


How to Encourage and Model Global Citizenship in the Classroom

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By Guest Blogger

What are teachers doing to support online learning both locally and globally? When interacting and collaborating with others beyond the immediate classroom, what are expected protocols or norms of behavior, and what are the essential understandings needed to forge working relationships between learners? Julie Lindsay, an education leader in digital technology, online learning, and curriculum across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, and author of the new book, [The Global Educator: Leveraging Technology for Collaborative Learning and Teaching](#), explores. Please also join us on Twitter next Thursday, July 28, for a special [#gloaledchat](#) with Julie Lindsay on her new book!

By guest blogger Julie Lindsay

What is Global Citizenship?

The term global citizenship today encompasses digital literacies, digital fluency, empathy with others beyond the immediate learning environment, and intercultural understanding that leads to global competency. As an extension of the more commonly used term of digital citizenship, global citizenship is about conversations and connections that will help students and teachers collaborate on shared outcomes. It is about developing skills, habits, and attitudes that are global in concept and able to be applied in practice.

Why is it important to focus on global citizenship and develop these global competencies? One reason is that global competition for jobs means today's students must not only be well-educated, creative problem solvers, they must also be equipped to collaborate globally and work with others at a distance.

Educators can encourage and model global citizenship and empower students when they are informed and confident with the technologies themselves. This involves monitoring and modeling online collaboration to foster engaged learning that is safe, private, and legal. As astute global educators already know, this is not about theory; it is about the practice of online learning. It is not about telling learners how to behave when they are online but about putting them into globally active hands-on situations and collaborations to gain this valuable experience.

Informed and empathetic global citizens use online technologies to gain different perspectives about the world. According to Australian educator [Chris Betcher](#), his students worked on a global project and developed strong working relationships that required lots of patience and understanding to deal with cultural nuances, "My students remarked that one of the most important skills they learned was how to disagree without being disagreeable."

The [Global Digital Citizen Foundation](#) shares a model for becoming a global digital citizen that includes personal responsibility, global citizenship, digital citizenship, altruistic service, and environmental stewardship, with a focus on how to be responsible, ethical, compassionate, and just. This model draws a distinction between the global and digital aspects of citizenship such that digital technology builds bridges for intercultural understanding and world knowledge while accountability for online behavior shifts to the learners themselves.

What is Flat and Connected Learning?

Flat and connected learning is part of a pedagogical approach enabled by online technologies to forge connections to support everyday workflow, communication, and collaboration. The focus is on being able to learn with others at a distance as well as in person and breaking through stereotypes to accept others as equal learning partners. Flat learning dictates active rather than passive learning and assumes a responsible, active learner who will be a reliable contributor and collaborator and give to others as well as receive.

Actions to flatten learning include:

- Connecting learning through personal learning networks
- Building global citizenship practices
- Collaborating for shared outcomes and solutions

An astute global educator is not the barrier to learning but becomes the bridge to many global journeys such that flat learning becomes the norm and "unflat" learning becomes stifling and constrictive.

Global Citizenship Construct

The 'Global Citizenship Construct' is a model of global digital citizenship that encourages individual, social, and cultural framing of the world through connected and global learning. In this model, ALL learners (global and digital citizens), while connecting online, have an awareness of, and accountability for, the following attitudes and behaviors:

Figure 1: Global Citizenship Construct:
'Individual + Social + Cultural' when 'Global' = GISC

- **Individual:** Purposefully relate to the world as an independent learner, develop personal online branding and ethical use of online technologies
- **Social:** Sociability of online learning within parameters that are legal and safe; use of online (social and educational) technologies to connect, communicate, collaborate, co-design, and co-create
- **Cultural:** Positive attitude and adaptive habits for learning with others from beyond; understanding of differences and similarities to find commonalities



The model becomes powerful when all three areas of the construct overlap to form Global Individual + Social + Cultural = GISC. When this takes place the learner (educator or student) becomes able to connect and learn comfortably and confidently with others, anywhere.

Moving Forward: Implementing the Global Citizenship Construct

Implementing the GISC does not rely on the usual digital citizenship policy or guidelines typically found in a school. It relies on a holistic approach and hands-on experience and on educators understanding the importance of modeling globally connected learning.

Here are some essential actions:

- Encourage personal branding for all learners. This applies to how a participant looks online (avatar, portfolio, blog) and how they share understandings. Make sure students have culturally sensitive avatars and do not use colloquial language when communicating with others at a distance.
- Provide opportunities for learners to connect in real time (synchronously) and also via platforms that include text and/or multimedia contributions at any time (asynchronous). Foster competent discussion skills using tools like Edmodo that go beyond the 'hi' and 'I like pizza' conversations, and that share local lives as well as question

others as to their global lives.

- Embed extended online global collaborative learning across the curriculum so that learners have an authentic and real-world opportunity to work alongside others and co-create understanding together. This could be as part of an extended online global project with multi-classrooms, part of a classroom partnership, or many other combinations. The important practice here is that learners take the time to get to know their partners through tackling and solving problems together over a period of time. The scenarios for what this might look like are only limited by the imagination of the educators and students!

Getting Started

Here are a few suggestions of organizations that provide online global projects, communities of global educators to connect with, programs to build global citizenship, and other resources to really get started.

- [Flat Connections](#) - Online global collaborative projects for K-12 that start in September and February, as well as online courses to help educators understand global citizenship and online collaboration
- [iEARN Learning Circles](#) - Project-based partnerships that join small groups together
- [Taking IT Global](#) - Find diverse communities of learners, global issues resources and more
- [VIF International Education](#) - Helps build global education programs for successful connections with the world
- [The Wonderment](#) - Where kids share their creativity with each other around the world and use it to make the world a better place
- [The Global Education Conference](#) - A website, a sharing community and a number of free events each year bringing global educators together. The main online conference is in November for 4 days.

Connect with [Julie](#) and [Heather](#) on Twitter.

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