



## Socially-based Curriculum Unit: Multinational Corporations - The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

**Unit Title:** Multinational Corporations: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

**Time Frame:** 6-7 periods (75 minute periods)

- 4 periods: Internet research and analysis
- 1 period: oral reports
- 1-2 periods: optional extension activity - showing of the film *The Corporation*

**Unit Developer(s):** Kathleen Beattie

**Developed for Course Name and Course Code:** Canadian and World Issues: A Geographic Analysis (CGW4U)

**Strand(s) and Curriculum Learning Expectations Addressed:**

### **Geographic Foundations: Space and Systems Strand**

SSV.02: analyse the causes and effects of economic disparities around the world

SS1.05: identify ways in which countries and regions of the world are becoming increasingly interdependent

SS1.06: identify the social, economic, cultural, political, or ecological components of selected geographic issues

### **Global Connections Strand**

GCV.01: analyse the influences that increase the interdependence of countries around the world

GC1.04 explain how economies and environments in some places can be affected by decisions made in other places

GC3.02: evaluate the performance of a selected transnational corporation with respect to the promotion of environmental sustainability and human rights

GC3.03: analyse problems of hunger and poverty in selected countries and explain how certain practices may aggravate the problems

### **Understanding and Managing Change Strand**

UC2.03: evaluate the role played by non-governmental organizations and local community initiatives in different parts of the world in promoting sustainable development and responsible resource management

### **Methods of Geographic Inquiry and Communication Strand**

GIV.02: analyse and interpret data gathered through research and investigation, using a variety of methods and geotechnologies

GIV.03: communicate the results of geographic inquiries, using appropriate terms and concepts and a variety of forms and techniques

GI2.07: explain the different points of view on a geographic issue that are, or might be, held by various stakeholders



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GI2.09: draw conclusions or make judgements or predictions on the basis of reasoned analysis and supporting evidence

GI3.01: communicate the results of geographic inquiries, for different audiences and purposes, using a variety of forms (e.g. oral and written reports, multimedia presentations, essays)

GI3.03: use appropriate terminology when communicating results of geographic inquiries

### Desired Results

#### **Unit Description:**

This unit, developed for CGW4U (Canadian and World Issues: A Geographic Analysis), starts with an introductory reading on globalization and multinational corporations. The students then carry out a 4-part Internet research assignment over 3 periods. First they evaluate the website of a multinational corporation of their choice. They also examine the financial information of that company available from the Hoover's website. Students then investigate public concerns about corporations as expressed on the websites of three watchdog organizations: *Corporate Accountability International*, the periodical *Multinational Monitor* and the Canada-based social activist site *The Maquila Solidarity Network*. A page of reflective analysis of the research findings follows on the fourth day. On the final day, students present their findings to the class in an oral report. An extension activity is also recommended—the showing of the TVO film *The Corporation*.

#### **Enduring Understandings / Learning:**

Students will examine the controversial issue of the role of multinational corporations (MNCs) in economic globalization. They will learn that while MNCs bring economic benefits to the countries they locate in or out-source to, they also cause negative impacts on the local, regional and global scale.

Students should understand that social activists and watchdog organizations, along with the actions of everyday consumers, play an important role in putting pressure on MNCs to operate ethically. Multinationals should follow a code of conduct whereby human rights are respected, environments are protected and resources are exploited at a sustainable rate.



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### Assessment Tasks

#### **Performance Tasks and Other Evidence That Will Demonstrate the Knowledge and Skills Acquired:**

Students will submit their research findings and a short analytical essay to the teacher for evaluation to demonstrate the skills and knowledge acquired. They will also give an oral report of their findings to the class to demonstrate the knowledge acquired, skills of thinking and inquiry, as well as communication.

#### **Assessment Criteria:**

The student products can be assessed by category. The research findings, Parts B, C, D, and E can be evaluated by level based on knowledge and understanding as well as application. Part F, the student's page of analysis, should be evaluated for Thinking/Inquiry skills as well as for written Communication. The final oral report allows for an assessment of oral Communication, Knowledge and Understanding, along with Thinking and Inquiry skills. Teachers should tie their assessment of this unit to the expectations of the course in which it is used. *Appendix C: Rubric - Multinational Corporations – the Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is provided, with expectations for the course CGW 4U, Canadian and World Issues.

### Unit Planning Notes

#### **Prior Learning Necessary:**

Students should have some concept of the disparity between rich and poor countries and the socio-economic indicators and characteristics of developed nations versus lesser developed countries.

#### **Preparation Notes:**

1. Photocopy a class set of Appendix A worksheets or, alternatively, copy and upload the file to the school network or online educational program such as Moodle, as a template for students to use for word-processing.
2. Internet/computer access must be arranged for 4 periods of 75 minutes.
3. The teacher should read Appendix B and access the TVO film *The Corporation* if using the extension activity.
4. Each semester the teacher should double-check and, if necessary, update the website instructions; website lay-outs and links change periodically.



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### Learning Plan

#### **Lesson 1: Days 1 to 4 – Research and Analysis of Findings**

1. Introduce the unit by asking students:
  - what they know about the concept of globalization
  - what they know about multinational corporations and some examples of MNCs
  - how multinational corporations drive globalization
2. Following a class discussion of the above terms, hand out **Appendix A: *Multinational Corporations: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly*** and have a class reading of **Part A: *Introduction to Globalization and Multinational Corporations***. (Alternatively, Appendix A could be accessed by students as a file from a school network drive, Moodle or via email, as a template for word processing). The teacher may stipulate that every student select a different multinational corporation to research in Part B.
3. Assign the Internet research worksheet package which includes **Part B: *Report on the Operations of a Multinational***, **Part C: *The Ten Worst Corporations of Last Year***, **Part D: *The Maquila Solidarity Network***, **Part E: *The Corporate Hall of Shame*** and **Part F: *Analysis of MNC Research***. The Internet research should take up to 3 periods of 75 minutes, followed by another period for the analysis required in Part F.

#### **Lesson 2: Day 5 – Oral Presentation of Findings**

1. Students give an oral report on both their research and analysis.
2. Encourage class discussion of the reports.

#### **Lesson 3: Days 6-7 – Optional Extension Activity – Class Viewing of *The Corporation***

1. Teachers should read **Appendix B: Optional Extension Activity – Teacher Backgrounder on Showing *The Corporation*** for background information on this resource. The fast pace and entertaining footage of *The Corporation* makes it particularly well-suited to show to a teenage audience. For a full overview of the film, as well as curriculum links, lessons and blackline masters, go to the TVO website at: <http://www.tvo.org/thecorporation/index.html>.
2. Show Part 1: “The Pathology of Commerce” and/or Part 3: “Reckoning”, both particularly relevant to this unit.



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### Attachments

#### **Appendix A: Multinational Corporations: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly**

- *Part A: Introduction to Globalization and Multinational Corporations*
- *Part B: Report on the Operations of a Multinational*
- *Part C: The Ten Worst Corporations of Last Year*
- *Part D: The Maquila Solidarity Network*
- *Part E: The Corporate Hall of Shame*
- *Part F: Analysis of MNC Research*

#### **Appendix B: Optional Extension Activity – Teacher Backgrounder on Showing *The Corporation***

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### Other Possible Course Applications

This unit is recommended for Senior level courses. Teachers are advised to adapt *Part F: Analysis of MNC Research* to meet specific course expectations.

#### **HSB4M: Challenge and Change in Society, Grade 12, University/College Preparation**

SC3.01: demonstrate an understanding of the anthropological significance of the relationships among globalization, tribalism, and transnationalism for Canadians

SC3.02: analyse, from a Canadian perspective, the social structures that support, and those that weaken, global inequalities (e.g., literacy, poverty, new technologies)

#### **HZT4U: Philosophy: Questions and Theories, Grade 12, University Preparation**

ET1.03: use critical and logical thinking skills to defend their own ideas about ethical issues (e.g., the nature of the good life) and to anticipate counter-arguments to their ideas

ET1.04: demonstrate how the moral problems and dilemmas that occur in everyday contexts (e.g., in medicine, business, law, the media) can be effectively analysed using a variety of different philosophical theories (e.g., virtue ethics, social-contract theory)

PP1.05: demonstrate an understanding of how particular philosophical theories (e.g., of rights, citizenship, duties) have influenced the development of subjects such as political science, economics, or law



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### **CPW4U: Canadian and World Politics, Grade 12, University Preparation**

SPO.030: analyse the rise and development of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and corporations as world powers (e.g., International Committee of the Red Cross/ Red Crescent, multinational corporations such as Nike, Shell, General Motors, Microsoft, Mitsubishi)

TII.043: explain the key arguments for and against the processes of “globalization” in economics, politics, and culture (e.g., opportunities for exchanges and international cooperation; likelihood of hegemony or domination of weaker by stronger nations)

DDN.050: compare key elements of selected theories concerning the nature of effective development (e.g., in relation to human development, global industrialization, sustainable national development, ecological preservation)

ICC.011: explain the effects on national sovereignty of the trend towards global decision making (e.g., with reference to the European Union [EU], Free Trade Area of the Americas [FTAA])

IIN.021: analyse the need for new international organizations as a result of globalization and the advent of new technologies (e.g., organizations for regulating extragovernmental firms, controlling drug trafficking, regulating activities in outer space)

### **BMI3C: Introduction to Marketing, Grade 11, College Preparation**

TMA.047: identify and describe various environmental, ethical, social, and legal issues that affect marketing activities

IES.056: explain the need for firms to demonstrate good corporate citizenship and organizational ethics in their day-to-day marketing practices

IES.057: identify examples of businesses that include corporate social responsibility as a component of their marketing philosophy (e.g., not using animals in product testing, sponsoring charitable events, hosting children's camps, engaging in responsible environmental practices)

IMA.060: describe the factors leading to the development of global markets (e.g., the growth of information technology, common currencies, multinational corporations, immigration)

### **BBB4E: International Business Essentials, Grade 12, Workplace Preparation**

CGM.001: identify the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges associated with international business activity

CIB.031: demonstrate an understanding of the way in which ethical considerations affect international business decisions

EIS.036: describe ways in which multinational enterprises have both positive and negative effects on the countries in which they operate

EIS.037: summarize the ethical issues that arise for companies that are competing internationally (e.g., fair wages, regulation of child labour, cultural preservation, environmental practices) TCT.066: use information and communication technology for a variety of purposes related to international businesses



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### **BBB4M: International Business Fundamentals, Grade 12, University/ College Preparation**

BTE.003: demonstrate an understanding of how international business and economic activities increase the interdependence of nations

TGE.018: assess the effects of current trends in global business activity and economic conditions

WIM.061: analyse the ways in which ethical considerations affect international business decisions

EIS.064: assess ways in which multinational enterprises have both positive and negative effects on the countries in which they operate, including the impact on the norms and practices of local and indigenous cultures (e.g., effects of the information and communication technology industry in India; effects of food, drug, and resource-extraction companies in Africa)

EIS.065: evaluate the ethical issues that arise for companies competing internationally, in relation to the following groups: consumers (e.g., safety, fair pricing, disclosure); stockholders (e.g., fair return, controlled risk); employees (e.g., fair wages, good working conditions, outsourcing, regulation of child labour); the host country (e.g., effects on local economy, respect for local laws and cultural preservation); and society (e.g., sustainability of development, practices to combat corruption)

TCB.005: describe key concepts related to international business and globalization (e.g., fair trade; outsourcing; rationalization; absolute, competitive, and comparative advantage)

TCB.006: use information technology for a variety of purposes related to international business

EIS.066: analyse the ways in which international development agencies (e.g., United Nations organizations, World Health Organization) and non-governmental organizations (e.g., Greenpeace, World Safety Organization) promote economic progress in developing countries

IIN.013: describe ways in which international business activity develops interdependence among nations