

The chocolate trade game

Chocolate

Many people find chocolate delicious and irresistible. We spend an estimated £4.3 billion on chocolate each year in the UK and Ireland – the equivalent of £78 worth of chocolate per person per year.* But where does it come from and what happens between the cocoa tree and the chocolate bar?

*Source: 'Britons are Europe's biggest chocolate lovers', *The Independent*, 13 April 2006.

This simulation game looks at the experiences of Ghanaian cocoa farmers in the cocoa trading chain. It highlights the role of international trade in the manufacture and marketing of chocolate and the way that the trading system affects the lives and livelihoods of the farmers. The *Chocolate Trade Game* also looks at how a cocoa farmers' cooperative in Ghana is working to improve conditions for its members through fair trade. The experiences of these farmers are similar to those of many primary producers across the world, who are caught in a trading system that benefits the multinational companies of rich countries, such as the UK and Ireland.

Learning objectives

The objective of the game is to:

- identify the difficulties experienced by workers in the chocolate trade
- describe the benefits of fair trade
- develop skills of cooperative working
- develop communication and numeracy skills.

Before the game

Introduce the subject of the cocoa trading chain by talking about chocolate. How many of the group eat chocolate and why? How much do they eat? How many of the group don't eat chocolate and why? Think of words to describe chocolate, such as delicious or creamy.

Ask children what they think chocolate is made of. Talk about the ingredients.

What's in chocolate?

Chocolate contains:

- cocoa butter
- cocoa solids
- milk
- sugar
- vegetable fat.

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Equipment needed for the chocolate trade game

14 sheets of brown A4 paper
14 sheets of yellow A4 paper
15 sheets of white A4 paper
16 pencils
9 pairs of scissors
2 rulers
4 calculators
a box of paper clips
a communal pencil sharpener

plus:

8 templates for the farmers' groups – cut out from card – as follows:

4 templates for Standard quality beans (empty bean shape); one for each of the farmers' groups

1 template for Premium quality beans (with the letters FT in outline); for the fair-trade group only

3 templates for Premium quality beans (with the letters GI in outline); one for each independent group.

The farmer groups are going to 'grow' beans by drawing them, using the templates. When creating their beans, group members must reproduce the bean templates exactly. This means the Premium quality beans will take longer to make and so reflect the production of higher quality beans. FT stands for 'fair trade' and GI stands for 'Ghanaian independent'.

To help production, you may find that you need to have more coloured paper available, especially brown.

Divide the players into ten groups and distribute the resources as follows (for more players, increase quantities of paper and equipment accordingly):

Fair-trade cocoa farmers

(One group of five or six students.)

This group will need:

- role-play card 1
- 6 sheets of brown paper
- 3 sheets of yellow paper
- 1 sheet of white paper (for name label)
- 2 pairs of scissors
- 2 pencils
- 2 cocoa bean templates (one Standard, one FT)
- 1 record sheet.

Independent cocoa farmers

(Three groups of two students.)

These groups will need:

- role-play card 2
- 1 sheet of brown paper
- 2 sheets of yellow paper
- 1 sheet of white paper (for name label)
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 pencil
- 2 cocoa bean templates (one Standard, one GI)
- 1 record sheet.

Fair Trade Chocolate Company

(One group of five or six students.)

This group will need:

- role-play card 3
- 4 sheets of brown paper
- 1 sheet of white paper (for name label)
- 1 pair of scissors
- 2 pencils
- 1 ruler
- 1 record sheet
- paper clips.

The Big Chocolate Company

(One group of five or six students.)

This group will need:

- role-play card 4
- 1 sheet of brown paper
- 5 sheets of yellow paper
- 1 sheet of white paper (for name label)
- 3 pair of scissors
- 3 pencils
- 1 ruler
- 1 record sheet
- 1 calculator
- paper clips.

Supermarkets

(Two groups of three students.)

These groups will need:

- role-play card 5
- 1 sheet of white paper (for name label)
- 1 pencil
- 1 record sheet
- 1 calculator.

Shoppers (consumers)

(One group of two students.)

This group will need:

- role-play card 6
- 1 sheet of white paper (for name label)
- 1 pencil
- 1 record sheet
- 1 calculator.

Journalists

(One group of two students.)

This group will need:

- role-play card 7
- 2 pencils
- 7 sheets of white paper for notes.

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How to play the game

1. Allow one hour for the game.

If this is not possible, the record sheets and feedback discussion can be completed in a second session.

2. Arrange the tables and chairs

to form ten groups, with space to move around. Put the resources on to the appropriate tables. Make sure all other resources or equipment are put away.

3. Use the role-play cards to explain what each group will be doing during the game. Choose the journalists carefully. They will need to draw conclusions from their observations. Ask each group to write their role name on one piece of white paper so that the other groups can identify them.

4. Explain to the groups that:

- they don't have money, but do have record sheets to keep a record of any deals
- they cannot have extra resources, but can share the communal pencil sharpener
- there will be four changes of season that will affect them all – you will give them two minutes' notice before each change of season
- they are going to be making cocoa beans and chocolate bars, using the templates and cutting out the shapes (supermarkets and shoppers will have to wait before they can buy and sell)
- they should reproduce the cocoa beans or chocolate bars exactly as on their role-play cards – this means the shape, size and lettering should be as specified. Otherwise their cocoa beans or chocolate bars cannot be sold
- they have to sell their cocoa beans and chocolate bars and that they should start selling as soon as they have made their first products, rather than wait until they have a large store.

5. Allow a few minutes

for the groups to read through their role-play cards. Start the game by reading out the first season's card. Either copy it onto the board or onto OHP sheets as a reminder to the groups of what is happening during the season. Do this for each season. The first season lasts the longest – 20 minutes – until the chocolate companies have had time to produce their first batch of five chocolate bars. The other seasons last ten minutes.

6. Announce a new season, having given two minutes' notice, and change your board or OHP.

7. At the start of the third season take away half of the paper resources and half of the unsold cocoa beans from the farmers. Take half of the unsold chocolate bars from the chocolate companies.

8. The fourth season is when shoppers will start demanding fair-trade chocolate. Supermarkets should note the demands.