





## ***About If the World Were a Village***

There are currently more than *six billion* people on the planet! This enormous number can be difficult to grasp, especially for a child. But what if we imagine the whole world as a village of just 100 people?

*If the World Were a Village* offers a unique and objective resource that will help children, parents and educators gain a better understanding of the world's peoples and their ways of life. By exploring the lives of 100 villagers, children will discover that life in other nations is often very different from their own. The statistics and David Smith's tips on building "world-mindedness" will encourage readers to embrace the bigger picture and help them to establish their own place in the global village.

## **About the Author**

David Smith, a teacher and educational consultant with over 25 years of experience in the classroom, is the creator of the award-winning curriculum "Mapping the World by Heart." He lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

## **About the Illustrator**

Shelagh Armstrong is a freelance commercial artist who has designed stamps, adult book covers and spot illustrations. *If the World Were a Village* is her first children's book. She lives in Toronto, Ontario.



## Discussion Topics and Activities

The following discussion topics and activities are suitable for classes in language and literature, social studies, science and technology and history from grades 4–6. Please note that some of the activities in the learning resource require students to visit their local library or use the Internet for research.

### 1. So Where Are We?

With your class, find the latitude and longitude of your school and then find the exact opposite location using an atlas, globe or world map. As part of a class discussion, ask students to answer the following questions: Where is the opposite location? Is it in a body of water? Are there any islands close by? What is the closest city or town? What are the similarities and differences between both locations?

As part of an individual in-class assignment, ask students to write a one-page essay comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences between each location. Have students present their essays to the class once they are done.

### 2. Consumer Alert

Ask students to bring in a variety of everyday items such as clothing, canned goods, games and other consumer goods that they have lying around the house (no more than three items per student). Have students use the labels of each of the items to identify their origins on an atlas, globe or world map. Once students have determined the origin of each item, ask them to share their observations with the class.

### 3. Earth Log

Divide your class into two groups. Ask one group to keep a daily Earth log of their community, town or city for a week, and have the other group keep the same log of a community, town or city located on the other side of the country. As part of the activity, ask students to document the following: wind direction and speed, temperature, precipitation, time of sunrise, time of sunset and length of each day.

Explain to students that they can use the Internet to access time zones and weather reports for different areas of the world.

After one week, ask both groups to present their log entries to the class. As part of their presentations, ask students to share five or six extraordinary details that they recorded in their Earth logs and explain what they found interesting about each detail. As a follow-up discussion, ask students to discuss the similarities and differences between both Earth logs.

### 4. Incredible Journeys

For this activity, you will need four pieces of bristol board or a pad of chart paper, different colored markers and an atlas, globe or world map for students to reference. Begin this activity by creating a world map with your class. Ask two or three students to draw an outline of the seven continents (South America, North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and Antarctica), using a different colored marker for each, and label the surrounding bodies of water. Next, ask students to use different colored markers to label countries, cities or towns that they have either visited or would like to visit. (Have students refer to a map, atlas or globe for accurate placement.)

After each student has taken a turn adding a location to the map, divide the class into groups of three or four. Ask each group to choose one of the marked destinations and research various facts about it (e.g. culture, food, religion, language).

Ask students to present their research in the format of a story (e.g. a story about a mock vacation). Each story should include details about the following: sights, food, language, culture, monuments, architecture, geography, population and types of people. Students should also include pictures or illustrations of the various topics that they have researched.



## 5. Dear Diary

As part of an individual assignment, ask students to write a diary entry documenting their activities for one day. Explain to students that they should record the following details: what they eat, how they get to school, what they study in class, after-school activities, what types of TV programs they watch, observations about their community and other details that they observe during the day. Then ask students to research what a day in the life of a young person living in a foreign country would be like. Have students write a one-page essay comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences between their diary entries and research. Ask students to hand in their work once they are done.

## 6. Natural Decisions

With your class, discuss how the local environment affects the way people live within their communities (ask students to consider the following: choice of building materials, housing and location). Explain to students that they should take their own communities into consideration and pay close attention to their surroundings and how things are built. Ask students to also consider how natural features affect the lifestyle of a region's population, paying close attention to mountain ranges (life in the Himalayas vs. the lowlands of Nepal), deserts (life in the Sahara vs. sub-Saharan Africa) and islands (life on an island vs. life on the nearby mainland).

Divide students into groups of five or six, and ask each group to design a small village for 100 people that takes into account all the aspects explored during the class discussion. Students should consider the following while they are developing

their village: location, housing, amenities and landscape, just to name a few. Explain to students that they can use any artistic style (i.e. collage art, three-dimensional art, illustrations, paintings) to create their village. Once the groups have completed their villages, ask them to share their design layouts with the class and include explanations for each decision they have made.

## 7. The World In My Community

Plan an afternoon excursion with your class to visit and observe the local neighborhood surrounding your school. Before beginning the class trip, ask students to choose a partner. Have each pair bring along a pad of paper and pencil to record their observations throughout the day. Explain to students that they will be responsible for observing aspects of their local community that have been influenced by other countries and cultures. Ask students to pay close attention to neighboring shops, places of worship, food, restaurants, clothing, language and people. After the trip, ask each pair to present their observations to the class.

## 8. Details, Details

Divide students into groups of four and assign three different countries to each group. Have students research details about each country, such as food, language, currency, famous landmarks, historical dates, population and other important details. Students should visit their local library or use the Internet to conduct their research. Based on this research, ask each group to create travel guides made up of pictures, maps and facts that highlight fifteen important facts about each country. Explain to students that they can use any artistic style to create their travel guides. Have students present their work to the class once they are done.

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