

Media Review

Lipovsky, M. What's your global IQ?: A review of Hobert, C.F. (2013), *Raising Global IQ: Preparing Our Students for a Shrinking Planet*.

Raising Global IQ: Preparing Our Students for a Shrinking Planet. Carl F. Hobert. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2013. (ISBN 978-0-8070-3288-6)

Technology has changed how people learn, think, create, and communicate. You can travel to the other side of the world to observe the weather, make friends, communicate face-to-face with someone on a different continent, read the news from the perspective of different cultures, countries, and religions, all in your own home. According to Carl F. Hobert, the planet is shrinking and we need to prepare students to be able to succeed in a global society. Hobert is a professor of education at Boston University where he directs the Axis for Hope Center. This non-profit center focuses on teaching middle school and high school students about conflict resolution through simulation workshops. Conflict resolution is one of Hobert's key strategies for building a student's global intelligence (IQ), along with language and cultural fluency, technology and media literacy, extracurricular activities, foreign travel, and service learning. Students need opportunities to think globally, but service learning allows students to put what they have learned into action locally, regionally, and nationally.

Grounding his work in the theories of Howard Gardner, Jean Piaget, Maria Montessori, John Dewey, and Paulo Freire, Hobert concludes that "these theories describe, in essence, how we can best help our children develop the intellectual flexibility, cross-cultural skills, and moral and ethical grounding to become responsible global citizens" (p. xxv). Becoming global citizens is not a new idea, and it is not going to take educational reform to build it into our official curriculum. It is through more purposeful teaching with a global focus that students can learn to problem solve, to be empathetic, and to have an international sense of the world.

Professor Hobert focuses on five areas to build international-mindedness in students. These areas are language and cultural fluency, technology and media, exchange programs and cross-cultural engagement, problem solving and conflict management, and service learning. It is through these areas of focus that students learn about cultures around the world. Along with becoming fluent in language they become "fluent" in culture. This is best achieved by cultural immersion and interacting directly with people of other cultures through international exchange programs and relationships fostered by technology. Participating in such programs allows students opportunities to exchange ideas and thoughts with people whose cultural backgrounds are different from theirs. Technology and media are utilized, so students have opportunities to observe, interact, and research the world even if they cannot travel.

Once students begin to embrace other cultures teachers can begin the action work. This simply starts with building conflict resolution skills. Instead of waiting until students leave school to begin applying problem-solving skills, they begin practicing them in the classroom. Hobert calls this preventative diplomacy. In preventative diplomacy activities students utilize their "fluencies" in language, culture, technology and media. These conflict resolution activities include putting yourself in the shoes of people with other perspectives. Understanding both sides of a conflict will not only help students with negotiating. It builds understanding of the concept of conflict and compassion

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for people whose positions differ from each other. Another activity is learning to separate the people from the problem. Look at the facts and be hard with the facts, but stay compassionate towards the faces you look at as you try to resolve conflicts. Focus on interests, not just positions. Focus on the interests of the groups; for instance, what are their goals? What do they want to have as a result? This may help avoiding the “I say yes” and “you say no” wall. Observe and evaluate body language. Knowing how everyone feels can help you determine how to react. This leads to learning to speak to others in a way they will listen. Yelling and arguing back and forth will not lead to a resolution. Your goal is not to get your point across and win. Your goal is to negotiate in order to obtain a resolution. Knowing how to speak to others can get you further in the game. Keep in mind your tone and word choice, and know when to be quiet and listen. When you respect the perspectives of others, you can go for the win-win. Try to find a solution that will allow both parties to win in some way. This may involve knowing the BATNA (best alternative to a negotiated agreement) of all sides. Everyone cannot always have everything they want. Know what your alternative or Plan B is before you begin discussions. Finally, do not forget that peace is a process. It does not just happen in a day or after a discussion. It is a process with steps and obstacles that never end. It is a continual process of communication and interaction.

The final step to building Global IQ is to allow students opportunities to apply what they have learned. We can read, write, and think all we want in the classroom, but it is through the application of skills that we truly show understanding. To those naysayers that feel it is a waste of time to think outside of a student’s immediate world, service learning gives students opportunities to apply what they have learned to their own world. Students may travel to help build homes in a south Pacific country devastated by a tsunami, or they can work in their neighborhood food pantry. Solving problems can be done locally, regionally, nationally, or globally. The same background of knowledge will be helpful in all situations.

Professor Hobert has created an informational guide to help any educator enhance his or her curriculum with a focus on global awareness. His clear text and the book’s sections make it easy to use. He also incorporates examples and stories to give you a better understanding of how you can raise your school’s global IQ.

Although the concepts of this book are not new, it is an important topic to revisit. Hobert himself states that these ideas are all seen in classrooms today but not often enough. Teachers, parents, and administrators all want students who have knowledgeable minds and empathic hearts. We want our students to learn to solve problems, resolve conflicts, and negotiate in life. We give them opportunities to practice and apply what we teach them to be good citizens of the world. We just may lack the consistency and deliberateness necessary to make it successful. *Raising Global IQ: Preparing Our Students for a Shrinking Planet* is a great tool to remind, or to inform, teachers of the importance of creating a learning environment that nurtures international-mindedness.

Author Note: Maryanne Lipovsky is currently a teacher of fourth and fifth graders at Adams School in Midland, Michigan. Growing up an “Army Brat” she has traveled around the world and feels it is important to cultivate international-mindedness in all students. She is currently enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in International Baccalaureate Education program at Oakland University and is on the committee to facilitate implementation of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme for Midland Public Schools. She can be contacted at LipovskyYM@mps.k12.mi.us.

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