United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Map

This Mastery Project introduces the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals while exercising fundamentals of geography and social studies.

For high school students

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This Mastery Project is structured with three core stages:

1. **Internal Investigation**
   - Learning Foundational Skills & Concepts
   - Lessons 1-3
   - First, you will learn the key vocabulary and concepts necessary to understand why and how the UN Sustainable Development Goals were developed. During this stage, you will explore the challenges humanity faces in the 21st century, understand the basic human needs that unite us all, and examine global statistics that challenge your assumptions about the world.

2. **External Investigation**
   - Exploring World Context & Testing Credibility
   - Lesson 4
   - Next, you will see how these concepts apply in the real world. During this stage, you will conduct a neighborhood walk to map how far you have to travel to access the resources necessary to satisfy your basic human needs.

3. **Action Project**
   - Demonstrating Mastery of Concepts & Skills
   - Lesson 5
   - Finally, you will apply everything you have learned through the creation of an action project. During this stage, you will research global statistics to create a world map that compares countries’ progress toward meeting the SDGs.
Mastery Project Guiding Question:

What are the biggest challenges facing humanity and how do we address them?
In April 2017, the world population topped 7.5 billion people. As our population continues to grow, natural resources are dwindling due to human consumption, and the resources that remain are unequally distributed. More than ever, our world needs thoughtful, engaged, global citizens to address the world’s growing crises.

The UN SDG Map project will ground you with fundamental reading, research, and writing skills necessary to enter into a conversation about our global priorities. Through project-based inquiry, you will study the greatest challenges facing our planet, understand what is needed to achieve the SDG targets, and create a map that communicates your discoveries and encourages viewers to question their assumptions about the world.
Guiding Question:

How does the United Nations prioritize and address global concerns?
Each day you hear about challenges being confronted by individuals, communities, and the world. Based on your experiences and observations, what do you think are the biggest problems facing humanity today?

Make a list of 5-10 challenges that your generation must overcome. Share your responses with peers and discuss.
You just created a list of the biggest challenges facing humanity today. The United Nations is an organization that also works to identify and address global issues.

Are you familiar with the United Nations and what they do?

If you are familiar, explain the purpose and responsibilities of the United Nations in your own words.

If you are not yet familiar, visit the UN website to learn about the organization's history and mission, then write a one-sentence summary of what they do.
Now that you understand the UN and what it does, imagine you are a diplomat asked to represent your country at the UN. You have been invited to share your country's biggest challenges, so the UN may develop a list of top priorities to work on.

Use this BBC website to research one of the following countries, or choose one of your own:

- Armenia
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Cuba
- Honduras
- Iceland
- Indonesia
- Kenya
- Liberia
- Tunisia
- Indonesia
- Kenya

Once on the web page, you may click on "full overview" below the executive summary to read a more complete country profile. Your purpose is to imagine you are representing that country and to learn all you can about its top priorities.
Step 4: Read and Explain

In the year 2000, world leaders met at the United Nations and conducted an exercise similar to the one you just did. While at the summit, the 189 world leaders in attendance identified and outlined the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the aim of achieving them by 2015.

Read [this explanation](#) of the MDGs, or watch this video, then compare the eight MDGs to the list of global challenges you identified in the previous Step. What are the similarities and differences between your list and the UN's?

Write a paragraph that compares the list you created in Step 3 with the eight MDGs. Your paragraph should include the following:

- An explanation of the MDGs in your words
- An evaluation of the eight MDGs: do you think the list is complete, or are there other issues you feel should have been added?
- Are there some you think should have been excluded from the list?
- Do you think the eight MDGs serve the priorities of all countries equally?
Guiding Question:

What are basic human needs, and how are they satisfied?
In the previous lesson, you learned that the eight MDGs expired in 2015. That year, world leaders gathered once again at the UN to check on the progress of the MDGs and set goals for the next 15 years. From that meeting, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were born, which member states are now working to achieve by 2030.

Study the list of SDGs and answer the prompts below:

- Why do you think the UN decided to revisit these goals every 15 years?
- What do you believe are the pros and cons of shifting from MDGs (eight goals) to SDGs (17 goals)? How does this change make the outcomes more or less achievable?
- Do you think the 17 SDGs serve the priorities of all countries equally? Explain.
The MDGs and SDGs are meant to ensure all humans have access to the resources they need to live healthy, safe and fulfilling lives. What does this mean, and what exactly do people need to live well?

Take a look at this list of human needs. You’ll notice two boxes are blank. Fill these in with needs you have that are not already included on the list.

Write the needs down in order of importance to you, or use the chart in this PDF to print, cut and arrange them in your preferred order.

When you are finished with your ranking, write a 2-3 sentence explanation of your thought process.
Everyone needs the same basic resources to stay alive, but as you noticed in the previous step, people have different requirements when it comes to leading productive and fulfilling lives.

Abraham Maslow was one of the founders of humanistic psychology, a branch of psychology concerned with human development and personal fulfillment. He developed the hierarchy of needs you see here.

Examine Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and discuss the meaning of each level with your classmates. For example, what does “self-actualization” mean? When you understand each level, complete the attached worksheet.

Examine the diagram, then complete the “Maslow’s Hierarchy Worksheet.”
What does Maslow’s hierarchy mean to you?

Now that you’ve examined the hierarchy of needs, think about what you personally need to fulfill each of the 5 levels: Physiological, Safety, Love & Belonging, Esteem, and Self-Actualization. For example, everyone needs shelter to survive, but can you live just anywhere? Is there a particular type of shelter you need? What do you need to feel safe? What makes you feel like you belong?

Create an illustration for the five levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (on paper or using a digital platform), and fill in what you personally would need to fulfill your needs at each level. Consider the importance of meeting one level of needs before you can achieve another.

Download a printable pyramid
Guiding Question:

How does access to resources differ globally?
In the previous Lessons, you examined the UN SDGs and used Maslow’s hierarchy to rank basic human needs. In this Lesson, you will begin mapping these concepts on a global scale.

Begin by testing your knowledge of geography. How many countries can you label on a world map without the use of outside resources?

Complete side one of the “Country Labeling Worksheet” by identifying as many countries as you can from memory. Try for at least ten, and do more if you are able!
The SDGs will require a great deal of effort and commitment if they are to be achieved by 2030. Some countries are closer to meeting the goals than others, yet everyone has work to do.

Think about two issues addressed by both the MDGs and the SDGs: poverty and education. To understand these issues and how they are measured, you must understand the following terms: poverty line and literacy rate.

Discuss these concepts with your classmates. Once you understand them, guess which country you think has the highest poverty rate in the world, and which country has the lowest. Then guess which country has the highest literacy rate, and which has the lowest.

Complete side 2 of the “Country Labeling Worksheet,” which you began in the previous step.
Now see if your guesses from the worksheet were correct by exploring these rankings, showing current statistics.

- **Population Living Below the Poverty Line**
- **Literacy Rates** (to explore US literacy rates click [here](#))

As you explore each statistic, identify the countries that actually have the highest and lowest poverty rates, and the highest and lowest literacy rates. Update your answers and mark each country on your “Country Labeling Worksheet.”
Based on what you have learned in this lesson, please answer these prompts in complete sentences:

- Were any of your guesses from the “Country Labeling Worksheet” correct? If so, which ones?
- Were you surprised by any of the rankings? Explain.
- Where does your country fall within the rankings? Write your thoughts on this.
- What factors do you think influence a country’s position in the rankings?
- Did this activity challenge any assumptions you have about the world? Explain your answer.
Guiding Question:

How does your neighborhood meet the basic needs of you and your community?

The purpose of this external investigation is to explore your school curriculum in the real world. You will explore, at a local level, access to various resources that satisfy basic human needs.
In Lesson 2, you learned about Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and how we must satisfy our needs at one level before moving on to the next.

In this external investigation, you will be mapping your ability to meet your needs at different levels of the hierarchy. To do this, take a walk around your neighborhood or do online research to find your nearest access points for the following resources:

- Food (grocery stores, restaurants, etc.)
- Clothing (stores with new and used clothing)
- Education (schools, day care, libraries)
- Security (police station, fire station, etc.)
- Health care (doctors, hospitals, urgent care)

Review the “SDG Map External Investigation Worksheet.” Print a copy that you can take with you as you walk, or develop a digital method for taking notes.
Now that you have previewed the “SDG Map External Investigation Worksheet,” you will walk around your neighborhood or the area near your home to identify specific businesses and resources that meet your basic human needs.

Take 30-60 minutes to complete your neighborhood walk and record how far you must go to find resources to satisfy your needs.

You should identify at least five different locations on your map, but if you live in an urban area, you might find many more than five while on your walk.
After returning from your walk, complete your “SDG Map External Investigation Worksheet.”

Use your worksheet to create a map of your discoveries. You may create a high-tech map using a program like Google Maps, or a low-tech, hand-drawn version. You may also choose to create a blended version, where you print a map and then write in the locations as you find them.
Guiding Question:

What can countries learn from each other to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals?

The purpose of this action project is to create a world map that educates viewers about a global challenge and causes them to rethink their assumptions about the world.
The purpose of this action project is to research and map the status of a specific SDG on a global scale. Please read the scenario for action below:

An international human rights organization has launched a new mapping project to help educate people around the world about access to resources and basic human rights.

The intention of the project is twofold:

- to raise awareness about the SDGs
- to show comparative data about what countries are doing to achieve the SDGs

As part of a team focused on the SDGs, your task is to produce a world map that accurately tracks a single global issue in four countries and informs viewers about status and context in each location.

At the end of this action project, you will have:

- Selected a global issue to research
- Researched the status and trends of the issue in (at least) four countries
- Created a map that displays your findings

Please review the following documents:

- Action Project Prep Worksheet
- Action Project Rubric
- Example of Excellence
Before you start researching and drafting your action project, examine the completed “Example of Excellence." This will give you an opportunity to see a final product and get familiar with the project rubric, so you know how your final work will be evaluated.

Please review the "[Example of Excellence](#)" and use the "[Action Project Rubric](#)" to give it a score.

After you have graded the project, discuss with your peers to see if you arrived at a similar conclusion. If you have any questions about the rubric, work through them with your teacher.
Both the MDGs and the SDGs call for international cooperation to achieve the stated goals by their target dates. This means countries must learn from each other and work together to meet the goals on time.

So far in this project, have you been surprised by any of the country rankings you’ve examined? Have you noticed that some countries may be well on track to meet one of the goals, but lagging behind on others? As you conduct your research for this project, you will find that you have something to learn from everyone and that no one country is leading the world in all 17 SDGs.

Broadly, the SDGs cover the following topics:

- Poverty
- Education
- Health
- Equality
- Sanitation
- Environment
- Energy & Sustainability
- Peace & Justice

Your goal for this action project is to compare your country to others and see what lessons can be learned from their achievements in one area identified by the SDGs.

Begin outlining your action project by familiarizing yourself with the “SDG Action Project Prep Worksheet.” You will use this as a guide to work through the steps necessary to complete your final project. After accessing the “SDG Map Action Project Prep Worksheet,” complete questions 1-2.
To effectively pursue research, you must first consider the questions worth pursuing. What do you want to know and why? What specific information will inform you, contradict or support your assumptions, and lead to an even deeper investigation?

Continue outlining your project by completing questions 3-5 on the "SDG Map Action Project Prep Worksheet." You will find some key words and indicators that will help you narrow your research and conduct an effective investigation.
Lesson 5  Step 4: Analyze

Analysis, synthesis, and reflection require different mental muscles than asking questions and gathering information. Now, you must try to surmise why the information you uncovered is important, explain the context for the numbers you found, and to what extent trends lead toward achieving or failing to achieve the SDGs.

Continue outlining your project by completing questions 6-7 on the "SDG Map Action Project Prep Worksheet."
Your research should be complete now. As you may recall from the “Example of Excellence,” you do not have to create a very complex map, but you do have to visually orient and display the key statistics.

Create a low- or high-tech map. Correctly identify your four countries, then create a caption that includes key statistics for each one.
What have you learned while working on this project? How have your assumptions become awareness?

Use your experience and process to answer question 8 on the "SDG Map Action Project Prep Worksheet."
If you have done a thorough job of completing your prep worksheet and drafting your map, you are well on your way to a completed action project. There's a huge difference between the parts and the sum of the parts, and now you are faced with the challenge of putting together your research, map, and explanation into one final document.

Use your “SDG Map Action Project Prep Worksheet” and map to produce a completed draft of your final project. Use the rubric to evaluate your draft, then share your draft and solicit feedback from a peer, friend, or family member so that you gain perspective on how to improve it.
After receiving feedback on your draft, make any necessary revisions. The purpose of a draft is to create a comprehensive, edited version of your work. However, the purpose of a final draft is to feel confident publishing your work. Thus, the level of quality is quite distinctive between a rough draft and a final draft.

Revise and submit your final draft. Make sure to use the rubric to confirm you have met all the requirements. You may also publish your final work by posting it to a blog or sharing it on social media.
Lesson 1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7
Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7
Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9
Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Lesson 2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7
Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7
Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

Lesson 3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Lesson 4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5
Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Lesson 5
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7
Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

D2.Geo.2.9-12.
Use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics.

D2.Giv.5.9-12.
Evaluate citizens’ and institutions’ effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.
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