

# PROJECT-BASED LESSON

## CONSUMER IMPACT: HOW OUR \$ CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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### Summary

Students will learn about fair trade and the positive impact that fair trade certified products have on communities which, in turn, helps keep girls in school. To learn more about fair trade and how it helps families in developing countries, go to [www.fairtradeusa.org](http://www.fairtradeusa.org) and preview the site before working with students.

### Objective

Students will study the positive impact their consumer decisions can make on developing nations and how they, with everyday choices, can help girls stay in school.

### Subjects

Language Arts, Writing, Social Studies (Economics)

### Common Core State Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

### Time Needed

Three to five class periods; 50 minutes each

### Skill Building

- Analyzing and comparing information
- Preparing and displaying information in a way that is appropriate for the audience
- Providing support and reasoning for conclusions

### Resources and Materials

- Teacher-selected film chapters from *Girl Rising*
- Teacher Guides for selected chapters, which include a list of Resources, a mini-lesson for introducing the film chapters, and a Film Viewing Guide
- KWPL Chart (see Resources section)
- Fair Trade print-outs from [www.fairtradeusa.org](http://www.fairtradeusa.org) (optional)
- See Additional Resources Guide (found in the Resources section) for additional resources, including relevant videos.

### Essential Questions

1. As consumers, how do our choices impact others?
2. How do socially responsible companies impact families in poor countries?
3. How do socially responsible, fair trade products help to keep girls in school?
4. As consumers, how can we support efforts that improve the lives of others?

## Sample Content Questions

1. What does a Fair Trade designation mean to consumers?
2. What does it mean for a company to be socially responsible?

## Building a Foundation and Making Connections

View the selected film chapter(s) from *Girl Rising* and use the Introductory Lesson and Film Viewing Guides, relevant Country and Issue Fact Sheets, and Resources to engage students so that they begin to develop an understanding of the numerous issues that influence a girl's ability to access an education. Ensure that students are familiar with the fair trade label. Bring in a fair trade-designated product to show students, or print the fair trade label found at [www.fairtradeusa.org](http://www.fairtradeusa.org).

## Introducing the Lesson

As a class, on a large sheet of paper begin a K-W-P-L Chart centering on the question, "What does a fair trade label mean, and how do these products make a difference?" Complete the Know, Want to Know, and Predict columns.

Tell students that they will be focusing on this guiding question as they research a fair trade certified product. Students will research a product and the company that manufactures it, learning how the product and company impact poverty and help - directly or indirectly - to keep girls in school

Product suggestions:

- Body care products (lotion, soap, shampoo)
- Crafts
- Clothing
- Handbags
- Coffee
- Chocolate
- Sugar
- Tea

Suggested questions to help students focus their research:

1. How does a product earn a fair trade designation?
2. Why was the fair trade designation created?
3. Who awards the fair trade designation?
4. How are these companies helping to decrease poverty?
5. How are these products helping girls to stay in school?

As students learn more about fair trade products, revisit the K-W-P-L Chart, filling in the Learned column as the project develops.

## Ideas for Encouraging All Learners

### English Language Learners

- There are fair trade websites available in numerous languages. Encourage students to bring their native language and background into their presentation.

### Support Services

- Encourage students to present data in a format that is supportive of their skills.
- Encourage the use of graphs to compare data.
- Modify the lesson by encouraging students to focus on learning about fair trade.

### Gifted and Talented Students

- Encourage students to explore the environmental impact of fair trade companies and/or products. How do their practices help people build stronger communities?

## Final Project

There are many options for how students might share their research and discoveries. The goal of this lesson is to encourage students to begin thinking of themselves as consumers in a global marketplace, and to recognize that their purchase decisions impact the lives of others. Final project options may include a written report; recording a "news-style" video; conducting a mock interview; creating a newsletter, press release, or informational brochure; posting a blog or informational Facebook page; or creating a digital presentation.

