Educating for Global Competence:
Learning Redefined for an Interconnected World

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The world in which today's students will live and work is fundamentally different from the one in which their parents and teachers grew up. Rapid economic, technological and social changes are creating a world that is ever more interconnected and interdependent. Globalization of economies, the digital revolution, mass migration, and the prospect of climate instability are triggering new concerns and demanding a new kind of graduate. At the dawn of the 21st century we are recasting our understanding of economics, communication, security, cultural identity, citizenship, and the environment. There is an increasing call for a more powerful and relevant learning in response to these new demands and opportunities (Gardner, 2007, Reimers, 2009, Stewart, 2007).

To succeed in this new global age, our students will need capacities that include but go beyond reading, mathematics and science – they will need to be far more knowledgeable and curious about world regions and global issues, attuned to diverse perspectives, able to communicate across cultures and in other languages, and disposed to acting toward the common good. Put simply, preparing our students to participate fully in today's and tomorrow's world demands that we nurture their global competence which herein is defined as the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.

Specifically, globally competent students are able to perform the following four competences:

Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted and age-appropriate research.
Recognize perspectives, others' and their own, articulating and explaining such perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully.
Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers.
Take action to improve conditions, viewing themselves as players in the world and participating reflectively.

I. A RATIONALE FOR GLOBAL COMPETENCE

Why is global competence essential for today's youth? A broad range of forces are transforming the global landscape requiring these new capacities and dispositions. Here we examine three of the most salient: the flattened global economy and changing demands of work; migration and immigration creating more culturally and linguistically diverse societies, and climate instability and the growing need for global environmental stewardship. These three areas of transformation illustrate a world in transition—and illuminate the new educational demands that world presents.

The rationale for global competence also rests on the value of studying the world and how it works as a potent means of engaging students deeply in learning. World cultures, transnational systems, and global issues can provide the relevance to today's world that

grabs and holds students' interest. Developing global competence can thus be both a critical outcome of learning and a pathway for achieving foundational disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills much of which have been articulated in the Common Core State Standards.

The flattened global economy and changing demands of work

Finally consider the changing face of the business world. A company in one country employs workers in another one. Consumers in a third country buy the goods produced. Transactions are aided by high-speed internet communication, the lowering of import tariffs, and government incentives for foreign investment. The result of these ordinary interconnections is a process of globalization—one of unprecedented reach and breathtaking speed and consequence. Globalization, the accelerating traffic of goods, ideas, people, and capital around the world, has changed the face of labor (Coatsworth, 2004). Much has been written about the importance of preparing a competitive workforce, able to revitalize economic growth. Understanding the changing nature of labor matters to educators seeking to ensure economic opportunity for our youth. Perhaps most importantly, understanding changing economies in a multipolar world matters to youth themselves if they are to participate thoughtfully in tomorrow's economies.

In a survey of large U.S. corporations, the Committee for Economic Development, a non-profit organization of more than 200 business leaders and university presidents, found that nearly 30 percent of companies believed they had failed to fully exploit their business opportunities due to insufficient personnel with international skills. Eighty percent expected their overall business to increase notably if they had more internationally competent employees on staff. CED concluded, "to compete successfully in the global marketplace, both U.S.-based multinational corporations as well as small businesses, increasingly need employees with knowledge of foreign languages and cultures to market products to customers around the globe and to work effectively with foreign employees and partners in other countries." Therefore, "the educated American of the twenty-first century will need to be conversant with at least one language in addition to his or her native language, and knowledgeable about other countries, other cultures, and the international dimensions of issues critical to the lives of all Americans." (Committee for Economic Development, 2006).

Increasingly, employers are looking for competent, reliable individuals who will work at an attractive cost—regardless of location. A new distribution of labor is in the making. Jobs that involve routinized tasks or scripted responses are being done by computers or workers in the developing world—with little training and at a very low cost. Yet jobs that demand expert thinking and complex communication will remain in growing demand the world over. At the beginning of the 20th century only five percent of the jobs in America required specialized knowledge and skill. By the year 2009 at least 70 percent did so. Our age demands workers able to synthesize different types of information creatively (Gardner, 2009). In fact, the top ten in-demand jobs projected for 2010 did not exist six years ago.

What competences will students need to fare well in a flattened global economy? Multiple skill sets have been put forth as essential to prepare our future workforce (Levy & Murnane, 2004, P21 Framework Definitions, 2009). They range from learning, thinking, and innovation skills, such as thinking creatively and using systems thinking, to skills associated with life and careers,

such as designing, evaluating, and managing one's own work for ongoing improvement and adapting to change. Collectively they offer a dynamic portrait of learning. Surprisingly absent in public discourse about work readiness is the lack of deep understanding by students of issues of global significance—how global markets operate, the promise and perils of transnational production, how social entrepreneurs contribute to human development while also meeting their bottom line, demands of economic and cultural development and the dilemmas of inequality—to name a few.

Globally competent students prepare for a global economy by learning how to investigate matters of global significance. Are social networking technologies developing in the same ways in countries like the U.S. and China? What are the economic, social, and environmental consequences of outsourcing to India and Mexico? What tools do governments have to promote economic development and eradicate extreme poverty? Engaging complex and pertinent questions of this kind can encourage students to recognize their own and others' perspectives and communicate their positions clearly—two additional capacities that are especially important to today's global work teams. Most importantly, preparing to work in a flattened global economy will require that students learn to take action. It requires that they learn to identify opportunities for productive action and develop and carry out informed plans. For example, students may learn to design and promote products to succeed in a digital world or develop an awareness campaign on the environmental consequences of their city's purchasing habits. Prepared students, this framework suggests, view themselves as informed, thoughtful, and effective workers in changing times.

Unprecedented global migration

International migration is happening on a larger scale than ever, changing the demographics of classrooms and neighborhoods alike. According to data from the United Nations Population Division, in the summer of 2010 the total number of people living in countries other than those in which they were born was estimated at about 214 million. Fifty million migrants were estimated to be living in the United States. If all migrants were considered one country, it would be the fourth largest in the world in population, after China (1.4 billion), India (1.2 billion), and the U.S. (317 million). (International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision, 2008).

Migrants from the developing world bring with them and take home ideas, know-how, practices, and skills that influence their encounters with and integration into the societies that host them. Migrants also send back home such social remittances—ie., values, practices, ideas that they acquire in their host country—which both promote and impede development in their countries of origin (Levitt & Lamba, 2009). As a result, world migration is felt in the classrooms, neighborhoods, markets, and streets of both sending and receiving societies in cities from Bangalore and Buenos Aires to Boston and Brussels. Much like global markets of labor and goods, migration today demands new educational responses. How can we best prepare youth for a world in which diversity will be the norm? How can we nurture graduates who are able to manage cultural complexity and increasingly blurred markers of origin and ethnicity? How can we prepare citizens who understand multiple spheres of participation—local, national, and global?

Whether through the media or in person, contact with individuals whose identity, culture, values, languages, and lifestyles are different will force our youth to compare others to themselves. How youngsters make sense of this will depend on the degree to which they have been prepared to live in diverse societies. Students who have learned intercultural skills, understand multiple contexts and traditions, and have had multiple opportunities to reflect on their own worldviews in light of others' are less likely to experience difference as a threat requiring violent defense. Rather they are more likely to experience the cultural encounter as an opportunity for exchange and collaboration (Suárez-Orozco, 2008, Süssmuth, 2008).

A growing percentage of new immigrant learners are part of a generation of transnational migrants. Unlike migrants in previous generations—and thanks to the digital revolution—these individuals are likely to remain in close contact with their countries of origin. They participate in religious, economic, cultural, and often political activity in two places. For them, healthy adaptation involves the development of a hybrid identity and dual citizenship that resists having to choose one nation over another one (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez Orozco, & Todorova 2008).

Schools the world over bear a new fundamental responsibility: to prepare students for difference and complexity (Suárez-Orozco, 2005, Suárez-Orozco & Sattin, 2007, Suárez-Orozco, 2001, Suárez-Orozco, 2005). They will need to prepare all youth—migrant and hosting alike—for new contexts in which multiple cultures coexist. Managing this complexity—fostering kinship, communicating effectively, working together, valuing difference, benefitting from diversity—is essential to success in a global world.

What competences will students need to fare well in a world of unprecedented migration? Preparing our youth to participate successfully in a world of increasing social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity will require teaching them about the qualities—the history, languages, geography, and cultural contributions—of peoples the world over. It requires inviting them to revisit their own nation's qualities and contributions in a way that captures its multiple relations with other societies. Students should not be led to assess "how we measure up," but rather to engage in a comparative analysis that deepens understanding of a nation's historical and contemporary characteristics. Providing students multiple opportunities to examine what happens when cultures meet—whether in their neighborhood, classroom, or virtually—is of the essence. The task of nurturing intercultural sophistication is not the responsibility of social studies teachers alone: it behooves art, mathematics, science, language, and second language teachers to renew their curricula as well.

The framework for global competence articulates two core capacities at the heart of intercultural sophistication: the capacity to recognize perspectives (others' and one's own) and the capacity to communicate ideas effectively across diverse audiences. It stipulates, for example, that globally competent individuals can examine and explain their own worldviews and cultural traditions, recognizing how these influence their choices and interactions in everyday life. Competent individuals can also weigh other's perspectives, considering the factors – including culture, geography, religion, and others –that inform them.

To be prepared for a world of growing cultural interaction and diversity, students will also need to understand what happens when cultures meet and influence one another. They will need to

understand how differences in power, wealth, and access to knowledge affect opportunities for individuals and social groups. Thriving in a world of diversity involves communicating with diverse audiences—being able to recognize how different audiences may interpret information informed by their own perspectives. It demands that students listen and communicate carefully and respectfully, using appropriate languages and technologies to do so. If recognizing perspectives and communicating with diverse audiences are at the heart of students' preparation for an interactive world, the two other competences put forth—investigating the world and taking action—are of no lesser value.

Students who are able to pose their own questions and investigate cultural interactions are more likely to be reflective about the complexities they present. And students who are able to envision and carry out a plan of action—perhaps to aid cultural dialogue through community service or raise awareness about different perspectives through an art exhibit or blog—come to view themselves as active contributors in an increasingly diverse world.

Climate instability and environmental stewardship

Over the last few decades the earth has experienced a growing frequency of extreme weather conditions and overall rising temperatures. Scientists around the world predict the prospect of further climate change is high. If greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere continues to rise, the consequences will be alarming and adaptation difficult. Global warming is too narrow a term to describe a phenomenon that is shaping life on the planet—affecting the earth's climate, chemistry, and biology at once (Sachs, 2008). Consider a few of the consequences: ocean levels are likely to rise due to thermal expansion and the melting of polar ice sheets, affecting coastal areas and their water supply. Climate and chemistry changes are likely to impact land and sea habitats, causing large-scale extinction. Infectious diseases like malaria have already spread as rising temperatures make new regions accessible to the mosquitoes that transmit it. Rising temperatures and shifting patterns of precipitation are also affecting agricultural productivity (Sachs, 2008). An important job for the next generations will be that of managing the consequences of climate change and devising effective solutions for mitigation and adaptation. The challenge will be significant.

Adaptation to climate change calls for a new paradigm—one that considers a range of possible future climate conditions and associated impacts, some well outside the realm of past experience (Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change, 2010). We have a responsibility to our urban students who share classrooms and neighborhoods with people from all over the globe. They require the tools to understand and interact with people who have vastly different cultures in order to appreciate their many similarities.

Because greenhouse gases do not respect national borders, the problem is essentially a global one. Climate change is affecting every region, country, city, and village on the planet in distinct ways and shaping living conditions, job opportunities, and civic participation for youth. In recent years, the search for increased energy efficiency has begun to trigger new industries and technologies—from green architecture to carbon sequestration tools. Political life the world over has seen a rise in environmental debates—in fact, the environment is reported to be a primary motivation for youth civic participation in industrialized countries (Haste, 2007). Yet despite

such productive developments, a more concerted global effort will be needed to return atmospheric temperatures to sustainable levels and to adapt effectively to climate change. Mitigating and adapting to change will require furthering international climate agreements and enlisting all sectors of world societies in prudent resource use and sustainable innovation (Sachs, 2008). A comparative advantage will go to those who, based on a deep understanding of the problem, can create novel solutions. However, progress in mitigating and adapting to climate change will not stem solely from the newest technology or the latest top-level multilateral agreement. Progress will pivot on the numberless private decisions of individuals who view themselves as agents of history—globally competent actors in today's world.

What competences will students need to fare well in a world of climate instability? Preparing our youth for a future of climate and environmental instability begins by helping them understand the workings of the earth, why and how climate change (past and present) takes place, and what consequences it is likely to have on various habitats and ecosystems, including their own. It will require that students understand how energy consumption in one place affects living conditions of people on the other side of the world and how we all depend on the same atmosphere for life. It will require that students understand current and future climate solutions and learn to weigh their potential against their risks.

Efforts to understand climate change, its causes and consequences, will continue over the next generations, when today's youth and their children are the decision makers. Well prepared individuals will be able to investigate climate change sources and impacts: framing local problems for study, collecting and interpreting data, building informed arguments. Most important, these individuals will need to understand that scientific claims and projections are empirically grounded interpretations of the problem. They will need to understand that the knowledge of today may be legitimately revised when new and more compelling frameworks or evidence become available. These individuals will need to see that our understanding of climate is provisional and subject to critique—and view these qualities as markers of strength, not weakness. The global nature of climate change, paired with the multiplicity of impacts expected in various parts of the world, will demand that students learn to recognize perspectives carefully.

How does a rising ocean affect fishing populations in Alaska or in coastal tourist villages in Bangladesh and New England? How prepared is each community to face the challenge? What adaptation options do they have? Thinking about climate change in ways that consider multiple locations, perspectives, and concerns, and communicating effectively about these various conditions prepares students for effective transnational cooperation—the kind of global approach necessary to mitigate and adapt to climate change. At a premium will be individuals who understand environmental systems around the world well. Most importantly, such individuals will find opportunities to act now as global environmental stewards preparing for the work of their generation.

In sum, schoolteachers across the globe are expected to teach core sets of concepts and skills deemed essential by curriculum experts at national, regional, and local levels. Preparing youth for the work of their generation involves revisiting such core concepts and skills and putting them to the service of a deeper, better and more participatory understanding of the world in which we live. Nurturing students' global competence enables education leaders to examine

how engaging crucial global issues can catalyze learning of this core content, and how learning such content can inform students' world views.

II. DEFINING GLOBAL COMPETENCE

While the salience of global competence reflects the unprecedented interconnectedness of our world in the 21st century, the framework for global competence used here draws on a history of efforts to define the concept. A seminal 1976 paper by Robert Hanvey, An Attainable Global Perspective, calls for education to develop "modes of thought" that include perspective consciousness "state of the planet" and cross-cultural awareness, knowledge of global dynamics and awareness of human choices (Hanvey, 1976). Fernando Reimers advances a view on the nature of global competence, defined as "the knowledge and skills that help people understand the flat world in which they live, the skills to integrate across disciplinary domains to comprehend global affairs and events and to create possibilities to address them" (Reimers, 2010). Veronica Boix Mansilla and Howard Gardner offer a perspective on "global consciousness" that emphasizes "the capacity and the inclination to place our self and the people, objects and situations with which we come into contact within the broader matrix of our contemporary world" (Boix Mansilla & Gardner, 2007). The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) cites one of its goals as developing "international-mindedness," a view of education that values the world as the broadest context for learning, develops conceptual understanding across a range of subjects and offers opportunities to inquire, act and reflect. (What is international mindedness?, 2012)

We, in the United States, are certainly not alone in recognizing the importance of preparing students to cooperate and compete in the global scene (Darling-Hammond, 2010, Kagan, & Stewart 2004a, Kagan, & Stewart 2004b, Stewart, 2005, Wagner 2008). In recent years countries around the world have seen the emergence of initiatives to infuse greater international understanding in their school curricula. For example, in a landmark document, the Maastrich Global Education Declaration, representatives of the European Council advanced a framework for global education designed to "open people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world and awaken them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity, and human rights for all." In these leaders' view, global education is thought to encompass—but is not limited to—education for human rights, sustainability, peace and conflict prevention, interculturality, and citizenship (O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2002). In Great Britain, the Department for International Development has sought to integrate global development issues into the formal curriculum through the Global Partnership Schools program, linking UK schools to schools in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean (Global School Partnerships, n.d.).

In Sweden, the Global Citizen Program prepares students, teachers, and school leaders to understand countries with significant importance to Sweden's future. Partnerships with schools in China and India are thought to prepare students for the real demands of the world, from studying abroad to engaging in sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, and economy and finances. In India, efforts toward international education build on ancient traditions of nonviolence and universal brotherhood. India's National Curriculum Framework for School Education calls for a school curriculum that promotes national identity and unity but also strives to "raise awareness of the necessity to promote peace and understanding between nations

for the prosperity of all mankind." The framework expects international education to be embedded in existing subjects, although particular curricula focused on peace and human rights education have also been proposed (APCEIU, 2005).

The definition of global competence articulated here was developed by the Task Force on Global Competence—a group of state education agency leaders, education scholars, and practitioners—under the auspices of the Council of Chief State School Officers EdSteps initiative (CCSSO-EdSteps) and the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning. This definition has also framed the U.S. Department of Education International Education Strategy 2012-2016, released in December 2012. The framework for global competence produced by Boix Mansilla and Jackson for the Ed Steps effort is reflected in Figure 1.1.
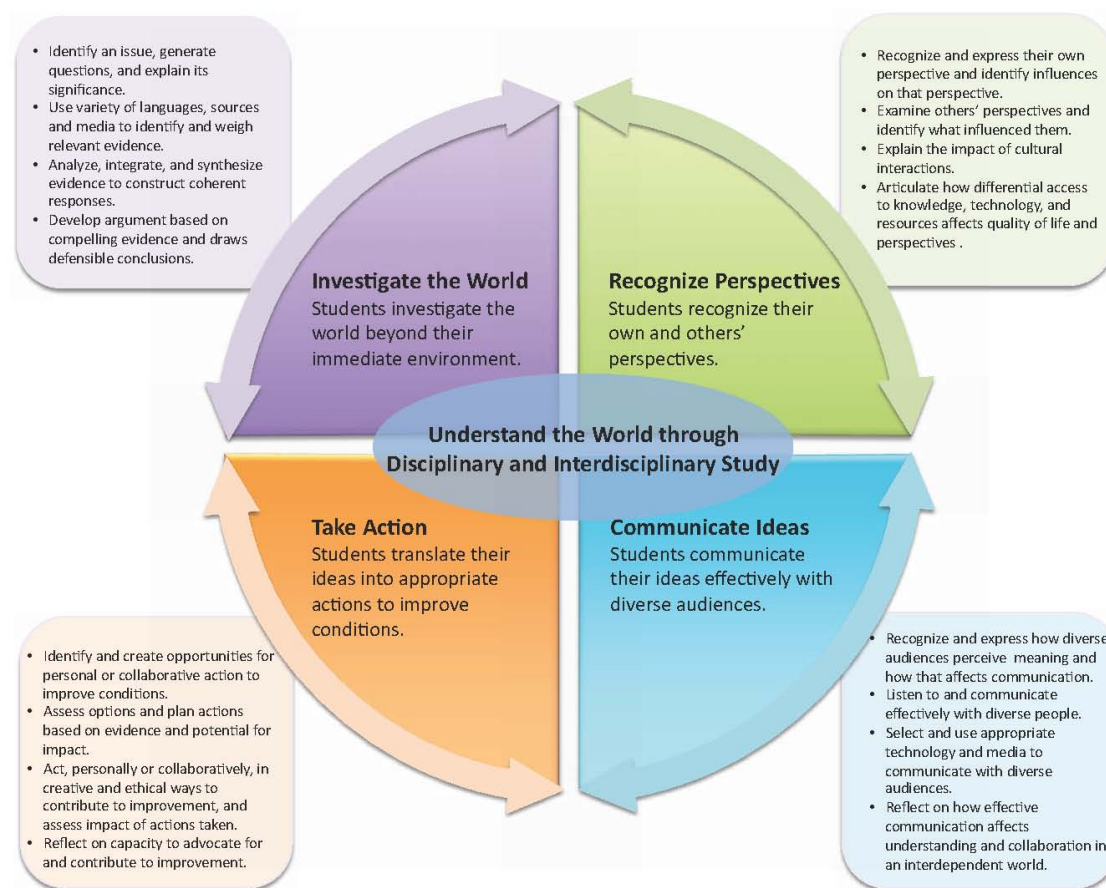

Figure 1.1   Framework for Global Competence

What are the critical attributes of each domain of global competence? How are these competencies demonstrated in student work? In what follows, we introduce each dimension of this global competence definition, illustrating its various dimensions with exemplary units developed by teachers around the world.

II.I Investigating the World

Globally competent students ask and explore questions of critical global significance: What is the expected impact of climate change on the Gulf of Mexico or the Gulf of Guinea, Africa? How prepared are local communities to adapt to the change? How does humor differ in the U.S. and in Afghanistan? How has the International Criminal Court interacted with national justice systems in Kosovo and Rwanda? How do immigrant adults from different religious orientations in the community experience the process of becoming American? These questions are globally significant. They address phenomena that affect a large number of people worldwide, they shed light on the diversity and commonality of experiences across localities, and they play out both in students' communities and in communities across the globe. Globally competent students can articulate the global significance of their questions and why these questions merit study.

Through careful framing and examination, important problems like these become researchable. Globally competent students do not seek a pre-established "right answer;" rather they engage intellectually and emotionally in searching for and weighing informed responses. To do so, they identify, collect, and analyze credible information from a variety of local, national, and international sources, including sources in languages other than their own. Competent students can weigh and integrate evidence to create coherent responses and draw defensible conclusions—in writing an essay, designing a solution, proposing a scientific explanation, or creating a work of art.

The box below outlines specific abilities associated with students' capacities to investigate the world beyond their local environments. Each of these abilities will be set in italics when integrated in our example. An investigation in Latin American literature by a 12th-grade student in New York provides an intriguing look at how some of these capacities are manifest in student work.

Globally competent students are able to investigate the world in the following ways:

- Identify an issue, generate a question, and explain the significance of locally, regionally, and globally focused researchable questions.
- Use a variety of languages and domestic and international sources to identify and weigh relevant evidence in addressing a globally significant researchable question.
- Analyze, integrate, and synthesize evidence to construct coherent responses to globally significant researchable questions.
- Develop an argument based on compelling evidence that considers multiple perspectives and draws defensible conclusions.

Student work example: Magical Realism and Latin American Literature
Henry Street School for International Studies, New York City

Grade 12

Gabriel García Márquez's novel Chronicle of a Death Foretold explores themes of family, reputation, honor, revenge, justice, obsession, and communal responsibility. Following an in-depth study of the novel, its construction and socio-cultural context, students in Ms. Wise's English language arts class were invited to study the work of a notable Latin American poet of their choice. They had to explain the writer's global significance and examine how, as in García Márquez, the author's personal experience and literary choices convey his or her unique perspective. "Looking specifically at one continent of poets," Ms. Wise explains, "enabled students to see how these storytellers not only reflect current social perspectives and cultural values, but they also have the power to direct and criticize public opinion."

One student, Janel, focused her research on José Lezama Lima, a well-regarded and debated Cuban poet. "His writing is complicated to understand," says Janel, "given Lezama Lima's baroque style, [which is] similar to [that of] Luis de Góngora." In her essay, Janel demonstrates how Lezama Lima's work explores themes of disappointment, religion, sacrifice, and femininity. Accounts of the poet's life reveal how Lezama Lima's homosexuality and independent political views influenced his writing and his view of poets as interpreters of a complex and often paradoxical world. Janel writes,

José Lezama Lima felt alone as a child. He lived in a society that was extremely judgmental and strict. A place where communism was present [and literature was not to] go against "revolutionary consciousness." [The author] was also famous for the novel he published in 1966, Paradiso, which is Spanish for "paradise." Because this book was detailed with content based on homosexuality, José Lezama Lima (APCEIU, 2005) faced hardships when publishing it. According to the government, the novel went against the Cuban Revolution in that it lacked political commitment. Another source of social rejection was religion, a topic about which Lezama Lima wrote extensively. The Roman Catholic religion [was] practiced by the majority of Cubans. Therefore, it is likely that he once followed the same beliefs as other Cubans. The Roman Catholic church does not approve of homosexuality. As a gay man, José Lezama Lima had to sacrifice his religious beliefs because he was considered a sinner. He felt alone in social terms, and in religious terms as well. As a homosexual, he had to sacrifice his beliefs because, according to the Bible, he is not fit to follow them.

Close reading of various poems, including "Melodia," enabled Janel to show how Lezama Lima's experiences were reflected in his densely symbolic work. She interprets the last lines of the poem as depicting a shattered dream followed by a paradoxically redeeming resolution:

Curved glass in the untwisted hand.
Cold dart falling more refined, the smoke towards the flute, and desired oblivion.
The cold darts are coming from the air. . . .

[T]hey are targeting something—a dream. Dreams may shatter, just like glass, no matter how carefully he holds on to them. He wanted to fulfill a dream but it vanished before he reached it: disappointment. "Melodia" evokes the many disappointments the author faced throughout his personal life as well as his career. Nevertheless, [the smoke suggests] hope will emerge and

perhaps he will unconsciously attain his desire, and his melody would be heard. . . . In "Melodia," Lezama Lima makes his readers envision solid objects in order to comprehend the non-literal idea that lies within the text.

How does this work illustrate the students' capacity to investigate the world? Identifying an author and explaining the significance of his work locally, regionally, and globally. Janel identifies Lezama Lima as an author of local and regional significance. In his work, universal themes are experienced and examined within the particular context of the Roman Catholic and communist society in which Lezama Lima grew up. As a marginalized homosexual writer, Janel explains, Lezama Lima found refuge in literature—and influenced a generation of Cuban writers.

Using a variety of languages and domestic and international sources. Analyzing, integrating, and synthesizing evidence collected to construct a compelling argument. To produce her essay, Janel must identify, interpret, and synthesize a range of sources: original and translated publications of Lezama Lima's work, biographies, and reviews produced in and outside of Latin America. Through a classical literary analysis approach, Janel selects samples of Lezama Lima's writing to ground her argument. Through close reading, she discerns literary choices that both support and challenge her argument—that is, that marginalization plays a key role in Lezama Lima's work.

In sum, Janel draws on literary analysis tools to make sense of the work of a poet whose life was shaped by forces very different to those shaping her own. In doing so, she comes to understand the way in which this particular example of Latin American literature speaks to the political climates on which it stands.

II.II. Recognizing Perspectives

An important step students take toward global competence is recognizing that they hold a particular perspective—one that others may not share. To reach a full understanding of world issues, they must be able to articulate and explain the perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought. Globally competent students understand, for example, how economic conditions may inform individuals' expectations for their lives, how religion may inform people's sense of responsibility. They understand that access to knowledge and technology is unevenly distributed in the world, affecting people's views and quality of life. Deploying their knowledge of history, culture, and current events, students with global competence are able to compare their own perspectives with those of others. And when needed, they can integrate these various viewpoints to synthesize a new one—the kind of comprehensive perspective vital to addressing complex global issues.

The box below outlines four specific capacities associated with recognizing perspectives. These capacities are then illustrated by an example of student work stemming from collaborative work between schools in California and Bangalore, India.

Globally competent students are able to recognize perspectives in the following ways:

- Recognize and express their own perspective on situations, events, issues, or phenomena and identify the influences on that perspective.
- Examine perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought and identify the influences on those perspectives.
- Explain how cultural interactions influence situations, events, issues, or phenomena, including the development of knowledge.
- Articulate how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources affects quality of life and perspectives.

Student work example: Exploring shelters across the world
Todd Elkin: Washington High School, Fremont, CA
Ariel Roman: East Oakland School of the Arts, Oakland, CA
Arzu Mistry: Drishya Kalika Kendra (Learning Centers for Urban Poor), Bangalore, India

Informed by statistics about the global rise of "mega-slums" and inspired by contemporary artists' engagement with such issues, the shelter project brought together students from three educational institutions: two American public schools (urban and suburban) and a learning center for the poor in a slum of Bangalore, India. Elkin, Roman and Mistry designed the project to raise students' awareness about global living conditions. The project encouraged students to think of themselves as contemporary artists taking part in a global conversation about how the majority of the world population lives. "How does what you make as an artist relate to your responsibilities as a citizen of the world?" teachers asked.

The unit capitalized on the cultural, socioeconomic, and environmental diversity of the three schools, inviting students to communicate with each other and respond to each other's work through a shared blog and Skype conversations. The unit culminated with the creation of site-specific shelters. For students in the U.S., the shelters represented explorations in contemporary art. For students in Bangalore, the project turned into the designs for a mobile classroom of the future—a temporary student learning space fit for meditation and study. In their designs, students were inspired to use recycled materials like colorful plastic bags and bottles to filter sunlight, creating a visually rich space for well-being. How do these students demonstrate their capacity to recognize perspectives?

Recognizing and expressing their own perspective on situations and identifying the influences on that perspective. For the American students, the project raised awareness of world inequality and their relatively privileged lifestyles. This was especially true for suburban students, who saw in the project an opportunity to revisit their own place gratefully and critically. Students appreciated their access to technology, not having to work, and the relatively safe and tidy neighborhoods they live in. They came to understand how living in this context influences their perception of standards of living. As one student comments:

A surprisingly high number of people live in shantytowns [and the like] and in poverty. It's funny how people tend to think that everyone lives the same way that they do, probably because

we are surrounded by people with the same lifestyles. But, when you get out of your comfort zone and really see what is going on, it's crazy. We are so lucky to have what we have.

These students were also able to raise awareness and critique as contemporary artists:

Our shelters were made for a reason. . . . They are installations that change the space. How often do you see a shantytown in the suburbs? Through all of these aspects, the shelters could create a new light around what a shelter actually is. It's not just a box.

Examining perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought. Exchanging images and interacting online enabled students to see each other's environments and analyze differences in culture, styles, and knowledge. Todd Elkin's students at Washington High immediately noticed the learning space used by Arzu Mistry's students in Bangalore—where children worked typically on the ground, barefoot, and outdoors. The Indian students' familiarity with natural elements and awareness of their environment became evident as they offered feedback to Elkin's students' designs. The U.S. students recognized that living and learning "closer" to their natural environment influenced their Indian peers' viewpoints and priorities. Ideas from the students in Bangalore established an important balance of power and respect across student groups. Consider the following examples from two of Mistry's students:

Nandini: Have you thought about using your sloped roofs for rainwater collection? The edge of the roofs can have gutters on them. Look at our meditation rooms.

Chandrakala: Are your homes going to have gardens? When we designed our spaces we had to think of 5 questions: 1) How does your space interact with the sun, wind, rain, and acoustics? 2) How does the physical aspects of the classroom inspire learning (windows, doors, boards, benches, etc.)? 3) How does your space deal with wastes? 4) How does your space improve the environment/have a positive Eco-Footprint (food, forests-landscaping, wastes, electricity, other inputs…) 5) How does your classroom inspire creative play? Do these 5 questions work for your space/models even though it's a house and not a classroom?

Explaining how cultural interactions influence situations, including the development of ideas. The collaborative nature of this project enabled students from diverse backgrounds to share ideas, influence one another's designs, and recognize similarities in approaches. Shared tasks were potent platforms for collaboration, cross-cultural analysis, and deeper understanding. One of Elkin's students, on sharing techniques for brainstorming:

I think that their poster is visually more appealing than the one that we did. It's cool to see people using the same train-of-thought method in a different part of the world. Even though I may not be able to understand what is written on the paper, the technique is relatively similar and I think that is really neat. Articulating how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources affects quality of life and perspectives.

Despite their drastically different socioeconomic environments, students in California and Bangalore engaged in a serious reflection about the ways in which food, shelter, and education affect people's lives. The discussion was not limited to material wealth but to the conditions that

enable well-being and the individual's responsibility to consider the well-being of others. "In our opinion this unit was a sneak peek into the emotions of homeless people," comments one of Todd's students, "But this peek is not limited to homeless people—it was a way to experience the emotions of any person who has faced [these kinds of] dilemmas in their lives." Mistry explains:

The students were engaged in a global conversation about education for all. Heated conversations during critiques argued whether we needed to design for 40 children, like in our centers, or 500 children like in the government school next door. The children were engaged in conversations around quality, scale, and need for education. As artists they were a part of global conversations keeping their real context (socioeconomic, cultural, geographic, and environmental) in mind.

Mistry believes that reflecting about the importance of education and life experiences can help students reframe how they view their opportunities. "Most of the children we work with are children of construction workers," she explains, "We were making the leap from a field they understood and positioning them at the level of a designer with a global consciousness."

They presented their work and received feedback from architects and designers in the city, validating the importance of the work they were doing and pushing them to think beyond their concept of school and classroom. One student has continued to pursue this work and has submitted drawings and models in order to build a one-room schoolhouse in her community. Others have designed elaborate rainwater catchment systems based on research of various rainwater-harvesting models. As this project illustrates, interaction and serious work can help students develop their beliefs about others living on opposite sides of the planet and in strikingly different socioeconomic conditions. Cross-cultural collaboration encourages them to challenge stereotypes and recognize that diversity of perspectives enriches their work—and their understanding of themselves as producers of work.

II.III. Communicating Ideas

Audiences and collaborators often differ on the basis of culture, geography, faith, ideology, wealth, and other factors. As such, globally competent students must be able to thoughtfully differentiate among audiences and adapt their behavior accordingly, working together in diverse teams toward a common goal. Because English is, at this historical moment, the world's common language for commerce and communication, globally competent students in the U.S. and elsewhere benefit from being proficient in English—as well as in at least one other language. Proficiency with a variety of media and new technologies is another essential component in communicating ideas globally in the 21st century.

The box below outlines key capacities associated with communicating ideas. These capacities are then illustrated by an example of student work: a project to explore communicative tensions in colonization through contemporary art at the International School of Amsterdam.

Globally competent students are able to communicate ideas in the following ways:

- Recognize and express how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information and how that impacts communication.
- Listen to and communicate effectively with diverse people, using appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior, languages, and strategies.
- Select and use appropriate technology and media to communicate with diverse audiences.
- Reflect on how effective communication impacts understanding and collaboration in an interdependent world.

Student work example: A happening: "Put your culture in the box and follow me"
International School of Amsterdam
Grade 10

For the final project of their contemporary music, art, and theater class, students had to create a happening—a fleeting artistic event or installation in the school. Their task was to explore the concept of exile in aesthetically interesting and novel ways. Helen, Kyoko, Noah, and Yei Jin's happening examined colonization as a metaphor for forced exile. The group chose to include the audience (teachers, researchers, and special invitees) in their piece, as they "wanted the audience to really get a sense of what colonization might feel like." They dressed in black, faces half covered by masks, and yelled commands at their audience, simultaneously in their four different native languages. Participants were unable to understand what was being said, but strong gestures indicated they were to follow the students through various stations in the happening. The students intended to elicit from their audience feelings of powerlessness and frustration, to make them feel they really were being "colonized." As pressure for obedience mounted, all attempts at two-way communication broke down and the captive audience began to quietly follow the masked students. Participants were instructed to place their shawls, watches, and a shoe in a box marked "Pre-colonial History Museum," then forced to carry labels with their newly modified names.

How do these students demonstrate their capacity to communicate ideas?

Recognizing how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information and how that impacts communication. The students' happening was in essence an examination of how communication works and makes meaning under cultural-political oppression. They demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of how the colonized and their colonizers interpret differently their realities, behavior, and artifacts. The symbolic act of relinquishing personally meaningful everyday objects to a "museum" is just one effective strategy the students used to convey such a clash of interpretations.

Using appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior, languages, and strategies. The students demonstrate a capacity to integrate a range of artistic modes of expression to convey their message. "We chose masks to symbolize the difference in cultures. Once we put our masks on we were not really ourselves anymore." Using a cacophony of voices and urgent, authoritarian

gestures, they communicate with an audience sensitive to different forms of input. The students relate their work to that of other contemporary artists. They honor, for example, John Cage, who expanded musical expression, and Kara Walker, whose visual work examines the perverse nature of "paternalistic oppression."

Reflecting on how effective communication impacts understanding and collaboration in an interdependent world. The colonialism happening illustrates the students' exquisite understanding of the role of communication in history and ethics. Their work offers a critique of ethnocentrism, the inability to listen, the failure of respect, and concomitant barriers to genuine cross-cultural cooperation. In an intelligent, reflective move, these students, hailing from different cultural backgrounds, comment on and exploit their own linguistic diversity to advance a common aesthetic goal. Engaging in a rich examination of communication—its limits, pitfalls, and potential for abuse—raises students' awareness of the responsibilities associated with verbal and nonverbal expression in engaging others, near or far.

II. IV Taking Action

Globally competent students do more than collect knowledge about the world: they seek to make a difference in the world. Furthermore, they do not postpone their contributions for "when I grow up" (Fischman, Solomon, Greenspan, & Gardner, 2004). Rather they see and create opportunities to act today—in their neighborhood or on the global stage. Alone or in collaboration, ethically and creatively, globally competent students envision and weigh options for action based on evidence and insight. They can assess the potential impact of their plans, taking into account varied perspectives and potential consequences for others. And they demonstrate courage—in acting and in reflecting on their actions.

The box below outlines key capacities associated with taking action. We then turn to an example of student work to examine the challenges and opportunities students encounter when taking action: An essay by a fourth-grade student in Britain on the children of political refugees, which received a young journalist award.

Globally competent students are able to take action in the following ways:

- Identify and create opportunities for personal or collaborative action to address situations, events, issues, or phenomena in ways that improve conditions.
- Assess options and plan actions based on evidence and the potential for impact, taking into account previous approaches, varied perspectives, and potential consequences.
- Act, personally or collaboratively, in creative and ethical ways to contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally and assess the impact of the actions taken.
- Reflect on their capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement locally,

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A student work example:
Amnesty International/Drayton Park Primary School, London
Grade 4

Florence is 11 years old. She has a strong interest in World War II, triggered by the books of such writers as Morris Gleitzman and Michael Morpurgo, as well as the diary of Anne Frank. When she learned about a competition run by Amnesty International and The Guardian newspaper calling for a report on human rights, she remembered a conversation she had recently had at home. Florence and her parents were talking about human rights, and the conversation turned to the topic of detention centers in the UK. A study had recently shown the harmful and long-lasting psychological and physical impacts on the children of refugees forced into detention centers. Prompted by her desire to raise awareness about the issue, Florence began conducting her own research. Her findings are captured in an essay, "Is This Nazi Germany?" which won the upper primary category of Amnesty International's Young Human Rights Reporter of the Year 2010.

IS THIS NAZI GERMANY?

She wakes, as eight men in dark uniforms barge through her front door. Her mother screams, but she stays riveted to the spot, shaking uncontrollably. The men hand her mother some paper and ignore her screams of outrage.

The men search the house. It is turned upside down. Abruptly, they are both frogmarched to the back of a van. They don't know where they are going or how long they will remain in this dark, enclosed space.

This is not Nazi Germany; this is September 2009 in Leeds. Bethlehem Abate is 11 years old and has escaped with her mother from Ethiopia, where she was abused by her father. If she returns to Ethiopia, she will be separated from her mother, who is Eritrean. She will have no one to care for her. Her mother will be put in detention or even killed by the authorities. Yarl's Wood is situated in Bedfordshire; it is a detention centre for asylum seekers. Each year there is an intake of 1,000 children. It is not a place for children. No child should be deprived of their education and freedom in this way.

As Bethlehem entered Yarl's Wood, she said, "It was like going into prison, for doing an awful crime."

"I thought the British government would understand our situation and help us."

Bethlehem and her mother have now been granted the right to remain in this country. They look back at their time in Yarl's Wood with horror. Many others are not so fortunate. . . .

How does this student's essay demonstrate her capacity to take action?

Identifying and creating opportunities for action to address situations in ways that improve conditions. Reading about children's experiences in detention centers disturbed Florence: "I was so worried to learn about so many children that were in detention centers and had no proper education, no proper childhood." Encouraged by her parents and teachers, Florence decided the essay contest was a good opportunity to write about the topic. She explains, "Before we talked about it, I had no idea that human rights violations were happening in England. Before we talked I always thought that human rights violations were things that happened in India or Africa and I had no idea they were happening here. It was horrible."

In her view, the essay would help "raise awareness about children in detention centers. No child should suffer this appalling lack of education and lack of freedom." Florence decided that focusing on a girl of about her age would be an effective narrative technique, highlighting the contrast between her safe and comfortable life and that of her subject. Florence's essay seeks to build on the tradition of girls from the past she admires, like Anne Frank.

Acting collaboratively in creative and ethical ways to contribute to improvement. The recognition for her essay led Florence to think about doing even more for the sake of refugee children. She joined a young campaigners' group at Amnesty International working to increase public awareness in the UK where the government is deciding to abolish child detention, granting children of refugees legal status upon arrival. Florence adds,

I am really hoping that I can make a difference. Many campaigners are working to make detention centers better. I understand that we may have to have detention centers but you don't have to call them such horrible names, you don't have to torture people there—not physical torture but psychological torture. You don't have to put them through such a horrible and very destructive experience that has a big impact on people's lives . . . leaving them scarred for life.

Reflecting on her capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement. Asked whether she, as a child, can indeed make a difference, Florence replies with hope that she can contribute to the work many others are doing. Grateful for all the support she has received, she understands the key role played by her family and those teachers who encouraged her to voice her opinion. She enjoys the feeling of having found a cause that matters to her: abolishing child detention and knowing that "whatever happens, you stood up for something you believed in."

III. CONCLUSION

Virtually every major issue people face—from climate change to national security to public health—has a global dimension. Information technologies ensure that news from every country reverberates around the world in minutes. And with over 200 million migrants world wide, migration and immigration are creating magnificently more diverse neighborhoods, communities, and nations. More than ever people, cultures, and nations are interdependent, requiring the preparation of students capable and disposed to solve problems on a global scale and participate effectively in a global economic and civic environment. No longer a luxury for a few global competence is a requirement for all.

Reflecting a variety of subject-specific and interdisciplinary scenarios, the student work featured here demonstrates that global competence can be developed across ages, disciplines, and educational institutions. The task at hand is to move global competence from the margins to the mainstream of education and cultural policy, in the United States and beyond. One thing is clear: the magnitude and significance of this enterprise demands that educators take actions—small and large, individual and collective—to make global competence a priority in policy and practice.

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