

## BOOK REVIEW

# Global Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools

*Reviewed by Jenna Copper, Slippery Rock Area High School, New Wilmington, PA, USA*

*The Global School: Connecting Classrooms and Students around the World*

*William Kist*

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This book was written to justify global education in elementary and secondary schools through a detailed theoretical foundation and to provide educators with practical resources for global education applications in the classroom. In addition to the background included in the introductory chapter, the book covers global education topics, such as bringing the world to your classroom; establishing global connections; finding study abroad, homeschooling, and alternative education options; and applying strategies to get started. The author includes stories, lesson plans, activity guides, and theoretical justifications, which make this book a must-read for educators who want to explore global education at its finest.

The notion of a physically flat world has been long since disproved; however, as William Kist explains in *The Global School: Connecting*

*Classrooms and Students Around the World*, the flat world has newfound meaning in today's classrooms. Even though it might be impossible for students to travel the globe in person, our ever-expanding technological advances have made it possible for students to explore the world in the digital realm. Kist (2013) masterfully writes a theoretical explanation to justify global education in today's global world while providing practical applications and strategies for educators seeking support through the use of specific 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

In reference to the flat world, a world in which technological advancements have broken down the walls of division and essentially opened the doors of contact among varying cultures of the world, Kist (2013) commences his argument for the significance of global education in schools around the world with an outline of the desired outcomes. Chapter 1, "*What Is Global Education?*" includes a brief history of global education from the 1600s to today and its connection to other educational "buzz" words, such as multicultural education, international education, and peace education. In short, global education focuses on preparing students for understanding world cultures

and interacting in a global environment (Kist, 2013). This chapter provides a collection of standards and agendas from many different agencies, such as the National Council for the Social Studies, Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, National Standards for Foreign Language Education, the Horizon Report, National Education Technology Plan 2010, and Western and Northern Canadian Protocol that prescribe to global education through a series of 21<sup>st</sup> century global objectives. With the emphasis on globalization in today's world, it should come as no surprise that the support in this chapter provides a convincing argument for an increased emphasis of global education in the classroom. While this chapter provides a solid foundation for the argument with comprehensive support, Chapters 2 through 5 are of the most interest to the educator who wants to take those objectives to the classroom.

Chapter 2, "*The World Within Your Classroom*," addresses many of those standards cited in Chapter 1. Kist begins with some basic suggestions, like adopting a multicultural curriculum and providing students with opportunities for multiple perspectives. These general ideas are discussed in greater detail and in accordance with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills as the chapter continues. For example, Kist provides directions for accessing news from around the world using an internet search engine and specific news links. Perhaps most helpful to the educator, these chapters include several examples of activities with directions, homework, and quiz ideas, such as a Google Earth Activity in the section "Going Somewhere Without Going Anywhere." With minor adjustments, educators can easily adapt these student-activity directions for classroom use. A particularly helpful explanation of Wikispaces is included in this chapter along with several lesson examples for assigning student-created textbooks.

Another key topic in the discussion of Global Education application appears in Chapter 3, "*The World Across Classrooms*." In this chapter, a large subsection is dedicated to Foreign Language Education. Though this subsection may not be relevant to educators

as a whole, there are many unique ideas using technological advances in the guide, "Using New Media to Learn Spanish" by Chad Everett Allan. Perhaps some of these ideas could even apply to other content area classrooms. Also in this chapter, Kist provides detailed suggestions for establishing global connections with educators and classrooms around the world. Providing even more support, Kist includes advice from educators who have established their own global-classroom connections. In one particular instance, Kist includes a testimony from Clarence Fisher, an experienced teacher who has worked with global connections. Fisher's story is extremely helpful for generating global applications. Additionally, Kist includes a rubric and checklist that Fisher uses in his classroom for possible adaptation.

Chapter 4, "*The Classroom in the World*," details several cases of global education classrooms that currently exist all over the world. For a typical classroom teacher, this chapter seems more informative than practical. This chapter emphasizes opportunities for global education through study abroad, homeschooling, and alternative education. The strength of this chapter rests in the author's ability to describe the successes of others and pose the possibility of adaptations. For instance, Kist (2013) describes The Global Citizen Diploma Program by the Yokohama International School and provides a copy of the official document that could be modified for any school district. On the other hand, the chapter consists of some educators' experiences that are far reaching for adaptation in most schools or generally irrelevant to traditional schools; Kist (2013) acknowledges these facts in this chapter. However, Kist (2013) is quick to point out that these examples can be used as a template for creating new assignments in traditional schools.

After reading the examples of other educators' successes and viewing the activity guides, the teacher just beginning the journey in global education may be left with some concern for how to begin. Chapter 5 is the remedy. Appropriately titled, "*Getting Started*," Chapter 5 presents several sections on how to do just

that—get started. Kist aptly predicts the needs of teachers in their journeys to begin applying the theory of global education and ideas for implementation to their classrooms. He provides tips for extending learning networks, choosing projects, and creating rubrics to name a few.

As a whole, Kist provides a thorough tool for educators who prescribe to the flat world model. Including stories, lesson plans, activity guides, and theoretical justifications, this book is

an excellent classroom tool for implementation strategies as well as a solid book for researched support on the value of global education. The collection of resources and practices from educators all over the world makes this book a must-read for educators who want to tear down the walls of a culturally divided classroom, expand their students' global experiences, and meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.

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