GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Curious Teachers, Critical Classrooms

Edited by Brighid Golden

The DICE Project is a national education initiative, which promotes the integration of development education and intercultural education in Initial Teacher Education at primary level in Ireland. DICE works to support teachers, educators, and student teachers of the four partner institutions (Marino Institute of Education, Mary Immaculate College, Maynooth University, Dublin City University) to integrate global and intercultural perspectives and themes into their teaching practice. By targeting the skills, knowledge and values of people involved in education, DICE seeks to promote global solidarity, human rights and sustainable development, and to support people to recognise and challenge discrimination and inequality, locally and globally.

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The ideas, opinions and comments herein are entirely the responsibility of its author(s) and do not necessarily represent or reflect DFA policy.

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The book has been designed as an interactive pdf which includes clickable links to external websites or pages.

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Furthermore, this book has been designed as an accompaniment to additional support materials created by the DICE Project such as a video series on YouTube and planned future projects including a podcast series and teaching materials to accompany the new primary school curriculum, which will all be available on the DICE Project website at www.thediceproject.ie as they become available.

If you come across language that is unfamiliar to you, please check our glossary for a definition.

DICE Development & InterCultural Education
Irish Aid
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

Dear teacher...

I have been dreaming about this book for more than a decade. I am, and always have been, passionate about Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and visualised this book because I wanted to provide students and teachers with an accessible starting point for learning about this important field. Having been a teacher educator since 2014, and as a former student teacher and classroom teacher, I am keenly aware of the busy schedules of B Ed students and primary school teachers alike, and of the variety of time and workload pressures to be navigated. This book is an attempt to lessen those pressures by bringing together the knowledge, expertise, and wisdom of well-respected experts and to present in one place, in an accessible manner, what we believe to be the most important considerations when developing your understanding and awareness of GCE.

I believe that teaching is a form of activism, and that incorporating GCE into our education system as early as possible is one of the most impactful actions we can take to contribute to shaping a more just and sustainable world for everyone. As teachers we have the incredible privilege of working with young people, but this comes with the responsibility to support them to become the citizens who will change our world for the better. I want this book to be your springboard to support you in incorporating GCE into your own work. I hope that it will further inspire you to accept the responsibility inherent in being a teacher and use your privileged position in education to be an activist and contribute to changing the world.

This book has been a labour of love. I spent many years daydreaming and planning its structure and have carefully designed it to be an introduction to the broad field of GCE by giving a grounding both in background knowledge of a variety of global justice topics in Parts I and II, and in methodologies which can be employed to implement this work in the classroom in Part III. This book is about educators, about you – about your personal development (deepening your understanding and connecting to your own values and attitudes), and your professional development (providing a grounding in common GCE practices and practical examples of how to implement GCE in the classroom). However, the book is only a starting point. I hope you become curious about GCE, and watch the videos, click on the links, and follow your own particular interests as you develop and broaden your understanding of GCE beyond these pages.

Education has a far-reaching impact long into the future and I look forward to living in a world shaped by those who have engaged with GCE in primary schools. I believe our future is brighter because of teachers – like you – who will take up the torch for GCE, as curious teachers creating critical classrooms, passing on a passion for justice to the next generation.

Brighid Golden

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BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CBI	Children's Books Ireland
CDVEC	City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CoE	Council of Europe
CPD	Continued Professional Development
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DfE	Department for Education (UK)
DfID	Department for International Development
DHC	Department of Health and Children
DP	Direct Provision
EfS	Education for Sustainability
ENAR	European Network Against Racism
EU	European Union
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFI	Global Financial Integrity
GNP	Gross National Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HRE	Human Rights Education
ICE	Intercultural Education
IDEA	Irish Development Education Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INIS	Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Services
LoS	Language of Schooling
MASI	Movement of Asylum Seekers Ireland
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NYCI	National Youth Council of Ireland
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OSDE	Open Space for Dialogue and Enquiry
P4C	Philosophy for Children
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
RP	Restorative Practice
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Chapter 14: Sustainability

Laoise Ní Chleirigh and Brighid Golden

'Sustainable development' is the term most commonly used in policy and educational documents when outlining plans for sustainability. The concept of sustainable development was defined in 1987 by the Brundtland Commission (formerly the World Commission on Environment and Development) as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (UN, 1987). Sustainable development tries to make sense of the interactions of three complex systems, namely the *world economy, the global society, and the Earth's physical environment.*

Figure 12: The pillars of sustainability

Sachs (2015) outlines that sustainable development is the most significant and complex challenge that human kind has ever faced and stresses that it is fundamentally an exercise in problem solving. He calls for an holistic approach and new ideas to produce prosperous, inclusive, sustainable, and well-governed societies. Engaging with this approach requires the exploration of a wide variety of topics and concepts such as climate change, valuing and appreciating the earth and its resources, dealing with waste, meeting increasingly complex energy needs, the economy, decision-making, lifestyle choices, and society.

In their framework for sustainable development in Ireland, the Department of Environment Community and Local Government (2012) connects the aims of sustainable development promotion with that of wellbeing for all current and future citizens. Furthermore, they (ibid, p.10) state that to realise the goals of sustainable development necessitates "a sustainable and resource-efficient economy founded on a fair and just society, which respects the ecological limits and carrying capacity of the natural environment."

However, it is important to acknowledge the contradictions inherent within the phrase 'sustainable development'. Development is commonly interpreted to imply growth and expansion, both concepts run counter to the goals of sustainability which focuses on preserving and maintaining resources. Indeed, Schumacher (1975), one of the foremost advocates for sustainability, suggests that part of the challenge to achieving the goals of sustainable development is that societies are driven by a demand for economic growth, which often manifests as a commitment to consumerism. For him, sustainable development means accepting that we have 'enough'. From this perspective, sustainable development would mean little or no economic growth.

Seeking alternatives: Introducing a circular bioeconomy concept

Alternatives to consumerism must be sought, and one such alternative is the circular bioeconomy concept. This involves systemic change in the economy, environment, and society, reflecting the three pillars of sustainability – economic, social, and environmental. A bioeconomy lends itself to a more sustainable way of being in the world. Using bio-based products, which are products created using only renewable resources, and engaging in services adopting a circular economy framework specifically designed to utilise natural resources, leads us to a kinder, more sustainable way of living in harmony with our world. We are not negatively impacting on the natural world but stewarding the planet instead. Reinmuth et al. (2023) define the bioeconomy concept with regard to the specific themes of the European Commission BioBeo project as follows:

Bioeconomy is a systems-based approach that seeks to replace fossil resources in a sustainable manner with renewable biological resources from terrestrial and marine ecosystems – such as forests, crops, animals, fish, microorganisms, organic waste, and agricultural side streams – to produce food, animal feed, fibres, energy, bio-based products, and services within a circular economy framework designed to optimise resource use based on a cascading hierarchy of utilisation options. A sustainable and circular bioeconomy requires the application of education and training programmes, scientific research, technology, and innovation with the aim of not only creating economic value, but also regenerating and expanding ecosystems and biodiversity as well as improving the health and the well-being of society. By addressing these systemic changes in the economy, environment, and society, the bioeconomy contributes to achieving a better and more sustainable future where no one is left behind.

In modern society in the Global North, many of us have subscribed to a linear lifestyle meaning that we dispose of items (simply throw them away) when they have reached their end of life or when we are tired of them. However, there is no 'away' on this planet when engaging with a linear lifestyle: waste is accumulated and stays on the Earth indefinitely. The plastic bottle that is recycled may now be part of a new chair that was created in order to create more 'sustainable' furniture. Unfortunately, the plastic is still here, regardless of the fact that it has taken on a new physical form. Greenpeace (2023, p.3) states that "plastics are inherently incompatible with a circular economy" and explains there are three poisonous pathways involved in plastics recycling which render them highly dangerous for human and planetary health. Firstly, toxic chemicals in plastics, which are then recycled, transfer the toxic chemicals to the recycled item they become. Secondly, plastics can absorb contaminants through both direct contact and absorption of 'volatile compounds'. Thirdly, when plastics are heated in the recycling process, this can generate new toxic chemicals which leach into the newly recycled plastics (Greenpeace, 2023).

Therefore, it is not 'away', it is simply 'elsewhere', but it may not be safely 'elsewhere'. There are indigenous peoples who view the world through a lens of circularity. The circular approach offers an alternative to the linear focus on consumption and disposal that is commonplace in many modern societies. A circular approach means reusing and repurposing with little or no waste created. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2023) states that a circular economy is based on three principles which are to 'eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials (at their highest value)' and to 'regenerate nature'

Wahl (2017, p.193), an environmentalist, states that "among indigenous peoples there is a long tradition of solving human problems by learning from other species and from the wider natural processes in which we participate". We see the wider natural processes of circularity around us every day in the ebbs and flows of the natural world in the relationships of flowers, trees, shrubs, breastfeeding dyads, tides etc. All of these reciprocal behaviours are examples of the purest form of circularity where no waste is created. If we were to see a shift from

linear, disposable ways of living to reciprocal ways of living, we would be able to live within our resources on the only planet we have.

A common concept and symbol, important to many indigenous peoples, is the circle. It is a long-held tradition to use the circle in rituals of indigenous cultures when wisdom and knowledge are shared, when communication is happening in a balanced space, where all participants can see each other and connect with each other in more collective forms of power relations. **The circle also acts as a metaphor for a more sustainable approach to consumption than the linear process of continually purchasing, using, and discarding goods. The circle is a continuous cycle of use and reuse or repurpose; nothing leaves the circle as waste.**

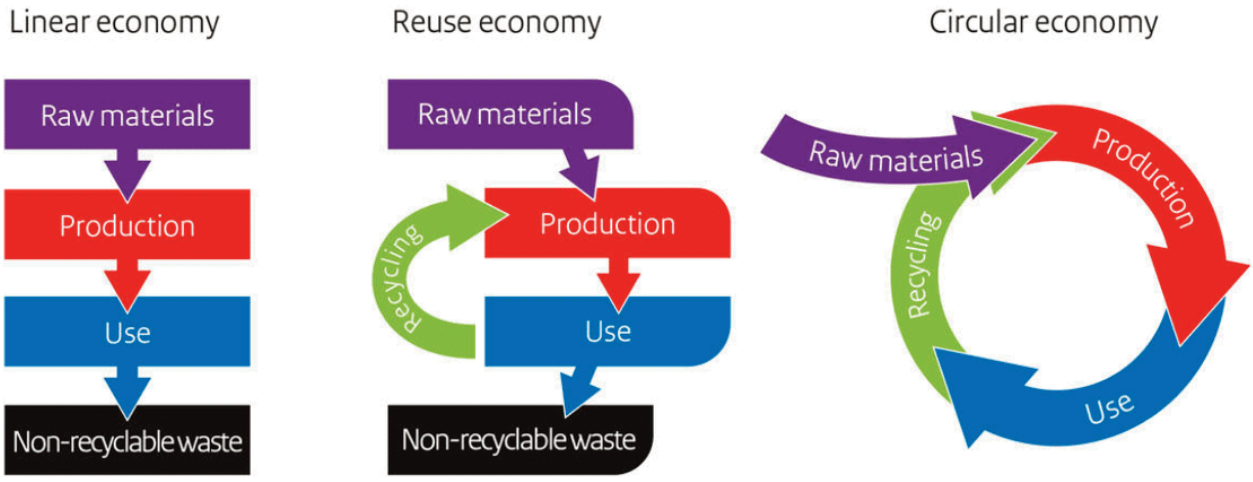

Figure 13: From a linear to a circular economy. Source: Government of the Netherlands (2023) National Circular Economy Programme

Indigenous knowledge emerges because of the understanding of skills and philosophies passed from one generation to the next. In modern society, the disposable mindset and linear approach to living has been passed on in more recent generations, and this will continue, that is, unless it is disrupted.

In the UNESCO publication *Learning and Knowing in Indigenous Societies Today*, Bates et al. (2009) illustrate some of the threats facing children of indigenous peoples of Africa. They (ibid, p.88) discuss how, due to a reduction in the home-based transmission of indigenous knowledge, "younger generations are rapidly losing their knowledge of the ecosystem, such as the names of plants and wild animals, and their characteristics or uses. At the same time, they are losing interest in their culture and traditions." There is an increased reduction in contact between children and nature. Children who were once constantly outdoors and connecting to the natural surroundings of their home environments are now spending less time in nature and the outdoors because of new social trends in the lifestyles of many societies. For

example, in certain African nations more children are attending formal schooling from around the age of six or seven, and therefore they are participating less often and in fewer outdoor activities such as "cattle herding, fruit gathering, game hunting, animal tracking, bird trapping, or food preservation" (Bates et al., 2009, p.88). Additionally, "many societies have developed negative attitudes towards traditional life as they consider it backward or not in line with the future expectations of children in the modern world" (Bates et al., 2009, p.88).

As a result of global capitalism, we are seeing the loss of minority languages and heritage, native foods giving way to globally produced food involving complex distribution chains; we see the diminution of customs and traditions, indigenous wisdom becoming diluted, and children losing the wisdom of their people and planet. However, capitalist societies could learn much from observing the interactions indigenous people have had with the land, their rituals, and from their reverence for Mother Earth. UNESCO (2017, p.45) states "there is great potential for indigenous and local knowledge to contribute further to global challenges of climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss in order to achieve goals such as sustainability and resilience".

Native American elder Martinez (2010, p.3), an advocate for the synergy of both conservative scientific knowledge and traditional indigenous wisdom, emphasises "traditional knowledge is a fragile living library of oral knowledge passed down from generation to generation. It has always been adaptable and resilient. Because of its adaptive nature it cannot be preserved in libraries. Its survival depends on the survival of indigenous culture".

The focus on economic development is constant in western capitalist society, and little value is placed on indigenous wisdom or reverence for Mother Earth; a reverence and respect many indigenous societies demonstrate. In contrast, many indigenous cultures have continued to withstand the test of time and to sustain their way of life despite the globalisation of the planet. There may be opportunity for education, science, technology and formal institutions to engage and collaborate with and to learn from indigenous peoples, and thus to help, protect and nurture the planet. UNESCO (2017, p.13) highlights that in formal educational settings "teachers replace parents and elders as the holders of knowledge and figures of authority". However, exploring indigenous wisdom and placing value on indigenous knowledge is not disregarding modern technology and we are not necessarily advocating for a full return to what may be perceived as primitive living.

UNESCO (2017, p.22) explains:

> ***"The adoption of modern technologies by indigenous peoples is often misinterpreted as the abandonment of their distinct values and ways of life. In reality, the capacity to incorporate new tools and skills has always been fundamental to the dynamism of indigenous cultures. Indeed, it is by blending new ways with old that many indigenous communities are able to uphold their unique lifestyles and worldviews."***

In reality, indigenous peoples are known for constantly re-evaluating and developing the skills and knowledge gained from the generations before them, in order to adapt to the world around them. This, therefore, is the time to begin to deepen our understanding of ecological relationships and the management of natural resources appropriately. Biomimicry is a concept which can support this too. Biomimicry is defined as "a practice that learns from and mimics the strategies found in nature to solve human design challenges and find hope" (Biomimicry Institute, 2023). Observation and biomimicry of the circularity of life in the natural world, and following nature's lead by exploring in nature, acknowledging that there is no 'away', is an appropriate starting point.

Sustainable lifestyles

From the purchase of clothes to cosmetics to the food on our plates, every decision we make has a connection to and impact on planetary sustainability. Adopting a circular approach can offer an alternative to the common linear mindset and positively impact on the sustainability of our everyday lifestyle choices. A core mindset shift necessary for the circular approach to lifestyle choices is to consider the full life cycle of items at the time of purchase and/ or consumption. This can include a variety of factors such as production of an item, packaging, materials of the product itself, its usefulness to us, or the carbon impact of the product. Crucially, a circular approach necessitates considering not just how a product has been made but also the potential end-of-life of the product, and allowing this consideration to influence purchasing decisions. Many products in our consumerist societies are not built to last but to be thrown away and replaced with a newer version, an 'upgrade', within a short period of time. Some companies are known to manufacture goods with the concept of planned obsolescence embedded in their products, in order to ensure continued economic growth as purchasers must return repeatedly.

Recognising that there is no 'away' when it comes to disposing of items is important to the circular mindset. Understanding that when items are discarded this is not the end of their life cycle, but that they go from your home, usually, to landfill sites where they continue to add to carbon emissions and contribute to harming the atmosphere. There are of course alternatives to buying products with unsustainable life cycles such as choosing to buy second- hand clothes, opting for natural or recycled fabrics, choosing biodegradable personal and household cleaning products, eating seasonal local produce, composting food waste, and seeking out plastic-free options or even biobased options where available. However, when exploring options as a consumer, it is crucial to be alert to possible **greenwashing**, which is a misleading advertising method used by companies marketing themselves as sustainable without engaging in the practices to match their promises. A common example of greenwashing is 'reuseable' or 'recyclable' plastic bottles, or packaging which distracts consumers from the fact that it is still plastic, and often not even recycled. Companies engage in greenwashing because it is good for business, people are more likely to purchase items

believed to be sustainable, and companies can get away with charging more for them. Greenwashing can be spotted by the 'fluffy' language designed to misdirect consumers and the lack of transparent information available about manufacturing practices.

However, it must be acknowledged that truly sustainable options are often not accessible or affordable. Sustainable products often have a higher price point which can make them an inaccessible luxury for many individuals and families. Indeed, a study by Dutch consulting firm Kearney (2020), found that sustainable products which are more environmentally friendly and ensure fair wages for all involved are 75 – 85 per cent more expensive than conventional products. Consequently, there is a 'green gap' which exists between people's stated sustainable and ethical values and their buying choices, highlighting that many people are unwilling, or usually unable, to pay the premium price tag attached to sustainable products, despite a desire to do so. However, it does not have to be this way, with greater demand for sustainable products companies will be able to increase manufacturing and lower prices. Additionally, Kearney (2020) have shown that companies often add additional and unnecessary mark-ups to their sustainable products which could be avoided to lower costs for consumers.

Regardless of the, often legitimate, reasons for sustainable products coming with a higher price tag, having access to decision-making is a privilege that comes with wealth, disposable income and age. Consequently, it should not be the responsibility of individuals alone to reassess their own lifestyle choices, but rather a structural and political consideration when reviewing and developing policies and practices. Governments and international bodies, such as the EU, have responsibility for policies which govern and dictate what they deem to be acceptable manufacturing practices, and have the power to enforce more sustainable practices along the production chain.