



## Connecting Cultures

### OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Learn about the Peace Corps' mission and how their work impacts over 60 countries worldwide.
- Consider how the Peace Corps' mission helps connect cultures and communities, while promoting world peace and friendship.
- Consider how engaging in communities worldwide can be a transformative experience.
- Explore the value of being a global citizen and how viewing the world through this lens has a positive impact on all beings that dwell on planet Earth.
- Create a social media video highlighting the values and lessons learned.

### Duration

3–4 60-minute class sessions

### Lesson Overview

*How can we empower students to see themselves as part of a global society and understand the importance of connecting with other cultures?*

### National Standards

#### National Social Studies Standards

Theme 1—Culture: *Through the study of culture and cultural diversity, learners understand how human beings create, learn, share, and adapt to culture, and appreciate the role of culture in shaping their lives and society, as well as the lives and societies of others. In schools, this theme typically appears in units and courses dealing with geography, history, sociology, and anthropology, as well as multicultural topics across the curriculum.*

Theme 9—Global Connections: *The realities of global interdependence require an understanding of the increasingly important and diverse global connections among world societies. This theme prepares students to study issues arising from globalization. It typically appears in units or courses dealing with geography, culture, economics, history, political science, government, and technology.*

#### National Literacy Standards

- CCSS.ELA–LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA–LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

## Educator Prep

- Read through the lesson bundle ahead of time to familiarize yourself with the activities for each day.
- Visit [peacecorps.gov](https://peacecorps.gov) to familiarize yourself with the Peace Corps' history and mission.
- Prepare materials ahead of each lesson each day.
- Predict questions that might arise with your specific group of students.

## Background

For seven decades, the Peace Corps has promoted world peace and friendship across the globe through community-based development projects and intercultural understanding. Currently, the Peace Corps impacts communities in over 60 countries.

The mission of the Peace Core is to promote world peace and friendship through community-based development and intercultural understanding.

Volunteers promote peace and understanding through three main goals:

- **To help the countries interested in meeting their need for trained people.**  
Volunteers exchange skills and knowledge with community members to help create sustainable change through work in six sectors: Agriculture, Community Economic Development, Education, Environment, Health, and Youth in Development.
- **To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.**  
Through their service, Volunteers share America and its values and learn about local cultures, opportunities, resources, and people in their host countries.
- **To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.**  
Volunteers immerse themselves in local cultures and share their experiences when they return home with family, friends, and the public. This helps promote cultural understanding, volunteerism, and public service.

When teaching this lesson, it is important to help students reflect on the skills they already possess and how these can be applied to working with communities worldwide. It is also important to emphasize the positive impact that becoming a global citizen has on their careers and on promoting world peace and friendship. Students will explore these ideas through lessons divided into three major categories: understanding the mission and history of the Peace Corps, discovering the value of volunteerism, and promoting global citizenship.

The goal of this educator guide is to provide teachers with a set of materials and resources that will help them deliver lessons that will expose students to the Peace Corps' mission. By helping students reflect on their skills and fostering an appreciation of other cultures, educators help achieve the mission of friendship and peace.

## Materials

- Device with internet access
- PowerPoint Slide deck
- Pen/pencils
- Paper
- Chart paper
- KWL Chart for Class Introduction and Discussion
- Student Capture Sheets
- Large pieces of butcher paper (large enough to trace a student)
- Markers
- Video featuring Rob Watson
- Peace Corps video discussion guide
- Peace Corps Volunteer Profile Handout
- Skills Self-Reflection Handout
- Global Citizen Cause and Effect Chart
- Social Media Video Planner

## Vocabulary

**Volunteerism:** The practice of offering time and skills for the benefit of others without financial gain.

**Intercultural:** Relating to or involving different cultures or cultural exchange.

**Development:** The process of improving social, economic, and environmental conditions in communities.

**Empowerment:** Granting authority or power to individuals or communities, especially in improving their own circumstances.

**Global citizenship:** The idea of being a responsible member of the world community beyond national boundaries.

**Community engagement:** Involvement and participation of community members in decision-making and activities.

**Humanitarian:** Concerned with improving human welfare and alleviating suffering.

## Day One, Slides 1–10

### What is the Peace Corps?

1. Begin class with a KWL chart. Ask students what they know about Peace Corps and connecting with cultures worldwide. Invite students to think about what they know, what they want to know, and what they learned at the end of this multi-day lesson. Keep the KWL chart posted so it can be added to daily discussions of the Peace Corps.

2. Ask students why it is important to be a part of a global society. Have students turn to a shoulder partner and discuss the following questions:
  - a. What are the positive impacts, and how can connecting with other cultures impact perspectives?
  - b. How can these experiences make the world a better place for all of us?
3. View the video featuring Rob Watson, a returned Peace Corps Volunteer. Lead a class discussion about the Peace Corps' history and mission using the questions on the Peace Corps Video Discussion Guide.

Teacher's Note: Guide students around how Rob's perspective and life were shaped by his experiences within the Peace Corps. Have them consider why these experiences positively impacted communities abroad and in his own community.

4. Share the Peace Corps' mission with students and explain that they will discover more about this organization that impacts over 60 countries.
5. Divide students into groups of three. Each student in the group will be assigned one of the following research roles. See slide 6 for the task outline:
  - One student will use the [peacecorps.gov](http://peacecorps.gov) website to investigate the types of projects that Peace Corps Volunteers contribute to around the world. Students will also consider why partnership and friendship are vital to the success of these projects.
  - One student will create a list of cultural norms and values in their own community. They will record why understanding personal and community culture is important to understanding other cultures, cultural norms, and values around the world. They will answer the question: Why does understanding my culture help to understand someone else's culture?
  - One student will list ways in which multiple cultures have influenced their community and country. They will research important contributions made by individuals from all over the world..
6. Once students have completed the tasks for their roles, they will discuss what they have researched with one another. They will then determine how these tasks are related to the Peace Corps' mission.
7. Students will use what they learned to design a symbolic Peace Corps image, using blank drawing paper and markers or the student capture. The symbol must reflect the three goals of the Peace Corps.
8. Next have students use a large piece of chart paper to design a poster that helps educate others about these three goals. This poster should share Peace Corps' goals in a way that is creatively and clearly communicated. They must ensure that the symbol they created is incorporated into the poster design.
9. Place posters around the classroom, and lead students on a gallery walk. Afterward, students will discuss their designs.
10. Lead a class-wide discussion using the following prompts:
  - How and why was the Peace Corps formed?
  - What are the three main goals of the Peace Corps' mission?

- How are community projects prioritized?
  - What do you think Volunteers might share with their communities about being American?
  - Are there values or beliefs that you think most Americans have in common?
  - Why might it be important to share about differences between Americans too?
  - Why is learning from other cultures important for American Peace Corps Volunteers?
  - What can you do to promote friendship and peace around you?
  - How could volunteering for the Peace Corps help you in your future career?
  - What are some ways you can use the Peace Corps' goals and mission to impact your community?
11. Close the lesson for the day by having students revisit their KWL Chart and complete it.
- Share something they knew about the Peace Corps and its mission before coming into the classroom.
  - Share something that they learned today about the Peace Corps.
  - Share something they would like to further research about the Peace Corps.

## Day Two, Slides 11–15

### Volunteerism & Community Engagement

Share the Peace Corps video about volunteerism with students. Facilitate a discussion on volunteerism. Ask the students to share times when they volunteered their time, either at home, in school, or in their communities in general. Have students list some of the benefits of volunteering. How did they help their community? Why is collaboration important when volunteering? What personal skills did they share? What new skills did they gain through volunteering? How did they feel afterwards?

1. Break up students into groups of 3 or 4. Students will research various stories available on the [Peace Corps website](#) or the [Peace Corps Volunteer Profiles](#) to make these considerations. Within their groups, individuals will take turns discussing what skills and characteristics make a great Volunteer. They will also discuss how the Volunteers helped the community they served.
2. Using the Peace Corps Volunteer Profile Capture Sheet, each group will create a profile to share with others. Place a large sheet of butcher paper on the floor. One student will lay down on the paper to help create a template for the design of a Peace Corps Volunteer Profile.
3. Students will then divide the butcher paper into four sections (as outlined in the handout). Each section will have one of the following: what they think, what they feel, what they say, and what they do.
4. As a group, students will work on filling out these areas as explained in the handout.
5. Students will then use the Skills Self-Reflection Handout to list some of their strengths and reflect on how they match up to those on the profile they have just created. Have students discuss their results with others in the group.
6. When done, the class will join for a general discussion. Each group will take turns sharing their profile with others.

7. Lead a class-wide discussion using the following prompts:
  - How do Peace Corps Volunteers contribute to the communities they serve?
  - What skills do these Volunteers need to help them be successful?
  - What are some of the skills Volunteers can learn during their service?
  - What skills can you share with others?
  - How does cultural exchange help promote friendship and world peace?
  - How do these elements help Volunteers in their future careers?
  - How could Volunteers use what they learned while serving in their community?
8. End class by having students fill out an exit ticket with three skills that they can share with others, and three things they have learned over the year through interacting with other cultures.

## Day Three–Four, Slides 16–23

### Global Citizenship

1. Begin the lesson by leading a discussion to define what a global citizen is. Write down responses on a board and come up with a class definition.
2. Have students tell the class about some of the experiences they have shared with other cultures. Ask to see if anyone has visited another country, speaks a language other than English, or would like to share about the traditions that they and their family participate in.
3. Break up class into groups of three or four. Students will work on creating a “job listing” for someone who is a global citizen. This can be created by hand or using a computer.

TEACHER NOTE: Prepare some job listings ahead of time or have students research some listings online to get an idea of what is included in a job posting. Students may come across an organization specifically around being a global citizen and they should be encouraged to expand their search.

4. Students will post their listing around the classroom, and do a gallery walk looking at the listings other groups posted. Once students have looked at each other’s work, they will return to their groups and make a list of desired skills based on what they have discussed. They will then use the Global Citizen Cause and Effect Chart and list these skills on the left-hand side. On the right-hand side, they will list the positive effect (or outcome) of having such a skill. They should post these around the classroom as well and share them with others.
5. Students will now begin work on the cumulative project for this lesson bundle. They will take what they have learned about the Peace Corps’ mission, volunteerism, and global citizenship and create a social media video to promote the Peace Corps’ values to others. Students will choose the social media type they believe will have the most outreach and use the Social Media Video Planner to prepare their product.

Teacher Note: The main goal of this video would be to create an educational video about Peace Corps or a video that serves as a call to action around a service project that students are passionate about.

6. Allow students an appropriate amount of time to plan out, record, and edit their video. Once all groups are finished, host a viewing party. Have students provide constructive feedback to one another.

Teacher Note: Some students may need additional time to complete their videos. If time permits, allow an additional day for video creation and a class-wide discussion.

7. Facilitate a class-wide discussion with the following prompts:
  - What constitutes a global citizen?
  - How can we share our culture with others?
  - How can we learn from those around us?
  - What positive impact does a global citizen have in establishing a peaceful environment for everyone?
  - What important values and lessons did you learn in the past few days?
8. As an exit ticket, have students record three ways in which they hope to become better global citizens in the future. They can sign this piece of paper and keep it as a pledge to continue promoting friendship and peace around them.