

If the World were a Village by David J. Smith

"If the World were a Village" teaches us about citizenship and being responsible members of the community.

It invites us to imagine our world as a global village of 100 people; each person representing 64 million people. This allows us to gain some interesting insights into the lives of our neighbours in a more comprehensible way. Dealing with a global village of 100 rather than a global world of billions makes everything more accessible and understandable.

Through an exploration of important issues, such as distribution of wealth and essentials like food, fresh air and clean water - we can see that the world has an abundance of everything. The problem lies with the distribution of these vital resources.

"If the World were a Village" shows us who we are sharing our world with - we gain an understanding of who our neighbours are, where they live and how they live. So, in our global village, more than half the people come from the 10 most populated countries - of which Australia is not one!

We gain important insights into the future of our world - by looking at the past we can predict the future population growth and see that for the world to sustain us significant changes need to be made now.

Knowing our neighbours leads to understanding our neighbours and caring for them. This gives us the incentive and desire to see that our whole global village has adequate resources; fairly shared and ultimately living in peace and harmony. 'World mindedness' is the aim of this valuable book which shows us a caring approach to life.

The vibrant pastel illustrations compliment the text beautifully. There's much to explore on every page.

David Smith gives the reader many worthwhile and practical suggestions on teaching our children to be world minded. Giving our kids a strong sense of geography, including them in discussions and encouraging passion are a step towards teaching them to be responsible citizens.

This book is a great eye-opener and I learnt a lot from it. It's difficult not to be moved by "If the World were a Village" and take a positive step towards world peace.

There are so many classroom activities that could stem from this book - aside from the ones mentioned by Smith himself.

I think a good start would be learning about the people we share our immediate world with - who's in our classroom, where have they come from, exploring family trees; then looking further a field at our school community, our neighbourhoods and so on,

Some great mapping activities and explorations of cultures - including foods, music, dance, art, language, and traditions would all be fun - particularly at the moment with the Commonwealth Games fresh in our minds.

Identifying flags, icons, natural geographic landscapes, well known people, festivals and climate would give the students a good understanding of many countries in our world.

This could lead on to discussion about the important issues and gives students the opportunity to explore some positive action or steps they could take towards world mindedness.

Liz Flaherty, VIC

Many people would be familiar with a popular email explaining the make up of the entire world if there were only 100 people in total. If the World Were a Village takes that concept further as it explores the many facets of our global village. Colourful illustrations complement the text and show us the many similarities and differences that exist. The statistics in the book are from January 2005 when the world's population was 6 billion, 400 million people. (This is an update from when the book was first published in 2002.) As such large numbers can be quite overwhelming 'what if we imagined the whole population of the world as a village of just 100

people? In this imaginary village, each person would represent about 64 million people from the real world.' (p7)

Each double page of the book briefly examines one feature of the global village such as languages spoken, religions, food, school and literacy. Around the short text are bright illustrations showing the diversity that is Earth.

This is a book that can be used on many levels by different ages of children. For younger children it is a way of understanding the diversity of peoples in our world. Older children can use the information to create their own displays, diagrams or texts. Real world mathematics can be brought out as students explore ratio and percentages. Students can use maps to explore where people are from and to understand their lives. Students can explore the similarities and differences between the lives of the children in the book and that of their own lives. In the end notes David Smith writes about ' "world mindedness", which is an attitude, an approach to life.' (p30) Smith also writes that, 'We need to become truly world-minded and to foster that attitude in our children.' (p31) To illustrate how we can do this other suggestions for classroom and home use are included in the section Teaching children about the global village.

We all share the one planet, a small village where understanding will help us to live in peace. If the World Were a Village helps all our students see that they are part of the solution in creating a world where all live in harmony. I would recommend this book as a useful and interesting addition to any school or classroom library. It is one of those books that teachers can really use and enjoy with their students.

Rowan Simpkin, ACT Department of Education and Training, ACT

This book is an ideal addition to an International School library or classroom as it deals with global issues. It would make a good big book to share with classes as well. Basically, it explains the concept of human ecology by contracting the world's population into the size of one village. The global village idea has been around for a few years now and this title was first published in Canada in 2002. Now published with updated information, this book contains 32 pages of information and colourful illustrations that make it very attractive.

There is an afterword from the author at the back of the book dealing with teaching children about the global village and describing the book as being about world-mindedness which is an attitude. The book fits into the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme attitudes in the area of empathy. It would suit the Tasmanian Essential Learnings in the area of World Futures as well.

The afterword is not totally unbiased and appears to me to be a little didactic in its approach. The information in the book will date quite quickly - one topical statistic being the ratio of poultry to humans in the village which must have changed recently given the recent avian influenza outbreaks! The rate of changing information does not detract from the overall quality of the book but it should perhaps be kept in mind. The bibliography on the final page is useful for guiding students to do further research.

Kimbra Weeks, International School Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Without even seeing this book, this title got me thinking! As a teacher, I think it is exciting when a book is interesting and enjoyable but even more so when it causes the reader to think! The content of the book and its layout makes it suitable for children of all ages but also interesting and relevant to the adult reader.

In the book, David Smith cleverly compares the world to a village of 100 people. When you think about it, the world may well be considered as merely a village within our amazing universe. The use of this analogy is effective in concretely assisting children to understand more about the world they live in. Simply, yet effectively, the author gives interesting and relevant statistics

concerning 'the village' of 100 people. Effectively the author portrays the percentage of the population that:

speaks particular languages;

originates from a specific countries;

is of particular age;

belongs to specific religions;

access to food, clean air and water, education and electricity;

Levels of income.

The book also digs into the past and delves into the future and providing endless points for discussion or extended research.

The possibilities for inclusion in the classroom are enormous with this book, particularly in the areas of Mathematics, HSIE, LOTE, Religion and even Science.

Form the perspective of Gifted and Talented Education, this book certainly encourages higher order thinking skills and offers vast opportunities. Why not have advanced mathematics students calculate the population of the world that are Christian or how the ratio of the population in Japan compares to that in China. What a fantastic graphing opportunity! Talented scientists, while conducting air samples of their local area, may be interested to learn that in a village of 100 only 68 would breathe clean air.

The book finishes with the future dilemma concerning population growth. Talented writers would thrive on writing their own scenarios of the outcomes.

This book was a brilliant read and a quality resource. Enjoy!

Meredith Phillips, Head of Gifted and Talented Education, Arndell Anglican College, NSW

"If the world were a village" by David J Smith is the realisation of a dream to write a book to encourage 'world-mindedness'. It promotes the idea that the planet is actually a village that we share with our neighbours. David Smith draws on current statistics to show that if the world's population was represented by a village of 100 people what would be the profile of this village. What would they own? What religion would they be? etc. For example in his village of 100, there would be 42 radios, 25 televisions, 36 telephones and 10 computers.

Each double page spread is beautifully illustrated by Shelagh Armstrong in a bold naive style. This book could be used very successfully in primary and junior secondary classes in society and environment, religious education and even mathematics classes. Plenty of discussion about issues could be extracted from this book about the world economy, resources, religion, humanity etc. Highly recommended for every school library.

Penny Mackenzie, Adelaide Secondary School of English, SA

This multi-award winning picture book is sure to provoke question and debate . . . as it should. The author, David J Smith, has taken the difficult concept of world population and simplified it by presenting the numbers as a village of 100 people. The statistics about topics such as nationality, food, religion and wealth should help children to a better understanding of the world's peoples and their way of life. These statistics, which may surprise some, will raise issues of sharing and inequality.

Vivid strong artwork by Shelagh Armstrong complements the text and invites further examination and discussion.

There are a multitude of possibilities for using the book with a class. A whole unit of work could be built around it and a web search will reveal a number of sites with lesson plans related to the book. The author also provides two pages of suggested activities.

It is a book, as Smith says, about 'world-mindedness' introducing the readers to a sense of multicultural awareness and world issues.

Judith Ettrup, Harris Fields State School, QLD

I have often downloaded a list of figures giving the world population diluted to 100 people and used it as an adjunct to my teaching about our place in the world, or used it as part of a display in the library of books from around the world. Many teachers have copied the list and used it in the classroom to make our students a little more aware of what happens beyond our shores. So how delightful that this book is now in our hands. We cannot help but make our students citizens of the world using a book such as this in the classroom.

The book reduces the population of the world (now in excess of six billion people) to a village of 100. Each double page spread takes one aspect of life and shows the reader how many in that group of 100 have access to something we all take for granted. One of the first pages shows the division of people into continents. Of the world's 100 people, 61 are in Asia, 5 are from Canada and the United States, while 1 is from Oceania, including Australia. As with all other pages, it will make you stop and think about the disproportionate influence of one country in the world today, and the insignificance of Australia in the global village.

A double page spread covers the following topics; age, food and water, schooling, money, electricity and the future of the village. All of the pages are most interesting, and engender much discussion with your classes. One that caused a huge amount of discussion with one of my classes, was the page dealing with money. Not one child in my year 8 class could imagine living on \$1 a day, which 20% of the world's population does. And the last page shows what the future of the village is like, when the population doubles by the year 2100, putting incredible pressure on the thinly stretched resources.

The last two pages gives suggestions about how to use the book with classes, and the last page details further reading. All in all a wonderful resource to use in your classroom to encourage students to see themselves as part of the global village, and encourage them to take some responsibility for making it better for all.

Fran Knight, William Light R-12 School, SA

If you would like your class to think further a field than their own neighbourhood and Australia, this could be the book to do it. As the title suggests the world is proportionally reduced to a village of one hundred people. Then a variety of topics are covered with a breakdown of the village's statistics for each. For example under Nationalities in our village, twenty one people would be from China, seventeen from India and so on. Eleven topics are covered in all, with two pages of teaching ideas at the end. The text is clear and simple and is accompanied by bright drawings with a slight picture book feel to the format. It is perfect for mid primary to lower secondary students.

Apart from the obvious discussions that the text could inspire, it would be good for the students to make their own predictions of the statistics prior to reading the book. On a more advanced level it may be possible for the students to hypothesize on what would happen if situations changed in the village, ie if all people had access to electricity.

Overall this is an intellectually thoughtful book to help students to see the 'real world'.

Mandy Ellis, Viewbank Primary School, VIC

This simple yet thought provoking book should be retitled. This is more than a book about the people on this earth, but a book for them. David J. Smith keeps the level of language very accessible; however the highly emotive responses I have received when using this in the classroom suggest that his messages are profound. While this picture book-come-factual portrayal of a village that represents the world seems uncomplicated, it resonates with the reader well beyond the facts and figures of literacy levels or religions represented in the village. The bare facts are enhanced by the vivid images provided by Shelagh Armstrong. Most intense are the two pages dealing with electricity, from 100 villagers, 24 are left in darkness, contrasting with the rich and the light surrounding those houses we may find familiar. In this imaginary village, many of the world's inequalities are brought to the surface; however at no time does Smith preach at the reader. This makes the book even stronger; it deals universally with the issues facing not a single village, but every citizen of the globe. With people like Smith producing such outstanding perspectives on issues facing us here and now, and in the future, the global village needs to be upstanding and listening, just like every class I have read this with.

Troy Martin, Merriwa Central School, NSW

This is a thoroughly fascinating, and sometimes confronting book. Representing the world population as a village of 100 people makes comparisons easy to make and concepts much more manageable for the upper primary child.

The year six class I tried the book with were quite affronted that only one villager came from Oceania. ('Not even Australia!') They were also surprised that English came in equal second as the language of choice, and that less than one person in ten spoke it. The spread dealing with schooling and literacy also caused some heated discussion. Some thought that being one of the seven children who didn't attend school would be great. Most of the girls were angry that they may be deprived of the right to read, however, and that changed the focus of the discussion, from being able to skip school, to not being allowed to go to school. We referred back to this page when we talked about money and possessions. Who were the 20 people living on less than \$1 per day? The 17 people who couldn't read would be some of them!

I was surprised, but the class was not, that more than half the village is aged less than 30 and a third is Christian. The children were quite upset that, with all the food in the village, only 30 percent of the population always had enough to eat.

The air and water spread also caused considerable discussion. Living in Darwin we have abundant water and very clean air (no heavy industry and no traffic jams). The thought of people having to walk long distances for water was inconceivable to this urban class. Even though the NT has remote settlements without piped water to all homes, these children can't imagine having to carry every drop of water they use into their homes.

Likewise with Electricity. Only 25 televisions in the village! Most of the children in this class have a TV in their bedroom! And to think that 24 people don't have electricity in their homes - unheard of. One group thought they could manage this as they would have a mobile phone and a laptop computer, but another group reminded them that you need electricity to charge them, and that if there was no electricity chances are you'd be one of the people who couldn't read and who lived on less than \$1 per day.

This book was read to one Year 6 class after recess on Monday. By Wednesday morning the discussion had spread across five classes of years 5 to 7. All the classes came together and 100 children became our global village. Each one was given in turn a nationality, language, religion, etc. They then had to work out how resources such as food could be shared fairly. The discussions arising from this book lasted until Friday afternoon, and may well continue when school resumes after Easter. The group discussions and debates were some of the most passionate I have ever seen in a group of upper primary students.

Robyn Cavanaugh, NT

If the World Were a Village by David Smith is more than just a book to be read from cover to cover. Originally written in 2002 and updated in 2005, it provides a wealth of information about this planet we live on and who we are. Shelagh Armstrong's bold illustrations use colour, shade, line and position to support the information presented on each double page spread.

So often we study Culture at school and investigate statistics relating to the physical features of a country instead of looking at who lives in that country and what are their lives really like. This means that we are only touching the tip of the iceberg that is Culture. How are we to better understand others than by investigating their belief systems, traditions, customs and values? This book provides us with the starting points for these investigations. It could also lead to investigations in many learning areas - S&E, Maths, Science, Language and Health.

When using with our Year 6/7 students, I chose to have them identify the countries, languages and religions that made up the village before using the information from the book. It was not surprising that their concepts of most populated countries and most used languages were influenced by their backgrounds and their exposure to different Cultures by the media. This naturally led to a study of the spread of civilisation around the world and eventually our own history and what makes us who we are.

The second half of the book provides information on the basic needs of people in the village and leads to the question of the future of our global village. Developing empathy with those peoples in our world whose needs are not met as well as ours is so important to the future of the village. The last paragraph on page 31 challenges us to develop minds that are open and questioning. Minds that don't accept as truth all that the media presents to us, but minds that have the skills to seek the truth and make valued judgements that will help the global village survive. I recommend this book as a tool to be used to challenge our students and us.

Nan Sheppard, Wembley Primary School, WA

This book is about "world mindedness", which is an attitude, an approach to life.

David Smith had written a fantastic book about the world and its people. Even though the statistics will change through time, they give the reader a great understanding of the people of the world.

This book has many uses for the classroom teacher. Mathematics lessons can be developed, giving students a better understanding of percentages, ratios, fractions and comparisons.

Projections can be made about the magical number of 250!

The illustrations are wonderful and would be very stimulating in collage creation or mixed media construction. Bright colours with black outlines could lead to stained glass window lessons.

Narratives could be written about the lives of people in the village. Any topic, such as water, electricity or transport could be selected for a report. Any genre in English could be explored.

Debating of issues such as the provision of aid or the distribution of food and wealth could be very stimulating. Animation and cartoons could be created using the illustrations as the starting point.

Geography and the study of other countries is the obvious link to the classroom. Also, the study of aid agencies and global connectedness would be others.

This book has a multitude of uses in the classroom. It can be linked to most Key Learning Areas.

Jackie Slaviero, Eastwood Public School, NSW

How is your knowledge of modern human geography? I'll admit to mine being a little fuzzy around the edges before I read "If the World Were a Village: a Book about the World's People" by US writer David J. Smith. In this book David Smith and illustrator Shelagh Armstrong seek to

educate children about the world's population. How do you teach children about their place in the wider world? How do you make information about millions of people accessible to children? Smith sets out to show what the world is like by shrinking it to the size of a village of 100 people. He tells a story of visiting this representative village in order to weave together a series of facts about the world's population-how it is organized (nationalities), what languages are spoken, what (if any) religions are practiced, how food and resources are produced and distributed, how people are educated. Each page opening looks at a different aspect of life in the village, for example, 'food' or 'money and possessions'. The simple story about the visit and the focus question on each page give greater interest to the lists of facts and figures about life in the global village. These facts are often fascinating: did you know, for example, that Portuguese is one of the most commonly spoken languages in the world?

"If the World Were a Village" is an information book in a picture story book format. The text is supported by bold and block-like acrylic illustrations by Canadian illustrator, Shelagh Armstrong. The illustrations change perspective over the course of the book, moving from the bird's eye view of the village in the opening pages to zoom in on the detail of everyday life. We see the village as a colourful and busy place, full of people of all ages and races engaged in work and play. Although the text describes in a simple way the problems of poverty, malnutrition and the unequal distribution of resources the pictures remain positive, giving a sense that the people of the global village are active and optimistic citizens.

At the end of the book the author outlines his view that teaching our children about our world neighbours and the way that they live will help them to grow up to be informed and engaged citizens who understand the urgency of creating a sustainable future. In the postscript 'Teaching children about the global village' David Smith describes some ideas for teachers and parents who wish to foster children's understanding of and interest in their world. He gives some practical ideas that could be used in the classroom such as games to play and reflective questions for discussion.

The book is supported by a website at <http://www.mapping.com/gv>. The website gives links for further information on population and resources which are geared towards school-aged children and also gives links to teacher resources with comprehensive activities based on the book. This book was originally published in Canada in 2002. The material has been revised and updated in May 2005. A note on sources in the back of the book explains how Smith made his calculations and the sources that he used.

This book would make a useful addition to resources for teaching economic ideas ('wants and needs') and civics and citizenship from middle primary upwards. Although the bright picture story book style of illustrations would seem to appeal to younger children, I think that the ideas and the language of the text pitch it at older primary school students. The Overview to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards states that students will need to create a future which 'is sustainable-developing an understanding of the interaction between social, economic and environmental systems and how to manage them'. A book like "If the World Were a Village", by setting out the facts and figures about world population and geography in an organized and comprehensible way, makes it easier for students at primary level to understand some of the challenges in promoting sustainability and social justice.

Keryn D'Arcy, Karoo Primary School, VIC

Based on a premise that has been floating around on the Net for a few years now, David Smith and Shelagh Armstrong have come up with an effective collaboration, explaining world statistics in a way that is accessible to even very young children. I found myself able to visualise the global proportions of the world's people, languages, religions and household activities in a graphic and practical way.

Each number-fact about the world's populations is expressed very simply and illustrated gorgeously - the naïve style uses rich, deep, exuberant colours, and is a joy in itself. We are given

a bird's-eye view of each set of statistics, and children will revel in close examination of the pages. There is plenty to discuss on every page, and even the youngest children will relate easily to the ideas.

The book is well-researched with lots of clear back-up information. At the back a double page offers ideas for activities around the ideas explored, and a source page has useful links. Most of the activities here would be appropriate for younger age groups; however they are easily adapted for older students, and can be used right across the curriculum.

I would have liked to see more information on the food page-a subject dear to most children's hearts. Classes could study different cultures and cuisines, and then lead on to an examination of poverty and hunger. It would be wonderful to see this book in a giant format, so that a whole group or class could use it together.

This compassionate and beautiful book helps children and adults to picture the different lives our global neighbours lead, and will therefore promote understanding and tolerance. It can provide a platform for topic-centred studies from early primary school right through to junior secondary, and is a most valuable addition to any school library.

Jill Hatherly, Springbank School, New Zealand

David Smith describes the content of this book as, being about "world-mindedness" . . ."an attitude, an approach to life" (pp. 30-31). He offers (at the back of the text) two pages of ideas for using this book in homes and classrooms. I was looking forward to trying some of these ideas with my 8-year-old students. I had identified the need for a child-friendly text that invited students to consider the magnitude and diversity of the world's populations in a way that connected to our relatively mono-cultural rural school context.

This 32-page text includes an introduction to the world as a village, where each of the 100 villagers represents about 64 million people in the real world. The reader is invited to enter the village as "dawn is chasing away the night shadows" to "come and meet the people of the global village" (p. 7). From this beginning, which could easily be extended to dramatic role-play, the reader learns more about the village as daily scenes are described, questions are posed and statistics are given. Topics such as nationalities, food, language, schooling and literacy are each explored with this format, accompanied by rich and colourful full-page illustrations. My students were particularly interested by the description of electricity in the global village: "dusk arrives, then darkness... (only) 76 of the 100 villagers have electricity." There are only 10 computers in the entire village! Such details triggered many passionate discussions about living standards and cultural diversity.

This beautifully illustrated book has been extremely useful in my Year 3 class. When I first used it as a "Harmony Day" (21.3.06) introductory text, I expected to check statistics about the world's population and provide reference facts for Studies of Society and Environments. However, my students and I were delighted to discover that this 'world village' book offers so much more. A favourite and spontaneous activity, arising from our interpretations of the statistical information, was a maths task. Each student used grid paper to represent the world in 100 squares. They selected statistics we had discussed, such as 31 of the 100 villagers attending school, and created a key to represent such information with contrasting colours. The children discussed and recorded world statistics in a way that was meaningful for them. As well as being an engaging and informative activity, the children loved the opportunity to use large numbers purposefully eg. 64 million. In fact, I recommended this book to our specialist Maths teacher who is always looking for appealing texts to encourage mathematical thinking across year levels.

There is much more that I could do with this text in the primary classroom! I plan to use it as a cross-cultural picture book with much younger children. For ease of reading, general appeal and usefulness across year levels, I highly recommend this well-priced text as an additional to all school libraries.

Dr Carmel Bochenek, Geographe PS, WA

"Get your fish fingers off my new picture book!"

The first night I brought home my copy of the new picture book "If the World were a Village", my husband said to my daughters and I as we ate a dinner of fish, "I wonder how many people in the world are eating as well as we are right now."

"I can tell you!", I said as I raced to my desk and produced my beautiful new book to a table full of fish fingers.

The written text is an easy read, although my eleven year old daughter had a difficult time understanding to the whole concept of scale (i.e. if there were 100 people in the world....).

The statistics which the text presents are amazing and putting it into perspective with the scale of 100, makes one realise how totally insignificant the Oceanic area really is in terms of numbers (i.e. only 1 person would be from the Australia, New Zealand and surrounding island areas).

The text is categorised into a topic area which then proceeds to give the relevant numbers in terms of scale to 100. Some of the areas covered are food, religion, age, language. Some startling statistics are presented, which are made readily accessible to the young secondary student.

The visual text could be studied in detail, however it does not have as confronting evidence as the actual statistics do.

This text would make an excellent related piece of non-fiction material. The fact that it is categorised into topic areas makes the statistics easy to adapt to relevant units of work.

I shared that text with some secondary students who suggested a text of this type would make their History course more tangible. What about the same statistics of what the world was like during WW1? Or WW2, etc.

A nice, easy text which could be adapted to support numerous units of work for secondary as well as primary students.

Suzy Taplin, Ulladulla High School, NSW

Many reviews have been written about "If the World Were a Village", by David J. Smith and its appeal has not diminished with this updated edition. Children, and many adults have little concept of the statistics related the populations of the world. Making the world a finite number, one hundred people, places statistics within the understanding of everyone.

When you live in an affluent country, it is very hard to understand the issues that face people in your own country, let alone those that confront people in less developed countries. Through this book, the limits of our resources, the ability to access available services and mans inability to share both so all have equal, is clearly portrayed. Realizing that twenty to fifty percent of the world's population may not have sufficient food, clean water or air at any one time is a sobering thought.

For children, this book may both sadden and then inspire them to strive to change their world, to be aware of their use of resources or making better choices for their future. Bright illustrations will attract students and maintain their interest in the books content.

Global issues in HSIE topics such as Global Connections

Environmental issue discussions

Mathematics that can be visualised as graphs, tables, and statistic comparisons

Art illustrations that reflect text.

This book should be on every book shelf to remind all of us, adults and children, of our responsibility to the world and its people.

Suzanne Singleton-Brown, NSW

