



# Virtual Ambassador

## Unit Summary

In this simulation, students assume the role of staffers to the U.S. ambassador of a developing country. The ambassador has a humanitarian aid budget to spend, and wants help to determine where money and volunteer labor can be used to alleviate some of the country's problems. Student staffers are appointed to fact-finding committees to research a particular problem—they study the historical context, research steps that have been taken to alleviate the problem, and develop a proposal for addressing the problem in a new or better way. Each committee presents its proposal to the ambassador, using supportive multimedia. The project concludes with students debating and writing about the issue of mandatory national service in the United States.

## Curriculum-Framing Questions

- **Essential Question**  
How can individuals make a difference in the world?
- **Unit Questions**  
What are the key problems facing the world's developing countries?  
What are our responsibilities as citizens of the world?  
How can individuals help a developing country solve one of its problems?
- **Content Questions**  
What kinds of volunteer agencies exist to assist developing countries and what do they do?  
What are basic features of the geography, people, history, economics, government, and culture of a developing country?

### At a Glance

**Grade Level:** 6-9

**Subject:** Social Studies

**Topics:** Global Studies

**Higher-Order Thinking**

**Skills:** Analysis, Evaluation, Problem Solving

**Key Learnings:** Geography, Development Issues, Economic Analysis

**Time Needed:** 3 weeks

**Background:** [From the Classroom](#) in Oregon, United States

### Things You Need

[Assessment](#)

[Standards](#)

[Resources](#)

## Assessment Processes

View how a variety of student-centered [assessments](#) are used in the Virtual Ambassador Unit Plan. These assessments help students and teachers set goals; monitor student progress; provide feedback; assess thinking, processes, performances, and products; and reflect on learning throughout the learning cycle.

## Instructional Procedures

### Preparing for the Unit:

Four to six weeks prior to beginning the unit, contact the [National Peace Corps Association, Speaker's Bureau\\*](#) and invite a Peace Corps alumni panel to speak to the class about the projects they have been involved in and what serving in the Peace Corps is like. Have students ask questions they have prepared in advance. Ask speakers to address features and needs of developing countries, and projects they were able to work on that helped address those needs.

### Beginning the Unit

Pose the Essential Question, *How can individuals make a difference in the world?* Elicit student ideas and examples, and record them on chart paper. Save this chart for future reference.

### Background on Developing Countries and Service Programs: Days 1-3

Two to three days before the guest speakers are scheduled, explain to students that the class will be engaged in a project about the needs of developing countries. Ask students to think about the Unit Questions:

- *What are the key problems facing the world's developing countries?*
- *What are our responsibilities as citizens of the world?*

- *How can individuals help a developing country solve one of its problems?*

To help answer the Unit Questions, explain to students that former Peace Corps volunteers will be coming to speak and share their experiences firsthand. Tell students that prior to hearing the speakers, they need to gain some understanding about the label *developing country* and issues that the countries might have.

The following Peace Corps activities can be done to introduce students to issues in developing countries:

- The Peace Corps has a program where students can correspond through e-mail with Peace Corps volunteers called [Correspondence Match](#)\*. Set up this program weeks prior to beginning this unit. Correspondence Match allows your class to correspond with a volunteer directly. This program is part of the Peace Corps' [World Wise Schools Program](#)\*.
- In addition, choose from a list of Peace Corps-sponsored [Activities](#)\* to give students background information about the Peace Corps and life in developing nations. Geography activities include having students compare the life of a teenager living in Paraguay to their own life, reading letters from Peace Corps volunteers to understand more about the culture of Nepal, and learning about economic development in Senegal and preparing a poster talk for classmates. The many social studies and language arts activities here offer students an opportunity to learn more about developing countries.
- Using [Primary Resources](#)\* from Peace Corps volunteers, have students look more closely at what life is like for a Peace Corps volunteer in a developing country. Online [Multimedia](#)\* including podcasts, videos, slideshows, and posters are also available for students to learn more about particular countries.

After students hear from the panel of former Peace Corps volunteers and investigate the needs of developing countries via the Internet and text materials, assign teams consisting of four to six students two tasks. Hand out the [group process rubric](#) and have students use this as they work as a team throughout the unit. First, teams should come up with a definition of *developing country*, and second, they should brainstorm the possible needs of developing countries. Students should have one member of their team record the information on chart paper, and another team member present the team's results to the class. After student teams finish their two tasks, come together as a class to share results. Record the results on the board or a large piece of chart paper, documenting each new idea only once.

### **Becoming an Expert: Days 4 through 6**

Prior to beginning this portion of the project, divide the class into committees of four students each or have students self-select their teams. Introduce the project scenario to students as it is described earlier in the unit summary. Have student committees select a country in the Caribbean, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East, Africa, Asia, or the Pacific Islands from the pull-down menus of [Peace Corps Countries](#)\*. This site gives an idea of some of the issues facing each country, and shows students the problems that volunteer efforts might address in the various regions.

After teams have selected a country, instruct students to gather information via the Internet or library about the country's geography, people, economics, politics, and cultural aspects. Explain that in the final presentation, they will include this contextual information as a part of their presentation.

Explain to students that they will write reflective journal entries on a weekly basis to illustrate their understanding of what they are learning. Ask them to reflect on differences between their country and the country they are investigating. Have students write an entry from the perspective of a student their age in the country they are learning about. Periodically read student journals to see how well students understand the content and redirect teaching as needed.

### **Identifying and Selecting an Issue: Day 7**

After students are familiar with their selected country, ask them to consider the problems that most affect it and where help is needed. Before students select an issue, present the [problems and projects activity slideshow](#). Show the first "problem" slide, have students discuss a possible project that might address the problem and then present the next slide that describes an actual Peace Corps project. Continue with the remaining problem/project slides, and then have student committees work with their groups to choose an issue they would like to investigate further. Give students the [project checklist](#) to help them manage their projects successfully.

### **Study the Issue: Days 8 through 10**

Have country committees consider each problem from more than one angle. Usually the problem and the solution are deeply embedded in larger issues of power, resources, and class stratification. Once their problem is identified, students can look to other countries and agencies to see how the same problem has been addressed. Suggest that students ask experts for help (for example, if the problem is health-related, a committee might talk to a nutritionist or public health worker to get expert advice).

Encourage students to analyze data and look for relationships. The following are some key questions for students to consider as they investigate:

- *Do countries with poor access to education also have people going hungry?*
- *Do countries with a primitive infrastructure (such as bad roads and limited public transportation) have issues related to access to health care?*
- *How do women's rights affect the economy of the country?*
- *Are health issues affecting the economy of the country?*

This is a great time for students to consider the complexities of the problems people face in our world.

Require each country committee to compose a list of possible solutions to the problem they have chosen to address. Then have pairs of country committees convene to offer peer feedback and suggestions on their respective proposals. Allow one class session for this.

Rotate through groups as they work each day to observe how progress is going, see what questions students might have, and find out what additional support students might need. Take anecdotal notes on individual student progress.

### **Creating a Proposal: Days 11 through 16**

During this time, committees put together their proposals. Using the sample [Namibia slideshow presentation](#), explain the components of the proposal, which include:

- Background on the country (geography, economy, and so forth)
- Explanation of the problem
- Project idea to address the problem
- Estimated budget for carrying out the project

Explain that each section of their final presentation should include graphics, statistics, and visuals that give more information about the problem. Hand out the [presentation rubric](#) and explain project expectations to students. Check for understanding and encourage students to use the rubric to guide the creation of their work. Have groups receive peer feedback on their proposals and use the suggestions to improve their final presentation.

Describe the roles for the committee members and have students in each group select one of the following roles:

- **Historian:** Using the research gathered during background studies, the historian determines the most pertinent information to include in the group presentation to the ambassador. The historian's job is to educate others about the people, culture, history, geography, government, and economic situation as these relate to the problem the group is addressing.
- **Sociologist 1 and 2:** The Sociologists work together to write an explanation of the problem the group has chosen to address. The explanation describes the big picture of the problem and includes causes and historical context. The sociologists come up with a way to present the solution and convince the ambassador that the group's project idea deserves funding. The solution includes information about the roles of both foreign and national volunteers in making the project successful.
- **Economist:** As the number cruncher, the economist's job is to convince the ambassador that the group's project is economically sound. The economist determines the estimated project costs. The projected cost analysis should include materials, labor, transportation costs, and any other projected expenses. The economist figures out the numbers and uses a spreadsheet program to make [graphs](#) and charts that support the group's analysis.

### **Presenting the Proposal: Days 17 and 18**

Invite community members (parents, community leaders, building and district administrations, fellow teachers, and so forth) to the meeting. Appoint an "ambassador" from leaders in the community—others can serve as interested "delegates." Have each student group make a 15 to 20 minute presentation. Assess the presentations using the [presentation rubric](#). At the end, have the assembly ask questions of the groups, discuss the pros and cons of the projects, and offer advice for making the proposals more effective or practical. Have students revise proposals as needed. Hold teacher conferences with each group to help refine proposals and answer any questions groups might have. Review the final documents using the [presentation rubric](#), looking for improvement.

Have students fill out the [group process rubric](#) to assess their team participation. Use this peer feedback as well as the [presentation rubric](#) to help inform final grades.

### **Hot Topic Essay and Debate: Days 19 through 21**

To give students both a national and an international perspective, discuss the various national service programs in the United States today, such as AmeriCorps, Vista, and Teach for America. Ask students to consider how volunteering in a foreign country would compare to volunteering in the United States. Briefly describe the current debate in the United States over whether national service should be mandatory for every young adult. Explain that President Bush would like to see every American "commit at least two years, or 4,000 hours over the rest of a lifetime, to the service of neighbors and the nation."

Assign readings of your choice that represent different points of view on the topic of national service (in your country as well as others), and have students write a response to the essay question, *Should young adults in the United States be required to commit two years of service to the country?* Pass out the [position paper rubric](#) to help guide student essays. Each essay should include a strong thesis statement and at least three reasons that support the student's point of view. Some students may wish to create a [survey](#)\* to collect information about the views of friends and family on helping developing nations to use in their essays. After students have submitted their position papers, conduct a classroom debate. Encourage students to send their position papers to the editor of the local newspaper to express their opinions about mandatory national service to a real audience.

Revisit the Essential Question, *How can individuals make a difference in the world?* by referring back to the original chart created at the beginning of the unit. Have students reflect on the Essential Question now that they have had an opportunity to research, create proposals, and hear stories firsthand. Ask students to share how their ideas have changed or remained the same.

## Prerequisite Skills

- Basic computer literacy, including use of the Internet
- Ability to research and synthesize information
- Ability to create effective slideshow presentations
- Ability to write cohesive, effective essays

## Differentiated Instruction

### Resource Student

- Limit assignment to essential parts
- Select Internet sites and other research materials appropriate to the student's abilities
- Set specific due dates at the beginning of the project for each component to assist the student with organization issues
- Create templates for the student to use for each role
- Assign student teams so the student with special needs works with a helpful partner
- Allow extra work completion time if needed

### Gifted Student

- Write and present a commercial for a *Survivor*-type television series that shows people addressing the problem students identified
- Create a Web site for the projects
- Submit a written proposal to the National Peace Corps Director in Washington, DC or to a willing, currently serving Peace Corps volunteer regarding a suggested solution to a problem encountered while researching the country
- Correspond with a Peace Corps volunteer for the purpose of finding out the kind of support materials they could use, solicit donations for their project, and send what you collect
- Assign supplemental reading about Peace Corps experiences—see [www.peacecorpswriters.org](http://www.peacecorpswriters.org)\* for possible readings

### English Language Learner (ELL)

- Preselect reading materials for the student
- If the student comes from a developing country that is served by the Peace Corps, have the student use the country as the basis of the effort
- Allow extra work completion time if needed
- Allow the student to write in a reflection journal in the student's native language, which can be translated later

## Credits

Nancy Kendall participated in the Intel® Teach Program, which resulted in this idea for a classroom project. A team of teachers expanded the plan into the example you see here.

# Designing Effective Projects: Virtual Ambassador From the Classroom

## **Experienced teacher**

Nancy Kendall has broad experience teaching at the high school level, in public and private settings, and in remote and face-to-face situations. During the 1990s, Nancy taught correspondence courses in composition, literature, and grammar through an independent studies program for high school students. Nancy returned to the traditional classroom three years ago, and now teaches English and social studies at North Eugene High School in Eugene, Oregon.

## **Combining resources**

When she took the Intel® Teach Program course, Nancy focused her efforts on a “from-scratch” global studies unit she had started during a collaborative learning communities workshop she took several years before. She says, “It was a great chance to finish up something I’d wanted to complete for a long time, and with global studies, it made sense to use technology to help students step outside the classroom, into the global community. I wanted the lessons to be structured and rigorous, and help kids meet the state content standards for initial mastery of graduation requirements.”

In the “Virtual Ambassador” unit, students research global issues and develop “a call for action,” suggesting how government and volunteer resources would be best used to solve world problems.

## **More about teaching “Virtual Ambassador”**

Nancy addressed the Oregon 10th-grade social studies standards when she planned the unit for her freshman class, and introduced the project at the beginning of the school year. She found incoming ninth-graders lacked necessary experience in research and speaking, however. Next time, she plans to introduce the unit mid-year, after she’s had time to teach the fundamental skills. She suggests that anyone interested in teaching the unit consider teaching the foundation skills of research, research writing, word processing, and oral presentation separate from the unit. Or, the unit could be adapted for older students who already have some experience in these areas.

## **Technology and project work--in measured doses**

Nancy is aware that an over reliance on technology can be limiting. She recalls one student who often demurred when she asked him to produce work in class. “He always said, ‘I’ll do it at home’,” Nancy says, “and I know it’s because he wanted to use the tools he was comfortable with there. Being bound to a single technology just won’t be practical in the real world; people need to learn to be flexible and ready to work in any setting using the tools at hand, whether they’re pencil and paper or unfamiliar electronic devices.”

She takes a thoughtful approach to project-based learning, too. “Relying on project-based instruction to the exclusion of other kinds of learning would be a burden on kids. Sometimes an expert lecture, with students taking notes, is the best way of delivering instruction.” Furthermore, it’s hard to set clear, defined expectations for how individuals achieve their grades from the group effort. The “slackers” can coast while the “strivers” do most of the work. For that reason, group work isn’t dominant in Nancy’s projects; many of them require an individual, and independent, effort.

What convinces Nancy that students enjoy this kind of learning “is their attention to detail and collaborative effort. No one was off-task during “Virtual Ambassadors”. Sometimes, she reflects, “I can even take a deep breath and relax, and then really turn my attention to the learning process rather than management.” In addition, “Kids were eager to show what they’d accomplished. Using multimedia spreads out the audience’s focus, so shy kids get less stage struck. One student had tons of information, a really exemplary project, and the class had lots of oohs and ahhs—it was a good experience, really stepping up the rigor. Kids enjoyed presenting to one another this way.”

## **Matching kids’ lives**

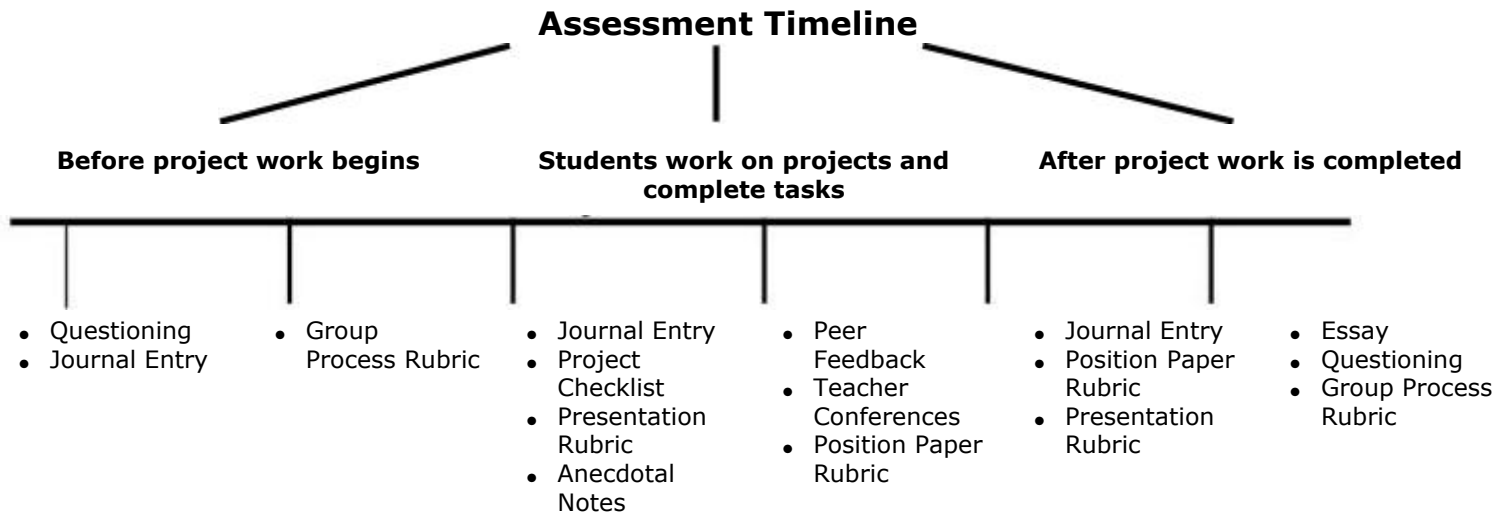
Technology is a natural fit for the classroom because it matches what kids do in their free time and life outside of school, Nancy points out. “It suits the ways they are used to gathering information and communicating for personal reasons. Anymore, students are used to some level of technology, and it’s become an expected way to work.” Other factors come to mind, as well. “The input and output are more engaging, and communicating their learning has more appeal. It’s motivating.”

Finally, and maybe most importantly, Nancy believes at-risk kids get a needed edge when they use technology. “At-risk kids are saved from having to write multiple drafts by hand, and their work is more polished, which helps build confidence. I’m always looking for tools to help them produce, demonstrate, and be proud of their work.”

What’s next? Nancy says, “When I get my next shot at it, I’ll develop a plan where kids do virtual time travel to another period and converse with authors of the time.”

# Designing Effective Projects: Virtual Ambassador Assessment Plan

## Assessment Plan



Informally assess students through questioning and reviewing reflections in student journals. Read journal entries periodically to check for student understanding and redirect teaching as needed. Ask students to complete the [project checklist](#) to help them plan and monitor their work on the projects. Have country teams meet weekly to share their processes, give and receive peer feedback, revise products, and offer suggestions. Ask students to use the [group process rubric](#), [presentation rubric](#), and [position paper rubric](#) to help guide their work and suggestions. Rotate through groups as they work each day to observe how progress is going, see what questions students might have, and find out what additional support students might need. Assess the committee members as a group using the [presentation rubric](#). Use the [position paper rubric](#) to assess the final essay. Ask students to use the [group process rubric](#) to assess team effort and group participation.

# Designing Effective Projects: Virtual Ambassador

## Content Standards and Objectives

### Targeted Content Standards and Benchmarks

#### Oregon Content Standards and Benchmarks

##### Social Sciences: Grade 8

- Understand the civic responsibilities of United States citizens and how they are met
- Understand the purpose and function of international humanitarian agencies and special interest advocacy groups, and how the United States interacts with people in other nations through these organizations
- Understand how people make decisions by analyzing economic conditions and changes
- Analyze and evaluate the impact of economic, cultural, or environmental factors that result in changes to population of cities, countries, or regions
- Understand the causes, characteristics, lasting influence, and impact of political, economic, and social developments in world history
- Define, research, and explain an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon and its significance to society
- Analyze an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon from varied or opposed perspectives or points of view

### Student Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Understand the geography, economics, politics, and culture of a developing country
- Analyze a key issue for the country
- Formulate and evaluate possible solutions to a problem
- Articulate a plan of action for addressing a significant problem in a developing country

# Designing Effective Projects: Virtual Ambassador Resources

## Materials and Resources

### Printed Materials

- Kempf, S. (1997). *Finding solutions to hunger: Kids can make a difference*. New York: World Hunger Year.
- Wheeler, G., Goekler, J. Hibbard, D., Boyd, D. Wondra, M. & Bush, K. (2002). *Facing the future: People and the planet curriculum guide*. Seattle, WA: Facing the Future

### Internet Resources

- Facing the Future  
[www.facingthefuture.org](http://www.facingthefuture.org)\*  
A set of resources for educators and students focusing on global issues and service learning opportunities
- Peace Corps  
[www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)\*  
The Peace Corps official Web site defining the mission and offering information
- CARE  
[www.care.org](http://www.care.org)\*  
Information about countries being assisted by this humanitarian organization dedicated to fighting global poverty
- Doctors Without Borders  
[www.doctorswithoutborders.org](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org)\*  
Discover events happening in countries around the world served by this volunteer, nonprofit organization providing emergency aid
- Mercy Corps  
[www.mercycorps.org](http://www.mercycorps.org)\*  
Explore their worldwide programs and classroom resources
- Cyberschoolbus  
[www.cyberschoolbus.un.org](http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org)\*  
View statistics on United Nations member states

### Technology—Hardware

- Internet connection to complete research and view Web sites
- Projection system to view final presentations

### Technology—Software

- Database or spreadsheet to record data and create expense graphs
- E-mail software to communicate with Peace Corps volunteers
- Encyclopedia on CD-ROM to research information about countries
- Internet Web browser to view Web sites and to complete research
- Multimedia to create student slideshow presentation
- Word processing to type notes and position paper



## Virtual Ambassador Project Management Checklist

**Directions:** Use the questions to guide your work on the project.

What do I know now?

	Explanation—be specific. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.
<b>These are the questions I asked myself to help me think about what I know:</b>	
<b>This is how I organized my current knowledge:</b>	
<b>These are the predictions I made about what I think I am going to learn:</b>	

What are my options?

	Explanation—be specific. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.
<b>These are the possibilities I identified:</b>	
<b>These are the options I explored:</b>	
<b>These are the choices I made:</b>	
<b>These are the opportunities I created:</b>	

What do I need to find out?

	Explanation—be specific. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.
<b>This is my research strategy plan:</b>	
<b>This is the necessary information I collected to make an informed decision:</b>	

What choices will I make and how will I implement them? What goal setting strategies can I use now and in the future?

	Explanation—be specific. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.
<b>This is how I will synthesize the information into my own thoughts:</b>	
<b>This is how I will communicate the information thinking about my audience and purpose:</b>	
<b>This is my plan of action to pursue my chosen option:</b>	
<b>This is how I modified my plan when new information arose that required a change:</b>	

Now what?

	Explanation—be specific. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.
<b>This is my assessment of the results of my actions:</b>	
<b>These are my new actions or goals based on my learning:</b>	

## Virtual Ambassador Group Process Rubric

4	3	2	1
<p>We paraphrase what others have said in our group to clarify understanding.</p> <p>We ask probing questions.</p> <p>We encourage and value the ideas and opinions of our group members.</p> <p>All of us can express our opinions and positions without hurting the feelings of others in our group.</p> <p>Our differences are appreciated—we seek out diverse opinions and try to come to common understanding.</p>	<p>We respond verbally to the ideas of others in our group and may ask for clarification.</p> <p>We are interested and curious about the ideas of others in our group.</p> <p>Our opinions are communicated without passing judgment, such as using “I” versus “you” messages.</p> <p>We can extend our discussions beyond our initial thoughts and ideas.</p> <p>Differences that we have are resolved.</p>	<p>We acknowledge the ideas of others.</p> <p>Occasionally, we repeat the ideas of others to acknowledge or indicate support.</p> <p>Sometimes, we have a difficult time responding to the ideas of others in our group.</p> <p>We pay attention to the consequences of what we say or do at times, and taking turns or accepting suggestions from others is difficult.</p> <p>Our differences are sometimes ignored and, when acknowledged, can be left unresolved.</p>	<p>We offer feedback only if requested.</p> <p>We have difficulty responding to questions.</p> <p>Our contributions are neither acknowledged nor responded to.</p> <p>We do not pay attention to the consequences of what we say or do.</p> <p>Our differences are usually suppressed or ignored and sometimes result in arguments.</p>

## VIRTUAL AMBASSADOR MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION RUBRIC

	4	3	2	1
<b>Content</b>	<p>We clearly describe the country, including geographic, economical, political, and cultural information.</p> <p>We thoroughly explain a key social issue.</p> <p>We present a realistic project that directly addresses the issue.</p> <p>We include a detailed budget with visual representation.</p>	<p>We describe the country, including geographic, economical, political, and cultural information but some of our descriptions lack detail.</p> <p>We generally explain a key social issue.</p> <p>We present a project that addresses the issue.</p> <p>We include a budget with visual representation, but it lacks detail in some areas.</p>	<p>We describe some information in a few of the following areas: geography, economics, politics, and culture.</p> <p>We partially explain a key social issue.</p> <p>We present a project that may not be realistic or directly address the issue.</p> <p>We include a budget without visual representation.</p>	<p>We describe very basic information about the country in one of the following areas: geography, economics, politics, or culture.</p> <p>We minimally explain a key social issue.</p> <p>We present a project that is not realistic and does not directly address the issue.</p> <p>We include only a basic budget.</p>
<b>Organization and Mechanics</b>	<p>Our presentation is well organized, sequential, and well-supported with detail.</p> <p>Our word choices are clear and appropriate.</p> <p>The grammar and spelling are free of errors.</p> <p>The formatting is consistent throughout the presentation.</p> <p>Proofreading is clearly evident, and the presentation contains no noticeable errors.</p>	<p>Our presentation is organized, sequential, and supported with detail.</p> <p>Our word choices are appropriate.</p> <p>The grammar and spelling are generally free of errors.</p> <p>The formatting is largely consistent, and inconsistencies do not interfere with the presentation.</p> <p>Proofreading is evident with only a few errors that do not detract from the presentation.</p>	<p>Our presentation is partially organized, and some of our ideas are not well supported.</p> <p>Our word choices are generally appropriate.</p> <p>Several errors in grammar and/or spelling are evident.</p> <p>The formatting inconsistencies detract from the presentation.</p> <p>Proofreading is somewhat evident, but errors detract from the presentation.</p>	<p>Much of our presentation is disorganized, and most of our ideas are not well supported.</p> <p>Our word choices are often inappropriate.</p> <p>Major errors in grammar and/or spelling are evident.</p> <p>Inconsistent formatting interferes with the presentation.</p> <p>Proofreading is not evident, and errors significantly interfere with the presentation.</p>

<p><b>Presentation</b></p>	<p>Our presentation is creative and engages the audience.</p> <p>Our slideshow contains visuals and graphics that powerfully support the content.</p> <p>We use strong, clear voices, and we are easily understood.</p> <p>We make excellent eye contact with the audience throughout the presentation.</p>	<p>Our presentation engages the audience.</p> <p>Our slideshow contains visuals and graphics that support the content.</p> <p>We use voices that are understood.</p> <p>We make good eye contact with the audience throughout the presentation.</p>	<p>Our presentation sometimes engages the audience.</p> <p>Our slideshow contains some visuals or graphics.</p> <p>We need to speak more clearly at times.</p> <p>We make some eye contact with the audience throughout the presentation.</p>	<p>Our presentation rarely or never engages the audience.</p> <p>Our slideshow does not contain visuals or graphics.</p> <p>We need to speak much more clearly.</p> <p>We do not make eye contact with the audience throughout the presentation.</p>
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## National Service Position Paper Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Content</b>	<p>My paper contains a strong thesis statement supported by research.</p> <p>My paper is richly developed with at least three compelling arguments.</p> <p>My paper has a clear viewpoint and is logically ordered.</p>	<p>My paper contains a thesis statement supported by research.</p> <p>My paper is fluent and fully developed with at least two compelling arguments.</p> <p>My paper has a viewpoint and flows in an understandable manner for the most part, but it could be more organized or neater.</p>	<p>My paper contains a weak thesis statement that is not supported by research.</p> <p>My paper is organized in a confusing manner, making the ideas difficult to understand.</p> <p>My paper is somewhat disorganized and difficult to understand at times.</p>	<p>My paper does not contain a thesis statement.</p> <p>My paper has no clear or logical organizational structure, just lots of facts.</p> <p>Overall, my work is disorganized and difficult to read and understand.</p>
<b>Voice</b>	<p>The words I chose are clear, descriptive, and accurate.</p> <p>My paper contains a consistent persuasive tone throughout.</p>	<p>The words I chose are adequately clear and descriptive.</p> <p>My paper contains a persuasive tone in most parts.</p>	<p>The words I chose are somewhat clear and descriptive.</p> <p>My paper contains a persuasive tone in some parts.</p>	<p>The words I chose are not clear or descriptive.</p> <p>My paper lacks a persuasive tone.</p>
<b>Support</b>	<p>My supporting evidence is detailed, relevant, and convincing.</p>	<p>My supporting evidence is strong but needs to be more specific.</p>	<p>My supporting evidence is adequate but not particularly strong.</p>	<p>I use very little or no supporting evidence for my arguments.</p>
<b>Conventions</b>	<p>My paper has no mechanical errors. It is</p>	<p>My paper includes one or two mechanical</p>	<p>My paper contains some mechanical</p>	<p>My paper contains many mechanical</p>

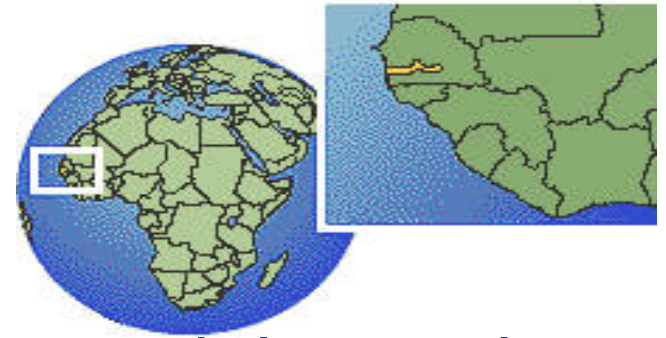
	written with complexity, using good word choices and exemplary sentence structure.	errors, but overall, it contains good word choices and sentence structures.	errors as well as some confusing sentences.	errors. My sentences are confusing and difficult to understand.
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Issues in Developing Countries  
What's the problem?  
What's a Project?





**Region:** The Gambia, Africa

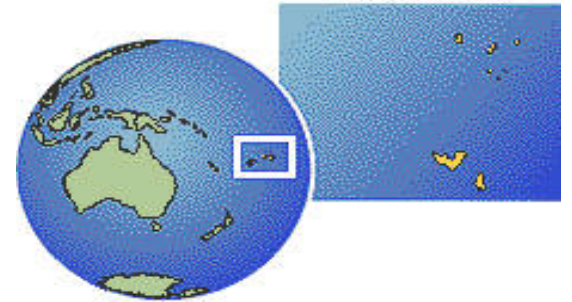
**Issue:** Environmental degradation and decreasing agricultural production are serious issues in Gambia. The conservation of natural resources is a high priority for the government. In the 1940s, 80 percent of the country was covered by dense forest and woodland – today, only 8 percent of the total land is covered by forest and woodland. Uncontrolled burning and deforestation for fuel wood are prevalent.

**Your solution?**



**Region:** The Gambia, Africa

**Peace Corps project:** Peace Corps volunteers work with schools and community groups on environmental education projects. Some volunteers work with community groups and individuals to establish village nurseries and plant orchards. Others work with women on community garden projects. One volunteer designed, implemented, and analyzed an important nationwide Women In Agroforestry survey, set up computer databases, and edited an agroforestry newsletter, which resulted in increased environmental awareness.

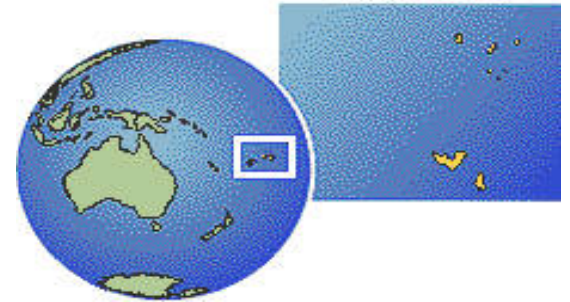


**Region:** Tonga (the Pacific)

**Issue:** The government of Tonga has expressed concern about the future for Tongan youth. They were apathetic and showed a lack of concern for their futures and the future of their community.

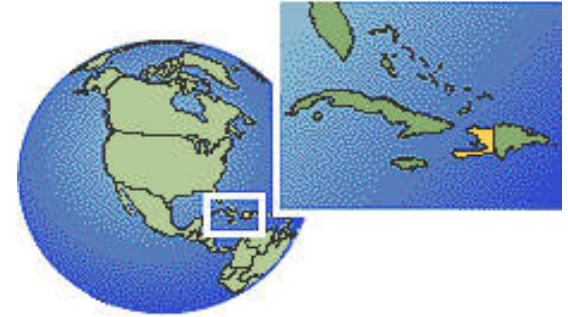
They want to see Tongan youth take more active leadership in the affairs of their communities.

**Your solution?**



**Region:** Tonga (the Pacific)

**Peace Corps project:** Volunteers have helped to develop youth leadership skills and trained peer educators throughout the islands. In cooperation with the Tonga government, the volunteers have established the first Tonga National Volunteer Services, in which trained Tongan volunteers work on community development projects.

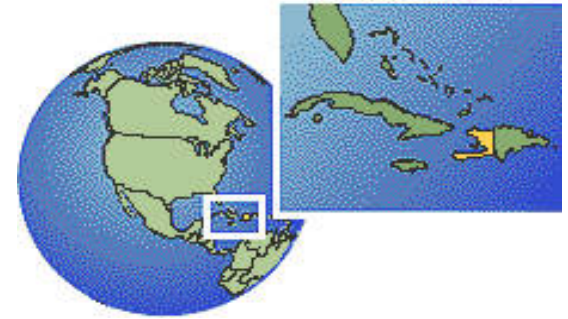


**Region:** Haiti (Latin America)

**Issue:** People in Haiti generally have poor access to health care and low standards of health care.

Because of this, many people suffer from chronic malnutrition and maternal health problems, and the spread of HIV/AIDS is rampant.

**Your solution?**



**Region:** Haiti (Latin America)

**Peace Corps project:** Volunteers implemented a health education project to promote health education and raise health standards by teaching communities about nutrition, immunization, sanitation, and maternal health. They also provided options for preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Volunteers work primarily with women and children, who are most affected by poor health.



Credits: Peace Corps Countries

[www.peacecorps.gov/countries/indexf.cfm](http://www.peacecorps.gov/countries/indexf.cfm)





# NAMIBIA, AFRICA

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# GEOGRAPHY



**Location:** Southern Africa, bordering S. Atlantic Ocean, between Angola and South Africa

**Total Area:** 825,318 sq. km.

**Borders:** Angola, Botswana, South Africa, and Zambia

**Climate:** Desert—hot, dry, with sparse rainfall

**Water:** 0 sq. km

**Terrain:** Mostly high plateau, Namib desert along coast and Kalahari Desert in east

**Land Use:** Arable land: 99%, Permanent crops: 0%, Other: 99.01%

**Natural Resources:** Diamonds, copper, uranium, gold, lead, tin, lithium, cadmium, zinc, salt, vanadium, natural gas, hydropower, fish

**Irrigated Land:** 60 sq. km.

**Environmental Issues:** Limited natural freshwater resources, desertification, wildlife poaching

# PEOPLE AND CULTURE



**Population:** 1,954,033

**Age Structure:** 0-14 years: 42.4%, 15-64 years: 54%, 65 years and older: 3.5%

**Life Expectancy:** 42.36 years

**Birth Rate:** 33.51 births/1,000

**Fertility Rate:** 4.65 children/woman

**Infant Mortality:** 72 per 1,000 births

**Ethnic Groups:** Black: 87.5%, white: 6%, mixed: 6.5%

**Languages:** Afrikaans: 60%, German: 32%, English: 7%

**Indigenous Languages:** Oshivambo, Herero, Nama

**Religions:** Christianity: 80-90% (at least 50% Lutheran); indigenous beliefs: 10-20%

**HIV/AIDS (adult rate):** 1 in 5

**People Living With AIDS:** 210,000

# ECONOMICS



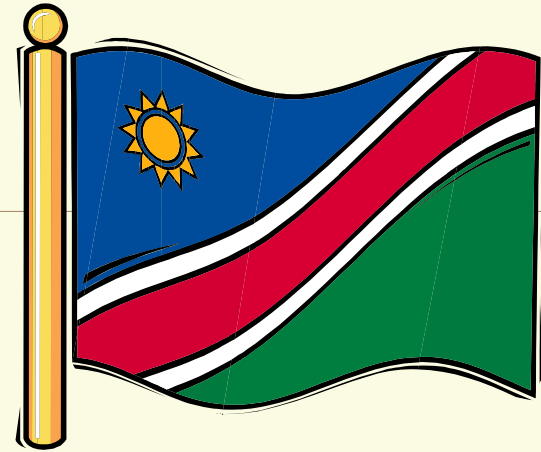
- Heavily dependent on the extraction and processing of minerals for export
- Half of the population depends on subsistence agriculture
- Industries: Meatpacking, fish processing, dairy, mining
- Mining: Diamond, lead, zinc, tin, silver, uranium, copper
- Agriculture: Millet, sorghum, peanuts, livestock, fish
- Import about 50% of grain/cereal requirement
- Labor force by occupation: agriculture: 47%, services: 33%, industry: 20%
- Unemployment: 35%
- 50% of the population is below poverty, with incomes of less than \$1,400 per year

# HISTORY

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- During its first years of occupation, Namibia was a German colony known as South-West Africa.
- During WWI, the country was occupied by South Africa and then was taken over by South Africa after WWII.
- In 1966, a guerilla group started a war for independence and renamed the area Namibia.
- In 1988, South Africa ended its involvement in Namibia.
- Independence followed in 1990 with multiparty elections and the establishment of a constitution.

# GOVERNMENT



**Type:** Republic

**Capital:** Windhoek

**Independence:** March 21, 1990

**Suffrage:** 18 years of age, universal

**Constitution Ratified:** 1990

**Executive Branch:** Chief of State: President Sam Nujoma, elected by popular vote for a 5 year term

**Legislative Branch:** Bicameral legislature with cabinet appointed by president from member of national assembly

**Judicial Branch:** Supreme court, legal system is based on Roman-Dutch law and 1990 constitution

# PROBLEM

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## **Illiteracy:**

- 62% of adult population (over age 15)
  - 55% of males
  - 69% of females
- 
- Namibia's people are striving for a higher literacy rate.
  - Illiteracy often affects women and poor rural people the most.

# PROJECT

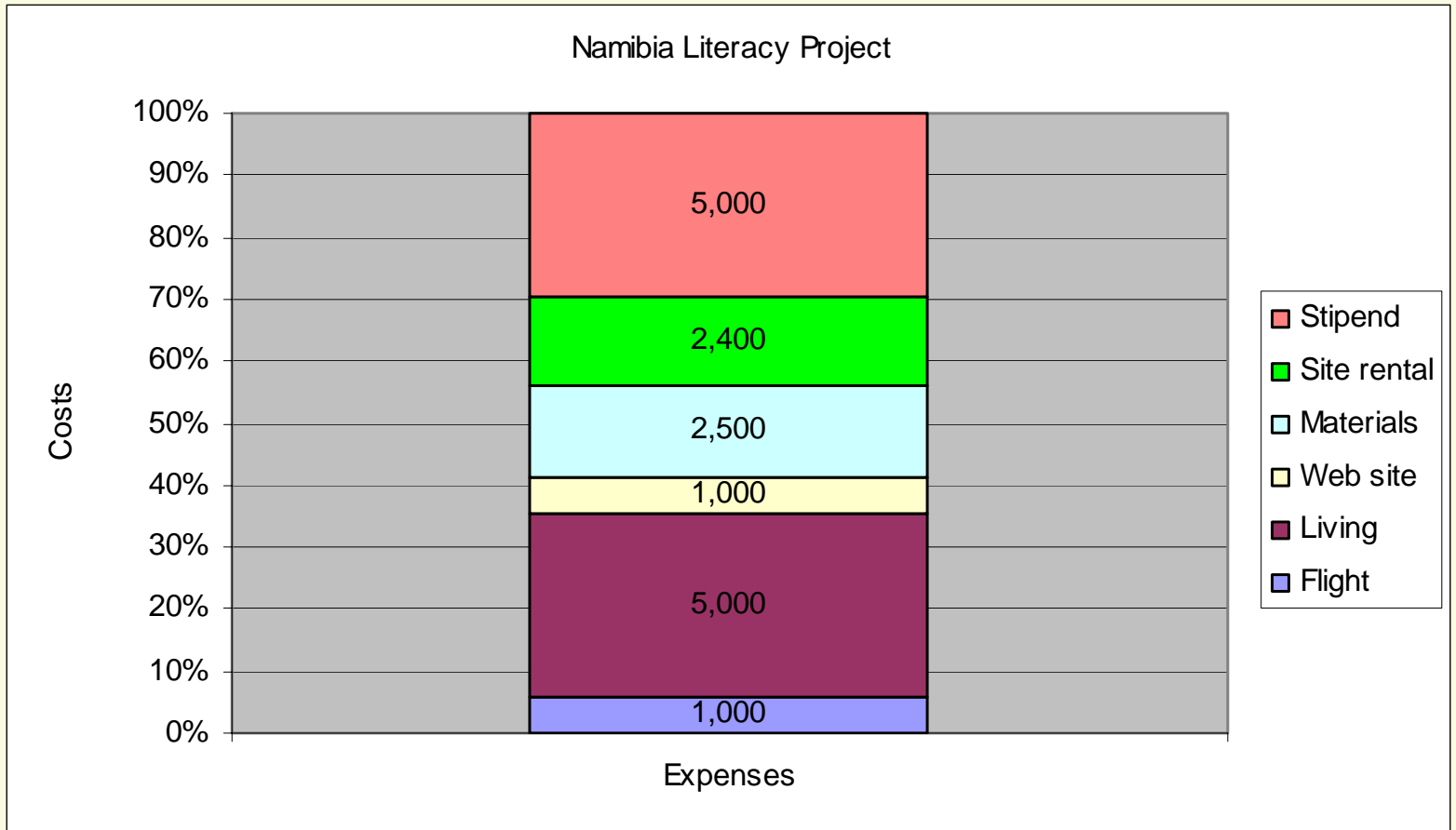
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## **Ideas for solution:**

- Establish adult-literacy tutoring program targeting women
- Train adult-literacy leaders
- Develop literacy curriculum
- Create a Web site to solicit donations for a library



# PROJECT BUDGET

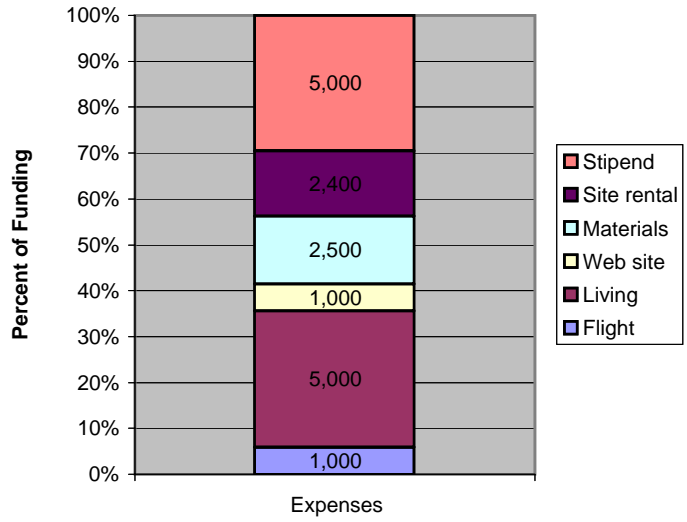


# SOURCES

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- An Introduction to Namibia ([www.geographia.com/namibia](http://www.geographia.com/namibia))
- CIA World Fact Book: Namibia  
([www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/wa.html](http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/wa.html))
- Namibia in a Nutshell  
([www.grnnet.gov.na/Nam\\_Nutshell/History/History.htm](http://www.grnnet.gov.na/Nam_Nutshell/History/History.htm))
- Namibia World Desk Reference  
([www.travel.dk.com/wdr/NA/mNA\\_Intr.htm](http://www.travel.dk.com/wdr/NA/mNA_Intr.htm))
- Peace Corps Countries: Namibia  
([www.peacecorps.gov/countries/namibia/index.cfm](http://www.peacecorps.gov/countries/namibia/index.cfm))

### Namibia Literacy Project



flight	1,000
living	5,000
web site	1,000
training ma	2,500
site rental	2,400
stipend	5,000
	<b>11,900</b>