

| <i>Global Issues</i> | | |
|----------------------|--|--------------|
| Author: | Ricardo Sampedro and Susan Hillyard (2004) | |
| Publisher: | Oxford: Oxford University Press | |
| Pages | ISBN | Price |
| Pp. x + 148 | 0-19-437181-6 | £14.25 |



Global Issues by Ricardo Sampedro and Susan Hillyard, published by Oxford University Press, is a resource book for teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It presents selected global issues in simple, easy-to-understand terms, and uses them as a springboard in the classroom to develop the learners' communication skills.

The book is organized in such a way that teachers can select activities that are appropriate to the level of language proficiency of their students: Elementary and above, Elementary to advanced, Lower-Intermediate and above, Pre-intermediate and above, Intermediate, Intermediate and above, and Upper-Intermediate and above. This is an extremely attractive feature, since it makes the book usable across the entire range of language-learning levels.

The book offers a variety of activities; 59 activities in total are provided in four units:

1. Awareness raising
2. Personal experience
3. Major global issues
4. Music, drama, and communication skills in global issues

Each unit has a theme that encapsulates what is going on in the real world outside the typical language classroom. The activities bring these real-world issues into the classroom for learners to think about and react to, giving them a chance to express their

opinions and thus practice and advance their verbal and other skills. Among the issues included are conflict and peace, disappearing languages, discrimination, environmental concerns, fair trade, genetically modified organisms, health, and perceptions and stereotypes.

The unit begins with a brief introduction of its theme and a description of the activities that will be presented in it. The activities are presented under seven headings: Level, Time, Aims, Materials, Procedure, Follow-up, and Recommended Sources. These sections provide the teacher with useful information about the activity, which the teacher can use in deciding which activity to choose for any given class. The instructions given in the Procedure section are detailed yet clear, and are easy to follow. The activities are all conducted in three phases: Pre-Activity Phase, Activity Phase, and Post-activity Phase. Some activities involve pair work, others group work, and still others require each learner to work on his or her own. The activities are varied, and involve interaction between teacher and learner as well as between learners.

The book focuses primarily on improving communication skills, particularly oral fluency. Thus, classroom discussions form a major part of activities. However, verbal skills are not the only skills the authors address: there are activities for grammar, vocabulary, writing, and reading comprehension.

Some other fine features presented in this book are the Background Information box, the Word Store, and Variations. The Background Information box presents additional facts relating to the issue being addressed in the activity. The Word Store lists vocabulary that the students may need to know before they can engage in a particular activity. Variations offer the teachers suggestions for alternative ways to conduct the activity to suit their students' needs. The extensive listings in the Reference Library are an invaluable tool for the teacher, not only in preparing for the class, but also in directing those students who are interested in further exploring the issues they have discussed in the classroom.

Global Issues is an excellent alternative resource book. Ricardo Sampedro and Susan Hillyard have created a text that fits well into the EFL curriculum and has the potential for benefiting EFL learners by advancing their communication skills and at the same time increasing their awareness of what is going on in the world around them through discussion, reflection, and critical and creative thinking. This multipurpose approach to language learning is to be highly commended. It is what sets this book apart from others in the field and makes it an indispensable addition to any ESL/EFL program.

Thinan Sangpanasthada
Brock University
<ts98ah@brocku.ca>

© Copyright rests with authors. Please cite TESL-EJ appropriately.