



INTRODUCTION TO COOBANA

Many of the things we enjoy are produced by hard-working people who receive little money for their crop and often struggle to get by. Every day, farming families make tough choices about which of their needs can and can't be met because the household budget simply won't cover everything.

These resources introduce banana farming and link with the stories from Coobana in Panama that you can find in the Schools Action Guide and on the Fairtrade Foundation Website.

These learning activities for learners aged 8+ give background context to the banana trade, and build learners' understanding of where their food comes from and the work that goes in to producing it.

Aim

- To introduce the topic of the banana trade in Central America

Subject links:

Geography
History
Business Studies

Topics:

Fairtrade
Working conditions
Sustainable Development Goals

Activity 1: Introduction

What do we know about bananas?

- Who in the class likes bananas?
- How many do they eat in a week?
- Where do they think bananas come from?
- How much is the cost of a banana? (*currently 11p-18p at supermarkets – Jan 2018*)
- Why do they think bananas are so inexpensive compared to fruit grown in the UK?
- What do they think are some of the issues that may be of concern to consumers in relation to banana production and trade?

You can follow this up explaining that bananas are one of the most consumed and cheapest fruits worldwide: they are the most traded fruit and the fifth most traded agricultural product. Banana Link provides other interesting facts: <http://www.bananalink.org.uk/why-bananas-matter>



Activity 2: Quiz

Pass out a sheet of paper with questions regarding the Central America region, Panama & Bananas.

Questions

- Which of these is NOT a type of wild banana?
 - Gold-tiger bananas
 - Bubblegum-pink bananas
 - Green-and-white striped bananas
- In the UK, how many bananas on average do we eat every year?
 - Over 5 million
 - Over 500 million
 - Over 5 billion
- How many different varieties of banana are there?
 - Over 500
 - Over 1000
 - Over 1400
- Up to how many bananas can a banana plant produce?
 - Up to 50
 - Up to 200
 - Up to 400
- Which country produces the most bananas?
 - India
 - Colombia
 - China



- Name as many countries in Central America as you can
- Name as many cities in Central America as you can
- Name the famous canal in Central America
- Name some of the ancient civilizations from this region



Review the answers to the quiz adding in other relevant background information. More information about bananas is available on the Fairtrade Foundation website.

Answers

1. Gold-tiger bananas
2. 5 billion
3. Over 1,000
4. Up to 400
5. India
6. Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.
7. Belmopan (Belize), San José (Costa Rica), San Salvador (El Salvador), Guatemala City (Guatemala), Tegucigalpa (Honduras), Managua (Nicaragua), and Panama City (Panama)
8. Panama Canal
9. The Mayans, Incas, and Aztecs