



# Introduction

## Acknowledgements

See Me, Share My World is a tribute to the universal language of art - its disregard for national boundaries and its ability to bond people through their common human experience. The artwork is the ambassador of the Developing World children and their communities, the catalyst for learning about the Developing World in American classrooms, and the inspiration for all of us who worked on the project.

See Me, Share My World would not be possible without the contributions of many people. Our special thanks to: our funders -the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities, and others for their foresight and generosity; numerous businesses for donated services; teachers throughout Rhode Island who adopted the project as their own, developed ideas for activities and piloted the teaching unit; school administrators who made it possible to bring a new project into the schools; the young students in Rhode Island who shared with us what they learned through creative examples of their own response artwork and writing; experts from all disciplines who contributed their time and insight; Carolyn Watson for her photographs; responded to our initial request for children's art; and to the children overseas who have touched our hearts through their art.

**"Before you finish eating this morning, you've depended on more than half the world. This is the way our universe is structured. We aren't going to have peace on earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality." -Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

### Teaching Unit components:

- 28-page Teaching Guide with instructional activities and background information
- 16 Study Prints: eight 11"x14" color prints of children's artwork and eight 11 "x14" black-and-white photographs, depicting scenes of daily life
- 48 reproducible Activity Sheets, including graphics and reference charts
- 30-minute Training Video

### Background

PLAN International USA is part of a worldwide humanitarian organization linking caring sponsors with needy children and their families overseas. Founded in 1957, today PLAN International is helping over 500,000 children and their families in developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. PLAN is non-profit, non-sectarian and non-political.

PLAN combines grassroots development with personal communications to improve the lives of needy children and their families overseas. Our work focuses on improving health, education and livelihood, and on strengthening the communities in which children live.

Personal communications between sponsors and the children they help overseas are very important to PLAN. We believe that communication between individuals promotes international understanding and peace. It is in this spirit that PLAN International USA applied for outside funds to expand this personal communication beyond our sponsors through the universal language of children's art.

We asked children, ranging in age from 8 to 14, in six communities in which we work to share aspects of their lives with us. We received 568 pieces of artwork from Colombia, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Sierra Leone and Thailand. Their drawings - about such things as the food they eat and the games they play - add a unique dimension to our understanding of their lives.

An Art Selection Committee, including art experts, teachers and a Third World artist chose 88 pieces to form three traveling exhibits, combining children's art, documentary photographs and graphic materials. A Teachers' Advisory Group representing 20 Rhode Island schools guided the development of a teaching unit to accompany the exhibit. See Me, Share My World materials were then pilot-tested in 21 diverse schools, involving over 100 educators and more than 2,000 elementary school students. The project generated such tremendous enthusiasm that PLAN International USA decided to adapt the exhibit artwork and teaching unit for national dissemination.

We chose eight art pieces and eight photographs that have been most effective in the classroom and used feedback from the pilot project to expand the student activities. This is the packet that you have received.

## **Introduction**

See Me, Share My World: Understanding the Third World through Children's Art is a multidisciplinary teaching unit designed for use in the upper elementary grades. The unit centers around a vibrant collection of children's artwork combined with documentary photographs to create a composite portrait of daily life in economically disadvantaged areas of Colombia, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Sierra Leone and Thailand. The visual images serve as a catalyst for questions and discussion and also promote observation skills and critical thinking. Reproducible activity sheets reinforce key concepts and offer opportunities for additional enrichment.

## **Goals**

The teaching unit is designed to be flexible and can be adapted to different curricular requirements, while reinforcing grade level skills in geography, social studies, language arts and art. Upon completion of the unit, students will be able to:

- Recognize essential kinship with their peers in developing countries through shared needs and interests
- Identify similarities and differences between their lives and the daily lives of children in developing countries
- Give examples of interdependent relations with people in developing countries
- Appreciate how art expresses a unique personal sense of cultural values and social conditions

## **Organization and key concepts**

Under the umbrella topic "daily life of a child" the unit addresses six universal themes: global kinship, food, education, health, work and fun (games/festivals). Motivating questions -**Where do you live? What do you eat? Who teaches you? What keeps you healthy? Why do you work? How do you have fun?** - introduce each thematic section and provide a focus for viewing and discussing the artwork and photographs in a comparative framework.

Ten class periods provide adequate time to introduce the unit and spend one or two periods on each of the sections. Many teachers have extended the unit throughout the entire year and integrated activities in all areas of the curriculum.

There are three main concepts that link all of the sections:

1. **ART AS PERSONAL EXPRESSION.** Children overseas have responded to the motivating questions through drawing. Their artwork is a personal interpretation of their environment, reflecting the cultural values and social conditions in which they live. The children's images are authentic. They convey the personal reality. Photographs present another perspective.

2. **SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES.** In the art and photographs there is much that is familiar and much that is different. Encourage students to look for similarities to build a sense of kinship with peers overseas. The differences are also important. There is a rich diversity in approach to life both here and in Third World countries. Every culture must be understood within its own context and rationale.

3. **CONNECTIONS.** Our lives are increasingly linked to people in developing countries through trade, travel, television and political events. The problems of one country become the problems of all. We share a common humanity and a common fate.

### **Developing observation and critical thinking skills**

The starting point for the teaching unit is the children's artwork and the photographs of where they live. In the initial viewing, stimulate your students' responses through open-ended questions.

**What do you see?** Encourage students to notice different details - the natural environment, the people, the action, the colors and shapes. Some things will be familiar, other details will be new and perhaps puzzling. There is no "correct" answer. It is not always clear what is going on even in the photographs. Elicit a variety of interpretations. The exchange of views makes the discussion more interesting and sparks divergent thinking. Students can learn that not everyone sees something the same way and that they can learn from each other.

**How does the picture make you feel?** Students will connect with different aspects of a drawing or photograph depending on their background and experiences. Help them to express their feelings.

**What is the artist or photographer communicating?** Art is a uniquely personal experience both for the artist and the viewer. The message of a piece unfolds through the bond that the viewer creates with the artist.

**What questions would you like to ask the artist or photographer?** Allow the curiosity of your students to give focus to discussion of the issues raised by the drawings and photographs. The personal connections and visual images will stimulate questions, some of which will be answered by the notes provided on the back of the study prints or by the Teacher Background Information in the Teaching Guide. There may be no easy answers to some of your students' questions. Encourage them to hypothesize answers, but also research alternatives.

### **Multidisciplinary approach**

The teaching unit provides an excellent opportunity to integrate geography, social studies, language arts, art, music, science, health and physical education. Even math concepts, such as proportion and percentages, can be incorporated in the analysis of population distribution or economic differences between developed and developing nations.

The starting point is the art itself and the reactions to the drawings. A social studies lesson can follow up with location of countries, discussion of differences in environment and climate, of universal human needs or specific issues related to developing countries. Science and health education concepts can be introduced as part of food production and nutrition. You can use the motivating questions, **What do you eat?**, or **Who teaches you?** as topics for artwork in a variety of media. Students then compare their work to those of their peers in developing countries.

The Activity Sheets and multidisciplinary activities outlined in this Teaching Guide can serve as a springboard for developing and implementing your own ideas. The possibilities for creativity and collaboration among colleagues are limitless.

## Culminating activities

The final theme, **How do you have fun?**, is an ideal way to bring closure to the unit by producing a final product (mural, class book) or performance (play, festival) or following up with a class project (food drive, pen pals, linking with another school). The Resources section of this Guide suggests additional ideas for a variety of activities and follow-up projects. Culminating activities and projects provide an opportunity to share the program with the rest of the school and the wider community.

## Evaluation

Built into the program are many opportunities for students to monitor their own learning. The Web Chart on page 5 is an example of one technique teachers can use on an ongoing basis. The final Activity Sheet "What did you learn?" (How do you have fun? Activity #8) provides feedback at the end of the unit. Student portfolios of artwork and writing can also be used to measure learning outcomes. Teachers have the option of developing their own appropriate means to assess student progress.

## BASIC INDICATORS

	Annual GNP per capita (US\$)	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Under 5 mortality rate (per 1000 births)	% of adults literate (male/female)	% of population urbanized	% of population with improved drinking water sources (urban/rural),	Total Population (thousands)
Colombia	1,910	71	23	92/92	76	99/70	42,803
Honduras	900	66	36	78/85	54	95/81	6,575
India	460	64	93	69/42	28	95/79	1,025,096
Indonesia	680	67	45	92/82	42	90/69	214,840
Sierra Leone	140	40	316	51/23	38	75/46	4,587
Thailand	1,970	70	28	97/94	20	95/81	63,584
USA	34,870	77	8	*	77	100/100	285,926

\* data not available

Adapted from the State of the World's Children, UNICEF, 2003

<http://www.unicef.org/sowc/archive/ENGLISH/The%20State%20of%20the%20World%27s%20Children%202003.pdf>

*Keep these basic statistics in mind as you go through the unit.*

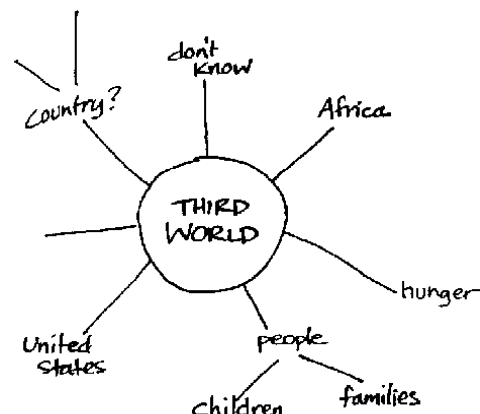
## What do your students already know about the Third World?

Prepare a web chart with the word "Third World" in the center. Ask students to think aloud of anything they know, think, or wonder about when they hear the term "Third World." Encourage all ideas and record them on the chart.

If there are only a few ideas and some facts are false, resist the temptation to provide additional information or make corrections. This is just a starting point. Have students keep a journal of new and old ideas and a list of questions they would like answered. After each thematic section and at the end of the unit, they can come back to the chart to add and change items. Through the chart, students will monitor their own learning and be able to see how their views about the Third World change.

"Sometimes the children themselves developed the lesson and took it away. They saw the art. It drew stories out of them. They had something inside and wanted to be heard. I just went with it." -4th grade teacher. Providence, RI

## How to use this guide



In preparing to teach See Me, Share My World, carefully review the format and organization of the Teaching Guide, the Study Prints and the Activity Sheets.

The Guide is designed to help you develop lessons, select activities and tailor them to the interests and abilities of your students. The Guide is divided into six thematic sections, each titled by a motivating question, such as **Where do you live?** Every thematic section includes the following headings:

**Title question** followed by a brief overview. The artwork from children overseas addresses the title questions. They can also be posed to your students. They help focus students in viewing the study prints and doing the activities.

**Objectives** stating what students are to learn. Each section should also reinforce the key concepts of art as personal expression, similarities and differences, and connections.

**Materials** identifies specific study prints, charts, and activity sheets that correspond to the learning objectives. Each print provides background information and a map on the back. In addition, it is helpful to refer to a globe and wall maps showing different projections.

**Getting started** is just that. It includes suggestions to prompt close observation of the study prints and open-ended questions to generate discussion.

**Teacher background information** is intended as reference material to incorporate in discussion and use with students when appropriate and where applicable.

**Activity Sheets** provides a review of each worksheet. Activity #1 introduces the motivating question. Students are asked to respond in writing and drawing. They can compare their responses with peers overseas. Activity #2 includes black-and-white reproductions of the art prints with guided questions. Activity Sheets also include charts, reference tables, and photographs. Although the sheets are numbered, they can be used selectively and in any order. For younger students, some activities may need to be simplified; for older students, activities can be amplified. A quick reference guide is provided on the inside cover of the student activities to aid in selection,

**Developing critical thinking** questions probe beyond factual information. They help students to explore different point of view and think creatively in areas where there are no simple answers.

**Multidisciplinary approaches** promote integration across the curriculum and collaboration between different teachers and subject specialists.

Above all, feel free to modify the teaching techniques and materials to suit your needs and the interests and capabilities of your students. As one teacher advised her colleagues at a See Me, Share My World in-service session, "Do not only dwell on facts. This whole project is about feelings from original art and should be fun."