

# risc reading international solidarity centre enews

september 2004



a half termly bulletin for teachers, focusing on topical global issues

## Forming the future

Do you ever feel that the world is spinning out of control? The future can look bleak and uncertain when we're faced with media reports of violence, or humanitarian and 'natural' disasters. It's easy to think "so what can I do about it?" but the future is in our hands – if we do nothing we're allowing the future to form risking irreversible environmental damage and continuing inequality.

Pupils need to explore for themselves what they want the future to look like for their local and global communities. According to David Hicks, "if education is for the future, then the future needs to be a more explicit concern in education". Hicks goes on to point out that over the past 30 years global education has focused on the need to teach about global interdependence – but this interdependence has a temporal dimension, which now needs more attention. Where better to start than with a topical issue?

This summer we read headlines referring to 'Shattered Boscastle' and 'UK on flood alert as storms surge in from the Atlantic'. While news agendas are more often dominated by 'the war on terror', violence in Iraq and European security scares, it would be easy to assume that the extreme weather we've experienced is purely a British phenomena. Only the highest profile stories of 'natural' disasters in other parts of the world make it into the news. Fortunately no one was killed by the storms in Cornwall, yet how many people realise that:

- in June heavy rains and mudslides in Brazil left 2,000 homeless
- in July severe flooding in China killed 381 and affected 45,000,000 people, ruining over 3 million hectares of crops
- in July the most severe monsoon floods in 15 years hit Southern Asia – in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan almost 2,000 people have been killed.

In the future, disasters will become larger and more cataclysmic and increasingly related to extreme weather conditions, which result from global warming (figures from the Observer 15.08.04).

So where do we fit into this picture? With global temperatures rising more than half a degree centigrade over the past year, pupils can be challenged to explore their own influence on this picture of the future, and what action individuals and communities need to take to ensure that the future is formed on the basis of sustainability and social justice.

### Forming the future – a simple look at a complex issue

The decisions we make, eg about consumption of fuel, contribute to global warming ... rise in global temperatures (more than 1/2 a degree centigrade in the past year) leads to glaciers & ice sheets melting, rises in average sea levels ... warmer weather ... more evaporation ... more precipitation ... swollen lakes and rivers, flash floods, landslips, mudslides – natural disasters?

### Saturday 25th September 10.30-4.30 Global Teachers' Open Day @ RISC

This free training day is designed for you to 'drop in' for part or all of the day and find out what we can offer your school – attend one or more of our taster workshops, visit our Resource Centre, Schools' Loans Service and Roof Garden, enjoy some Fair Trade refreshments and pick up some free resources. We look forward to meeting you.

## a 3 day training course

### become a Global Citizenship advocate

this course will cover the theory & practice of Global Citizenship and will develop participants' abilities to:

- address opportunities for social justice & sustainability across the curriculum
- tackle controversial issues within the school community
- increase pupil's motivation, self-esteem & attainment
  - be a catalyst for change.

### 10-4.30 Wednesdays at RISC 10th Nov 04, 1st Dec 04 & 23rd Feb 05

Total cost for the 3 day course £300 – to include support materials, plus £125 of resources of your choice.

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## Events

### September

**8: International Literacy Day** This day and events throughout the week focuses attention on worldwide literacy issues and needs. [www.reading.org/meetings/ild/](http://www.reading.org/meetings/ild/)

**12: Racial Justice Sunday** Sponsored by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland to raise awareness of each other's cultures and experiences [www.ctbi.org.uk](http://www.ctbi.org.uk) and click on Racial Justice

Sept 15-Oct 15: **Hispanic Heritage Month** September 15 is the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico achieved independence on September 16, Chile on September 1 and Belize on September 21. [www.infoplease.com/spot/hhm1.html](http://www.infoplease.com/spot/hhm1.html)

**21: International Peace Day** A day allocated by the UN aimed at having the entire world observe a day of peace and nonviolence. [www.worldpeace.org/peaceday.html](http://www.worldpeace.org/peaceday.html) or [www.internationaldayofpeace.org/](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org/)

**15-22: European Mobility Week** (Car Free Day 22 September) Works towards more sustainable mobility. The theme for 2004 is safer streets for children. [www.22september.org/](http://www.22september.org/)

**17-19: Clean up the World Weekend** Communities around the world will make their local environment a cleaner, healthier place to live. In 2004 the campaign takes on a 'Seas and Oceans' theme. [www.cleanup.com.au/Main.asp?Requesttype=Doc&DocID=154&CatID=55#](http://www.cleanup.com.au/Main.asp?Requesttype=Doc&DocID=154&CatID=55#)

**18-26: Welcome to Walking Week** Walks are organised which are accessible by public transport in support of European Car Free Day on 22 September. [www.ramblers.org.uk/walks/](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/walks/)

**16: International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer** Reflecting the urgent need to preserve the ozone layer, which filters sunlight and prevents the adverse effects of ultraviolet radiation reaching the Earth's surface, thereby preserving life on the planet. [www.uneptie.org/ozonation/events/ozoneday/2004\\_main.htm](http://www.uneptie.org/ozonation/events/ozoneday/2004_main.htm)

**26: Vote for Trade Justice** An event sponsored by Christian Aid to promote trade justice. [www.christian-aid.org.uk/campaign/brighton/index.htm](http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/campaign/brighton/index.htm)

### October

**1-31: Black History Month** Promotes knowledge of Black History and experience, disseminates information on positive Black contributions to British Society and heightens the confidence and awareness of Black people in their cultural heritage. [www.black-history-month.co.uk](http://www.black-history-month.co.uk)

**4: World Habitat Day** Remembers people worldwide who are homeless or without adequate shelter. The theme for 2004 is Cities – Engines of Rural Development. [www.unhabitat.org/whd/2004/default.asp](http://www.unhabitat.org/whd/2004/default.asp)

**4: World Animal Day** A celebration of animals and their contribution to our lives. [www.worldanimalday.org.uk](http://www.worldanimalday.org.uk)

**4-8: Walk to School Week** (Walk to School Day October 6) Encourages children to walk to school and create healthier, more sustainable communities. [www.walktoschool.org](http://www.walktoschool.org)

**4-10: BDA Learn To Sign Week** Celebrate British Sign Language & Deaf culture. [www.learntosign.org.uk/myfc.php](http://www.learntosign.org.uk/myfc.php)

**5: World Teachers Day** Focuses on the work of educators throughout the world in contributing to a better-educated and more tolerant society. This year the focus is on the need for qualified teachers in the classroom.

[www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index\\_21889.html](http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_21889.html)

**15: World Rural Women's Day** Aims to raise the profile of women farmers. Theme for 2004 is biodiversity.

[www.rural-womens-day.org/](http://www.rural-womens-day.org/)

**15-31: Reading International Festival** Aims to raise the profile of Reading's international links and diverse communities with a wide range of events and activities. details: 0118 958 6692

**16-28: Action Week Against Racism and Discrimination in European Football** Run by Football Against Racism in Europe and supported by UEFA. [www.farenet.org/actionweek.asp](http://www.farenet.org/actionweek.asp)

**16: World Food Day** Aims to increase international awareness of the problem of hunger facing the world.

[www.fao.org/wfd/index\\_en.asp](http://www.fao.org/wfd/index_en.asp)

**17-24: Amnesty International Week** [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

**17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty** Aims to raise awareness about the plight of the 1.3 billion people living in absolute poverty and to mobilize action against it. [www.un.org/events/poverty](http://www.un.org/events/poverty) and resources at [www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/poverty2000/index.asp](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/poverty2000/index.asp)

## Resources

David Hicks *Citizenship for the Future: a practical classroom guide* Pub WWF-UK 2000 £12

If all education is for the future, how do we help children and young people explore the kind of future they want for themselves, for society, and for the world? This handbook offers teachers a range of stimulating classroom activities.

David Hicks *Lessons for the Future: the missing dimension in education* Pub Routledge Falmer 2002 £75

This book provides an insight into, and an argument for, futures education. It presents innovative ideas for teaching, outlines research in the field and looks at young people's attitudes to the future. This book is currently only available in hardback, and will be published in paperback if the publisher believes there is sufficient demand. They can be emailed at [anna.clarkson@tandf.co.uk](mailto:anna.clarkson@tandf.co.uk)

Nia Williams *Natural Disasters: what can we do?* Pub Humanities Education Centre 2004 free from RISC

This resource supports teachers in responding to children's questions and concerns, and encourages them to look beyond the consequences of disasters to the causes behind them. It is unusual in that it suggests ways of responding that go beyond just fundraising.

**RISC has a very wide selection of teaching resources for all ages and curriculum areas as well as a selection of artefacts for loan, please email us your name and address for further information.**