 2 Youth Participation.

F: Widening the Lens: Incorporating Multiple Voices

This lesson begins with a short visualisation to broaden learners' perspectives on education. This is followed by reading different perspectives and experiences of education from minority groups, as well as a video interview focusing on Indigenous education in Colombia. In groups, learners are then tasked with developing an Education Charter for an Indigenous community.

Learning Outcomes: 4.2, 4.3, 5.3, 6.2, 6.3, 7.5, 7.6

Time: 60+ minutes

Materials needed: PowerPoint Widening the Lens, available in the supporting materials for [Unit 4](#).

1. Introduction - Visualisation (5 mins)

Invite learners to close their eyes and...

- think about the variety and diversity of educational contexts, relationships and practices that they are aware of
- move beyond the classroom and think about education globally, education as a universal human right (UDHR and UNCRC) or education for all (SDG4)
- think about what education (or lack thereof) looks like in war contexts (e.g. Gaza in 2026), education for girls (e.g. in Afghanistan), private education in Global North contexts (e.g. UK or Ireland), Indigenous education (e.g. in Colombia or Australia).

After 3 or 4 minutes, ask learners to jot down words, sentences, drawings, emojis etc. which come to mind.

Invite learners to swap their notes or drawings with a partner and ask each other questions about their ideas and musings.

2. Education Through Other Eyes (10 mins)

Slides 2-4 'Education Through Other Eyes' presents 5 different lived experiences of education from people around the world (these can be displayed for whole class discussion, for group work or individual reflection). These excerpts are taken directly from the resource 'Learning to Read through Other Eyes: Notions of Education' by Vanessa Andreotti and Lynn Mario T. M. de Souza (2008), available [here](#).

Learners choose 2 of the 4 prompts on **slide 5** to respond to. The response could be a paired discussion or individual journalling.

3. Case Study: Education in Colombia (45-60 mins)

Show the subtitled video: '[The Wisdom of Elders](#)': *Indigenous communities in Colombia refuse to occupy an empty space in history, and believe their very cultural survival is at stake*' (4.30mins).

After the video, allow learners 5 minutes to read through the short accompanying article (alternatively read it aloud) available in the [New Internationalist](#) (2017) by Hazel Healy.

Group Activity

The aim of this activity is for learners to assume the position of a community facilitator, such as Fernando Guerrero and devise an 'Indigenous education charter'.

Display [slide 6](#) which is a direct quote from the article referring to creating an 'Indigenous education charter'.

Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5.

Allocate each group with an Indigenous community to research and represent. Select from the list below.

Alternatively learners may have prior knowledge of or interest in a particular community. The aim for learners is to create an Indigenous Charter on Education (i.e. guiding principles) which states the values, culture, music, clothes, food, etc. of their chosen community and how these relate to education and schooling.

1. Europe: [Irish Travellers](#)
2. Africa, Kenya: [Maasai People](#)
3. North America, Canada: [Inuit People](#)
4. South America, Peru: [Quechua People](#)
5. India, Nepal: [Tharu People](#)
6. New Zealand: [Māori People](#) (*Learning to Read through Other Eyes: Notions of Education* also includes case study on Māori children's education).

Consult the [Wikipedia list of Indigenous Peoples](#) for more information: there are estimated to be over 5000 distinct Indigenous peoples spread across every inhabited climate zone and inhabited continent of the world.

After 10-15 minutes researching and 10-15 minutes devising a charter, groups prepare to present their charters to the class. Allow 2-3 minutes per presentation with 2-3 minutes for questions.

Reflective question and possible stimulus for an action project: *How can we stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples' fight to retain traditional knowledge and practices in formal education systems?*

4. Reflection: Postcard to your Future Self

Distribute postcards, key cards or index cards to each learner. Ask learners to reflect on the entire Unit on Education (or the aspects covered) and invite them to write on their postcard:

- one thing they learned or discussed which they do not want to forget
- a commitment to themselves in terms of reconstructing their understanding of education and schooling
- a hope for education and education policy

Commit to delivering the postcards to learners in a future Politics and Society class the following month, term or year if possible. When delivered, ask learners to consider how their learning has changed.

Additional Activity: Education Charter for Ireland

Create a youth-informed and youth-centered 'Education Charter for Ireland' or a set of Guiding Principles for Education in Ireland.

As a stimulus, learners read the short article 'What If Children Led the Fight for Their Rights?' from the [New internationalist](#), June 2023 by Matt Broomfield.

This can be a group activity, homework task or whole class collaborative activity.

Explore More: Education in Colombia

- Revolution in the Classroom: Escuela Nueva 2017 Monica Pilar Uribe Marin in the [New Internationalist](#)
- Scaling Innovation: The Escuela Nueva Story (2016) by Alex Ryan in the [Medium](#)

Additional Activity: Reconstructing Education

This is a suggested activity to bring closure to this Unit and to incorporate [WWGS Guiding Principle 1 'Unlearning and Reconstructing'](#).

Use Socratic Questioning as a discussion tool to unlearn and reconstruct learners' taken for granted assumptions and understandings of education and schooling. This is an opportunity to solidify the learning in this Unit and to dig deep into the justice issues surrounding education.

The [WWGS Activities Resource includes Socratic Questioning](#) and has step-by-step instructions as well as links to a video, infographic and more, as well as examples for each category of questions.

Questions or issues may have arisen naturally for your learners and these can form the question to be explored through Socratic Questioning. Alternatively, here are some suggestions:

- Is universal education possible? (think of education as a right- UDHR, as a goal (SDG 4) or as a global agenda- Education for All) (LO 5.1-6.2)
- Can education have the same meaning in different cultures?
- Rights to education are a western idea (6.2)
- Is it a progressive move towards development to impose rights to education on non-western cultures (6.2)

Discursive Essay Question

“Education is always political”

Consult this [article from the New Internationalist](#) 2022 by Sruti Bala: ‘Anti- Nationalism: The Spectre Haunting Indian Higher Education.

The following excerpt and cartoon are copied from the article.

Apparently, a complaint had been filed by a bureaucrat from the National Monitoring Committee on Education in a letter to the University’s Vice Chancellor, which alleged that Sebastian had been ‘indoctrinating students by spewing hatred and poison against the Narendra Modi government’.

A poster circulating on social media and on campus at the time featured a drawing of a teacher with a gigantic syringe injecting ‘anti-nationalism’ into innocent, patriotic students.

Lying on a table behind him was a book bearing the title ‘Maoist’ – a catch-all term with which India’s rightwingers brand progressives as potentially dangerous and violent. The poster, which bore the logo of the student association ABVP (Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad), a student wing of the RSS, made it clear that the complaint involved their co-operation and participation. Rightwing channels on YouTube shared videos praising the students who stood up in defence of the nation and succeeded in having the ‘anti-national’ lecturer suspended. Well-funded and efficiently organized political and ideological networks now firmly connect student groups and faculty representatives to the paramilitary ‘voluntary social services’ of the RSS and state-level and national educational bodies.

The warning was formalized a few months later in a paranoid memo issued to all employees of the university, calling upon them to ‘abstain from giving any type of provocative lectures/statements that are anti-national and will be against the interest of the nation. Strict disciplinary action will be taken against those who indulge in such activities in future.’ While student and teacher unions across the country have criticized the bureaucratic abuse of codes of conduct at universities to undermine their academic freedom, these protests seem to not have deterred universities and the Ministry of Education from pursuing their hardline approach towards cracking down on critics.

Lectures on topics that challenge the ruling party line are regularly cancelled or not allowed to take place. Red tape and growing surveillance mechanisms are making it extremely difficult for scholars to participate in or organise research events. Bodies mandated to provide educational quality control interfere in curricular decisions and remove or reassign texts on grounds of their promoting a ‘negative’ impression of the country. Political stooges with no academic credentials are appointed as university administrative heads, and are emboldened in their policing role as overseers of the state.

Read the full article [here](#).



‘Rightwing student association at Indian university accuses teacher of promoting anti-national ideas’, from [New Internationalist January 2022](#).

Explore More

The Impact of War and Conflict on Education and Schooling

'The UN estimates that 224 million children need educational support, and that includes more than 72 million who can't attend school at all because of war or conflict in their country' (from the BBC Global Story Podcast). Explore how lack of access to education is compounded by inter-connected factors, e.g. climate change, girls early marriage, corruption, education management, poverty, health and more.

New Internationalist: [No Status, No School: Palestinian Children in Egypt](#) 2025

[Keeping Schools Open in Yemen](#) 2017 by Sawsan Al-Refaei

[BBC Global Story Podcast](#) Impact of war and conflict@13:45 (material here which relates to challenges/obstacles to universal approaches/measures of education).

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