Interconnectedness is the conceptual glue that binds together the ideas, fields, focuses, themes, and topics that fall within the orbit of global education. In economic, environmental, social, and political terms, global educators are concerned with the nature and effects of connections, propelled by movements of goods, people, and information that link all humanity together — albeit not always within relationships that are just and equitable. They are likewise at pains to show that any global issue is linked, to a greater or lesser degree, to all other global issues; that issues of development, environment, peace, and social justice are, in the final analysis, interwoven. Phases of time are also seen as interconnected: past, present, and future are not discrete periods but are deeply embedded, one within another. At a personal level, global education is concerned with the synergies that can arise from helping students mindfully connect their mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual potentials and their inner well-being to the well-being of the planet. A challenge for the global educator is how to help students think in a relational mode. The activities offered here suggest some practical ways forward.

Time: 20 minutes
Materials: (per student) 5 slips of paper, pencils

Procedure:
1. Distribute five slips of paper to each student. Ask students to write the following category names, one on each slip of paper: a natural object, a human-made object, an animal, an emotion, a hope for the future.
2. On the reverse side of each slip, have students write one word that represents the category written on the front. (An animal, for example, could be “deer”; an emotion could be “gratitude.”) Any word can be chosen for a category; the selections do not have to follow a theme or pattern.
3. Have students place the slips of paper on the table in front of them with the category names facing up.
4. Choose two students at random and ask them to turn over their “natural object” slips and state what they have written down. The two students then have ten seconds to think of at least one way in which the two natural objects are connected. Should they fail to do
so in the time allotted, other class members can con-
tribute.
5. The two students then choose two classmates, whose
challenge is to find connections between the two new
objects that they reveal by turning over their “natural
objects” slips.
6. Continue the activity, switching to another category at
any time. The students’ task is always to find connec-
tions between the two items written on the slips.
7. When the activity is progressing well, you can start to
mix the categories randomly: connections can be
sought between, for example, a human-made object
and an emotion. As well as choosing a classmate, a
student might also select a category. At this point,
creative thinking will be required in abundance and
any type of connection should be allowed: the goal is
to develop and enhance creativity rather than to dis-
cover the optimum connection.

Globetrotting

This lively activity assesses and reinforces students’
knowledge of North America’s global connections and
the geographical location of various countries. The
whole group’s success depends on the degree of
cooperation shown, not only in matching countries with
connections but also in helping each other to form
appropriate groups. The activity refines the skills of non-
verbal communication and develops a sense of group
cohesiveness.

Location: an open indoor space in which students can
move about freely

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: set of self-adhesive labels, index cards, atlases

Preparation: Write the names of the countries listed in
the Country Connections chart (see page 216) on adhe-
sive labels, one country per label. Write (or photocopy
and glue) the “connections” from the second column of
the chart on index cards.

Procedure:
1. Ask students to form a circle, close their
eyes, and remain silent.
2. Stick an adhesive “country” label on the
back of half of the students. Give the
other half of the students “connections”
cards. Ask students to open their eyes but
not to speak.
3. Instruct students with “connections” cards
to read their cards and, without speaking,
find the student who has the matching
country label on his/her back. Atlases can
be used at any time.
4. Have students use the country names to
form groups, still without speaking,

according to each of the following criteria:
• northern and southern hemispheres
• rich and poor countries (by GDP, per capita
income, or degree of industrialization)
• continents
• coastal, island, and land-locked countries
• population (e.g., less than 100 million, 100 to 999
million, over 1 billion)
• population density

5. Have students refer to the “connections” to form
groups according to connections that have a direct
impact on students’ lives, and those that do not.
6. Finally, ask the students who have country labels on
their backs to inform their partner which country
they think they represent.

Extensions:
• As a final challenge to their global sense of place,
ask each pair of students to organize themselves,
by country, into a human world map. You can take
the position that represents Canada and the
United States and invite student pairs to adopt rel-
ative positions around you.
• As a research task, student pairs can be given a
country name and asked to find out some relevant
connections to Canada or the United States, or
perhaps the country of origin of one of the stu-
dents. Once these connections are written on
blank labels or index cards, the activity can pro-
cceed, as described above.

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