



MODULE 1: Migration, Remittances and Development in the Philippines

LESSON TITLE: Does Migration Improve Quality of Life?

GRADE/SUBJECT: Grade 8 Geography

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Activity Overview

This is the second of three lessons that explore the linkages between migration to Canada and quality of life and development in the Philippines. It allows students to think about the connection between a family's migration and the much larger global processes that such experiences are a part of. There are many reasons why a person may migrate (e.g., economic opportunities, reunification with family, forced migration, etc.) and in the first activity, students will listen to a pop/rock song written by Filipina Canadian Casey Mecija and "doodle" to evoke some emotions migrants might feel. This will make possible personal connections for the students, or connections to the film *Balikbayans* (Alex Humilde, 2015) viewed in the previous lesson. In small groups, students will brainstorm and present the benefits and negative consequences of migrating and how the process affects the communities (and countries) they leave behind.

Overall Expectation(s):

B1. analyse some interrelationships among factors that contribute to global inequalities, with a focus on inequalities in quality of life, and assess various responses to these inequalities;

B2. use the geographic inquiry process to investigate issues related to global development and quality of life from a geographic perspective.

Specific Expectation(s):

B1.1 analyse some interrelationships among factors that can contribute to quality of life;

B1.4 assess the effectiveness of media in improving the quality of life in some countries/regions around the world;

B2.1 formulate questions to guide investigations into issues related to global development and quality of life from a geographic perspective;

B2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about issues related to global development and quality of life.

Catholic Graduate Expectation(s):

A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community who:

CGE1g -understands that one's purpose or call in life comes from God and strives to discern and live out this call throughout life's journey;

An Effective Communicator who:

CGE2c -presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others;

A Reflective and Creative Thinker who:

CGE3f -examines, evaluates and applies knowledge of interdependent systems (physical, political, ethical, socio-economic and ecological) for the development of a just and compassionate society;

A Self-Directed, Responsible, Lifelong Learner who:

CGE4g -examines and reflects on one's personal values, abilities and aspirations influencing life's choices and opportunities;

A Collaborative Contributor who:

CGE5a -works effectively as an interdependent team member;

A Caring Family Member who:

CGE6c -values and honours the important role of the family in society;

A Responsible Citizen who:

CGE7f -respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world's peoples and cultures.

Evidence of Learning (Assessment and Evaluation Plan):

- discussion
- observations
- brainstormed ideas on chart paper
- (oral) presentation
- tweet

Teaching/Learning Strategies

Minds On [7 mins]

As a way to touch upon the emotional dimensions of migration, begin with pop rock video/song “*Balikbayan*” (2011) by Canadian band Ohbijou (lead singer Casey and her sister Jennifer Mecija are Filipina Canadian members of the band). For background information on Casey Mecija, read her PASSOC Role Model profile found here: <https://passocproject.com/casey-mecija/>. With knowledge of her background, listen to the audio track while reading the lyrics. The video of *Balikbayan* (2011) can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYGdcLzIJqY>

Doodling, or *sketchnoting*, can provoke new ways of thinking. The act of freehand drawing and creating “is essential to expressing spontaneous concepts and emotions” (Heller, 2015). While listening to the song, invite students to doodle using a tool of choice (i.e., pen, pencil, digital, etc.). Encourage students to engage in the activity as an entry point for expressing ideas, connections and/or immediate responses to the text, through

pictures, words, numbers, etc., keeping in mind there is no 'correct' way of doodling. Following the activity, invite students to share in small or large group discussion.

Guiding questions:

- ☐ Why do you think the singer's family migrated to Canada?
- ☐ What are some of the emotions associated with migrating?
- ☐ What might be felt by those who migrate out and by those who are left behind?
- ☐ If you are an immigrant to Canada, did this song emotionally connect with you? Why or why not?

Lyrics to "*Balikbayan*" (2011) are provided as BLM.GEO8.2.1 and are also below for your reference:

Here on these hours,
the sun hangs over,
the parallel, a spell,
we feel the myth, the distance like a metal case.

My family, the limbs of which, spread
the body of this land.
I'll pour my blood, on this place
to keep you safe, keep you safe.

We'll send it home, balikbayan. We'll send it home, balikbayan.

The heavy freight, it carried
the weight, of a better life.
You separate, your kids get old,
the air gets cold, we feel alone.

Our country, this in between
the hours hang, we're still not paid.
We'll fold our clothes, and write our notes—send
them home, send them home.

We'll send it home, balikbayan.
We'll send it home, balikbayan.

Action [25-35 mins]

Divide the class into 6 groups. Provide each group with chart paper. Assign 3 groups to brainstorm in pictures, words and/or numbers the benefits of migrating for an individual or a family. The other 3 groups are to brainstorm in pictures, words, and/or numbers the negative consequences of migrating. Encourage students to think of the Alex Humilde's documentary *Balikbayans* (2015) viewed in the previous lesson and to think of their own experiences.

Guiding Question: Think about the documentary *Balikbayans* (2015), or your own family's experience and ask yourself: when migrants go abroad to work, or to live permanently, how does it impact the quality of life of the people and communities they leave behind?

Have the groups share their ideas orally with the class. For assessment, see “LOOK FORS: Costs and benefits of migration for Quality of Life (QoL) in the Philippines” (BLM.GEO8.2.2).

Consolidation [5 mins]

Have each student create a Tweet. In 140 characters or less they are to describe, in the perspective of someone who is migrating, the benefits or negative consequences of doing so, depending on which group they were in. Encourage them to be precise, use emojis and hashtags. **Note:** if Twitter is unavailable to all students, they may alternatively create their tweet on “The Costs and Benefits of Migration: Twitter Template” (BLM.GEO8.2.3). The completed tweets can then be displayed on a “Twitter Feed Board” in your classroom.

Differentiated Instruction and Accommodations/Special Needs:

- rephrase, repeat instructions
- provision of visual, audio, kinesthetic prompts, etc.
- provide a variety of tools for doodling (i.e., pencil/pen, digital)
- allow for choice, where applicable, through differentiating instruction and/or assessment
- provision of tools and/or apps (i.e., Google translate)
- varied instructional strategies (i.e., individual, pair, small/large group)
- ‘Flipped’ classroom; provide link to video/article/website prior to lesson
- scribe
- frequent breaks
- chunk assignments into manageable tasks
- additional time to complete work
- collaborative talk structures prior to written work

*Instructional, assessment and environmental accommodations must reflect student’s *Individual Education Plan*, if applicable.

Learning Materials

- chart paper
- markers
- Twitter on a personal device or computer
- Internet connection
- Projector and speakers (to screen music video and listen to song)
- “*Balikbayan*” (2011) by Ohbijou (BLM.GEO8.2.1)
- “LOOK FORS: Costs and benefits of migration for Quality of Life (QoL) in the Philippines” (BLM.GEO8.2.2)
- “The Costs and Benefits of Migration: Twitter Template” (BLM.GEO8.2.3)

Elements of 21st Century Learning

Collaboration: Students work together, sharing responsibility, making substantive decisions, inter-dependently.

Knowledge Construction: Students create or adapt and evaluate prior knowledge, influencing change in a new context, across multiple disciplines.

Real-World Problem Solving & Innovation: Students problem solve, reaching beyond their immediate world, finding innovative solutions, consulting with experts in the wider community.

Skilled Communication: Students use various forms of communication, providing supporting evidence, communicating with clarity, honesty and

sensitivity, reaching out to the greater community to enhance the quality of life.

Self-Regulation: Students work on long--term activities, knowing learning goals and success criteria in advance, with opportunities for self--direction, revising their work based on feedback.

Use of ICT for Learning: Students have the opportunity to use Information and Communication Technology for knowledge construction, creating ICT artifacts for others to use.

Resources

- The Six Competencies of the neXt Lesson: TCDSB21C Project neXt
<https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SchoolProgramsK12/AcademicICT/21st%20Century%20Learning%20Conference/TCDSB21C%20-%202021st%20Century%20Learning%20Plan%20Placemat.pdf>
- To learn more about the cognitive benefits of doodling, see Steven Heller's 2015 article in The Atlantic, found here:
<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/07/doodling-for-cognitive-benefits/398027>
- For more on indie Canadian pop rock group Ohbijou, please visit <http://www.ohbijou.com/>
- To learn more about Filipina Canadian singer/songwriter Casey Meciija, visit her profile on the PASSOC Project website, found here: <https://passocproject.com/casey-meciija/>

Teaching Notes

- There are often strong emotions associated with migrating, especially when considering the costs. Ensure that students can be provided with support from a CYW, settlement worker, or a guidance counsellor if there is evidence of distress during this lesson.

“Balikbayan” (2011) by Ohbijou

Doodle, sketch or do a free association with words as you listen to the song, “Balikbayan” by Ohbijou.

Here on these hours,
the sun hangs over,
the parallel, a spell,
we feel the myth, the distance like a metal case.

My family, the limbs of which, spread
the body of this land.
I'll pour my blood, on this place
to keep you safe, keep you safe.

We'll send it home, balikbayan. We'll send it home, balikbayan.

The heavy freight, it carried
the weight, of a better life.
You separate, your kids get old,
the air gets cold, we feel alone.

Our country, this in between
the hours hang, we're still not paid.
We'll fold our clothes, and write our notes—send
them home, send them home.

We'll send it home, balikbayan.
We'll send it home, balikbayan.

Lyrics: Casey Mecija | Music: Ohbijou
Label: Last Gang Records

LOOK FORS: Costs and benefits of migration for Quality of Life (QoL) in the Philippines

Think about the documentary *Balikbayans* (2015), or your own family's experience and ask yourself - when migrants go abroad to work, or to live permanently, how does it impact the quality of life of the people and communities they leave behind?

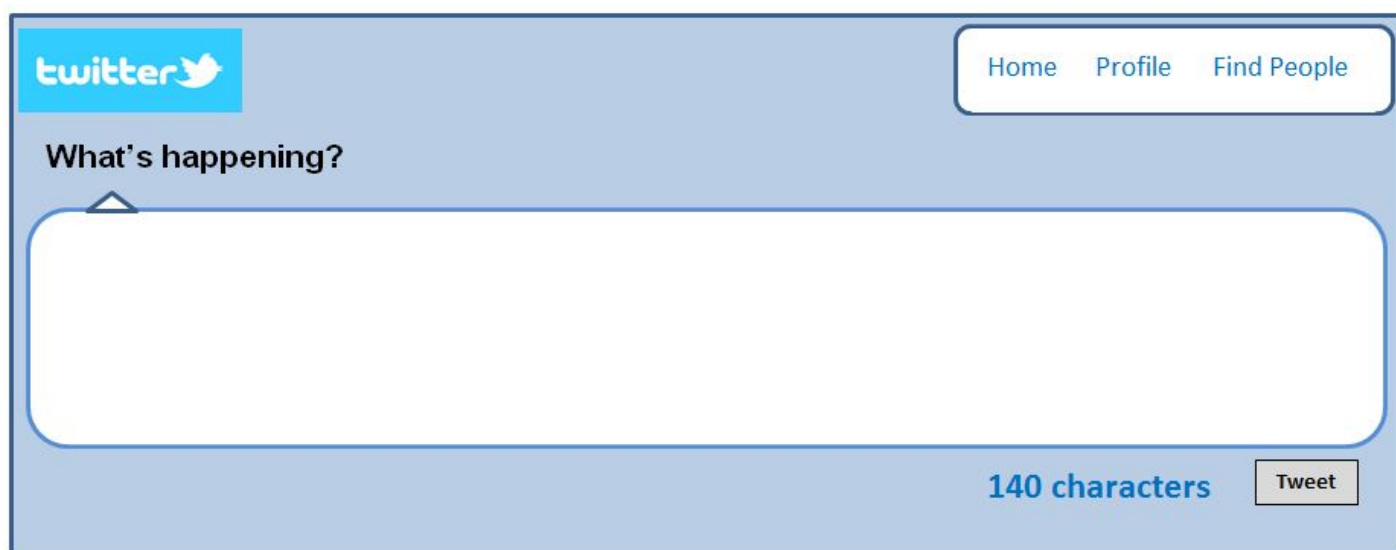
Benefits for Quality of Life:

- ☐ Everyday living expenses for family members left behind in the Philippines might be covered by remittances. (QoL indicator: Income)
- ☐ New houses are constructed using the money sent back – improves housing for those who live there (assuming the houses are occupied).
- ☐ Remittances sent back often pays for educational expenses, and can assist younger relatives in attending college or university. (QoL Indicators: Education, Literacy)
- ☐ Remittances also often pay for health care expenses in the Philippines. Good health care is available in the Philippines but it can be expensive and it is not paid for by the government in the way that it is in Canada. (QoL Indicator: Life Expectancy)
- ☐ Remittances can be used to finance a new business or expand an existing business (as in the case of the pig farm seen in the video)
- ☐ For some migrants, the experience of living overseas is exciting and interesting
- ☐ Receiving money or gifts from relatives working or living overseas reminds family members in the Philippines that they are loved and cared for, even from a distance. So it is an emotional benefit, not just a monetary gain.
- ☐ Migrants who move overseas permanently will often try to bring other family members with them. They especially hope that their children will benefit from employment, education and health opportunities that exist in a country like Canada.

Costs for Quality of Life:

- ☐ Migration usually involves being separated from loved-ones, so there is an emotional cost for both the migrant and the relatives left behind
- ☐ Some migrants are poorly treated by their employers or by recruitment agencies when they travel abroad to work
- ☐ Migrants often find themselves unable to use their education and professional qualifications when they are overseas. They might be trained as accountants, teachers or engineers but find that they are not employed to do these jobs
- ☐ The money and gifts sent home create an impression that life is so much better somewhere else (e.g. Canada), while the realities and hardships are not communicated. This creates a feeling that life in the Philippines is inadequate.
- ☐ Migration can increase inequality in the places that migrants come from. While families with a relative abroad will benefit from better education, healthcare and housing, those that do not receive help from a migrant will find life to be even harder. (QoL Indicator: Inequality)

The Costs and Benefits of Migration: Twitter Template



A template for a Twitter post. At the top left is the Twitter logo. At the top right are links for Home, Profile, and Find People. Below the logo is the text "What's happening?". In the center is a large white rounded rectangle for the tweet text. At the bottom right, it says "140 characters" and has a "Tweet" button.

twitter

Home Profile Find People

What's happening?

140 characters

Tweet