Who Owns Poverty Lesson Plan

Lesson Title:

Chapter 13: Poverty Free Businesses

Chapter Summary:

In this chapter the author details the challenges of bringing the Poverty Stoplight program to other countries and how they trained the partners at other organizations who wanted to use the Poverty Stoplight with their own clients. The author also discusses the concept of bringing the Poverty Stoplight program to businesses and how they built a training model for private industry to use the system.

Lesson Topic:

At the end of this lesson students will be able to identify the challenges faced by the team while introducing and training private businesses to the Poverty Stoplight system.

Resources/Materials: Links needed for activities and assignments are in each section.

For the Global Marketplace on Your Back activity, an additional hand-out is needed.

Lesson Vocabulary:

1. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs - an evolving business practice that incorporates sustainable development into a company's business model. The intent is to have a positive impact on social, economic and environmental factors.
2. Fair Trade Movement - an institutional arrangement designed to help producers in developing countries achieve better trading conditions. Members of the fair trade movement advocate the payment of higher prices to exporters, as well as improved social and environmental standards.

Outcome(s)/Expectation(s):

1. Describe the pros and cons of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs
2. Compare the goals of CSR programs with the Poverty Stoplight program as it applies to private businesses
3. Discuss the social significance and potential repercussions for businesses when their employees are living in extreme poverty.

Critical Thinking Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think that private companies might be willing to pay to use the Poverty Stoplight? What expectations might they have of the tool?
2. Do you think that poverty could be eliminated if all companies agreed to use the Poverty Stoplight?

3. Explain Corporate Social Responsibility and give some examples of CSR initiatives that might benefit your own community.
4. The author suggests that it is not always possible or easy to measure the impact of CSR, or know "who benefits more." Are these features necessary for engaging in CSR activities?
5. Why do you think the author suggest that in our economic thinking "we need to start again at the beginning"? Do you agree?

Instructional Delivery

Activities/Motivation:

The Global Marketplace on Your Back

In this chapter you learned about how businesses may or may not know that their employees are in poverty and how big companies underpaying their employees affects communities. In this activity, you will look at where the items you are wearing are made and link that to the global economy.

Additional vocabulary for this activity:

Child Labor – Work performed by children, often under hazardous or exploitative conditions. This does not include all work done by kids/children everywhere, for example, do chores to help their families. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child calls for protection "against economic exploitation and against carrying out any job that might endanger well-being or educational opportunities, or that might be harmful to health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development" (Article 32).

Maquiladora – A factory, often foreign-owned, that assembles goods for export. From Spanish, the word is pronounced mah-kee-lah-DOH-rah. It is usually shortened to maquila (mah-KEE-lah).

Free-Trade Zone - An industrial area in which a country allows foreign companies to import material for production and export finished goods without paying significant taxes or duties (fees to the government). A free-trade zone thus decreases a company's production costs.

Participants should begin by watching the video: Zoned for Slavery: The Child Behind the Label: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XtYhfcEZ9A

Ask each student to check the labels they find on their clothing. Have students write down each country their clothing comes from. Include shoes, eyeglasses, and headgear. Note: This works well as a homework assignment in which participants survey their closet and drawers and record information about labels and countries where apparel is made.

Once students have completed their review, make a list on the board of each unique country found. You can also tally each country as it is named to see if one stands out above the rest.

Complete the activity in the hand-out: The Global Marketplace on Your Back – T-Shirt Math

Once students have completed the activity discuss the following:

1. Why do you think a small group of randomly picked people in the class is found to be wearing clothing from such diverse countries?
2. Were the brand names those of US companies? Why do US clothing companies make their products abroad?

Follow-up activity:

1. Who do you think made the fabric in your clothes? Made the buttons, zippers, and other decorations? Sewed the buttonholes, set in the collar and sleeves? Was it more likely to have been a male or a female worker? An adult or a child? List these ideas under the heading WHO
2. How much do you imagine that the workers who made these clothes were paid? How much should they have been paid? For example, should the workers have received pay that equals a quarter of the garment's retail price? Half?
3. List participants' ideas on the board under the heading THEIR PAY
4. Ask participants what they have been paid as an hourly wage? List the wages and type of work on the board under the heading YOUR PAY

Use the information from the three headings to further the class discussion on the disparity of pay for the work performed in these countries.

Writing Prompts

1. The author describes his "dream to get to Walmart" (p185-7). In a short reaction paper, discuss whether or not you agree with the author's idea of using the Poverty Stoplight in companies such as Walmart, and why.
2. On page 188, the author writes: "[T]he Poverty Stoplight is about giving poverty back to individuals—but it seemed to depend on having a skilled and motivated organization facilitating the process and doing the influencing. In the past, we'd encouraged government to take on that role—but in proved too inflexible. We'd encouraged development NGOs and civil society organizations to take on that role—but they were unable to make their single-issue solutions work in this new landscape of multidimensional poverty. But the private sector? It was agile, well-resourced and incentivized to promote employee well-being as a driver of productivity." Discuss what assumptions are underlying this statement, and what school of thought it might be most compatible with.
3. Prepare a short literature overview on the principles of the Fair Trade movement and its effectiveness in increasing well-being. What do you see as the key differences between this approach and the Poverty Stoplight?
4. The author says "The private sector is a powerful force in the world—what if we could harness it as a force for good?" (p.179). Do you think that, in the absence of the Poverty Stoplight, the private sector is typically a force for good? What are some (other) ways the private sector can be a force for good? Explain.
5. Do you think the decision to expand the Poverty Stoplight program to the private sector was a good idea? What sorts of strategies would you employ in such an expansion, OR: How would you justify retaining a purely public organization?
6. Explain some of the possible benefits, and some possible drawbacks, of CSR. Do you think CSR can lead to sustainable development? How, if at all, could we ensure that CSR initiatives succeed in benefiting their target community?
7. The author describes the Stoplight's private partnerships by saying "Instead of community development, it's employee development" (p.182). Why might this be a "bold claim" (as the author calls it)?

Final Project Assignment

For the final project, students will be required to develop and present a "Poverty Stoplight" Visual Survey Questionnaire and Results Matrix, which defines and identifies poverty in (preferably) the student's own community.

Final Steps:

Final version of project (description of the process and results of points 1-10 above) is due. Final project should be not more than 15 pages (not including bibliography and appendices).

Information for High School Teachers: Relation to Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1.A
Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8
Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.