

# **United Nations Environmental Issues Project**

Adapted from Mark Ewoldsen, La Cañada High School, La Cañada, CA

## **Correlation**

Raven and Berg – all chapters

Lecture Notes

Individual Research

## **Purpose**

To better understand the interaction between the environment, the people, and the nations of the World.

## **Student Objectives**

Students will connect concepts from APES to nations of the world, thus developing associations to the information.

## **Background Information**

The United Nations is usually thought to be involved only peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. However, the UN works diligently to solve troubles that face the human race. There are over two dozen associated organizations, the UN system, that work to solve these problems. The United Nations and the UN system work on human rights, the AIDS epidemic, poverty, global climate change, racism, health, and more.

Many environmental organizations, treaties, and conventions were initiated in the United Nations. The health of people worldwide is monitored by the WHO or World Health Organization. Environmental protection and socioeconomic development were addressed at the Earth Summit. The fight to protect the stratospheric ozone layer was the focus of the Montreal Protocol. The attempt to solidify the world against global climate change was initiated via the Kyoto Protocol. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of the United States was established in 1973 as was the United Nation's version which is called Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Your teacher will assign you a nation that is a member of the United Nations. You will research that country, collect information and develop resolutions pertinent to that country throughout the school year and then towards the end of the year, take on roles as diplomats to find solutions to world problems. This is similar to what is done in either the Model United Nations or the YMCA program titled Youth and Government.

## **Materials**

Spiral notebook or Computer folder

Before the summit, students will be holding a food fair to demonstrate the culture of their respective country.

During the summit, students should dress the part of an ambassador of the country to again portray the culture.

## **Procedure**

1. Find location to store information - spiral notebook, computer folder, etc.
2. Collect information about your assigned country for each chapter covered in the textbook. See evaluation section for information to collect.
3. During school year, **develop resolutions** that are important for your nation. These resolutions will be addressed during United Nations meeting at end of year.
4. About one month before end of instruction (around the beginning of May), start finding other nations that agree with your resolution. Amend or modify your resolution to fit all the situations.
5. Remember that you will be representing the beliefs of your government and/or nation. Please put aside your personal beliefs and knowledge. You are a representative of that nation and can be removed (or eliminated by your government) if you do not properly represent the government/people.
6. The United Nations summit will be called to order and start with the selection of the Secretary General. This person will run the meeting so should know Parliamentary procedure. This person must "TRY" to put aside their nation's viewpoint, which is normally "NOT" 100% successful.
  - a. Determination of which resolution to discuss first.
    - i. A member will propose a resolution to discuss which must be seconded by another member
    - ii. Discussion of whether to discuss this resolution will continue until a call for vote

- iii. Voting yes or no to discuss the resolution
- iv. Indicate the exact wording of each resolution and the authoring countries in Table 1.
- b. The discussion of the resolution may lead to
  - i. Proposed amendments added to the resolution must be seconded by another member
    - 1. Discussion of amendments will continue until a call for vote on the amendment
    - 2. Voting affirmative or negative on amendment
    - 3. Indicate the exact wording of each amendment to each resolution in Table 1.
  - ii. Amendments added to the amendments of the resolution must be seconded by another member
    - 1. Discussion of amendments will continue until a call for vote on the amendment
    - 2. Voting affirmative or negative on amendments
  - iii. Resolution may be tabled if
    - 1. Call for tabling seconded by another member
    - 2. Discussion of call for tabling will continue until a call for vote on the motion
    - 3. Voting affirmative or negative on motion
  - iv. Passage of the resolution
    - 1. Discussion of unmodified and amended resolution will continue until a call for vote on the resolution
    - 2. Voting affirmative or negative on resolution
    - 3. Indicate whether each resolution pass (P), was tabled (T), or was defeated (D) in Table 1.
- c. Repeat until out of time. May be continued a second day if so desired and/or needed.

9. Answer questions at the end of the evaluation

### Evaluations

1. Answer the questions distributed by your instructor specifically for YOUR country.
2. Resolution creation
  - a. What environmental issues are extremely important for your country?
  - b. What is the wording of the resolutions that you created?
  - c. Were you able to find anyone in class that had a similar resolution, and if so, how did you work out the differences in language?
  - d. How different resolutions did the class create – What are ten of them?
3. Debate

**Table 1.** Intergovernmental discussion at the ‘United Nation’

Resolution	Author	Amendment(s)	P, T, or D

4. Debate follow-up:
  - a. Describe what you thought about the method of discussing a resolution.
  - b. How efficient is this method of solving the world’s problems?
  - c. Does this method create an atmosphere of all members being able to participate?
  - d. Is this method fair to all members?
  - e. Did you become involved in the discussion? Did this increase your enjoyment of the activity?
5. How would you change this activity for next year’s class?

### Information

1. Relevant resources and references
  - a. Nations of the United Nations – obtain from instructor
  - b. Chapter Questions – obtain from instructor

2. Important terms
  - a. See Glossary for each chapter
3. Works Cited
  - a. United Nations. UN in Brief. 21 Aug. 2008 <http://www.un.org/Overview/uninbrief/>.
  - b. Global statistics published by the UN Statistics Division <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>
  - c. National statistics developed by the UN Statistics Division [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/internatlinks/sd\\_natstat.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/internatlinks/sd_natstat.htm)
  - d. "Lab 25: Negotiating for a Cooler Planet: Ethical Considerations of Climate Change." Edward Wells, Wilson College, Chambersburg, PA. (this Lab manual)