

Bringing the world into our classrooms and schools creates an opportunity to increase relevance in learning and to enliven the standards and the content that are part of state or district curriculum expectations. Although many schools and districts have global awareness or global citizenship as part of their mission or vision, often teachers and leaders struggle to know how to make that a real part of the learning experience for students.

Through a partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning, a new, actionable definition of global competence has emerged that schools can use to bring a greater global perspective into teaching and learning everyday.

The definition articulates the knowledge and skills that students need in the 21st century. Students must

have the knowledge and skills to investigate the world in robust ways, to recognize and weigh their own perspectives as well as the perspectives of others, to communicate ideas effectively to diverse audiences in multiple ways, and to take action in order to not just learn about the world but to make a difference in the world. This knowledge and skill is built both within the core content areas as well as through interdisciplinary study in which the interconnectedness of issues as well as broader global themes are explored.

Schools or teachers can use the elementary or secondary version of the global competence matrix on the following pages as a planning tool to bring a greater global focus to the curriculum. Consider asking the following questions, either for self-reflection or as the prompt for a department or grade-level team conversation.

1. What am I already doing in the curriculum or through specific learning units that help students learn to investigate the world?

2. Is there a specific unit or topic that I currently teach that, by adding a focus on a global problem, issue or challenge, could foster a deeper understanding of the world for students?

3. What state standards or district curriculum provide an opportunity for students to articulate their own perspectives as well as explore different perspectives on an issue or event?

4. What opportunities are there for students to communicate with diverse audiences, use a language that they are learning, or connect with other students around the world?

5. How do students in my school “make a difference” in the world either through local actions and initiatives or through broader global actions and / or service opportunities?

6. What is one concrete step that I can take to develop global competence in my students through the learning opportunities that I create for them?

7. What learning do I need, and how can I learn in community with my peers, to be better prepared to develop global competence in my students?

Adapted with permission from *Going Global: Preparing Our Students for an Interconnected World*, Asia Society, 2008.