

Resource
for
schools

Actions for kids on tea



TRAIDCRAFT
Fighting poverty through trade

**[make it
FAIR]**



Background

Traidcraft is working to make every cup of tea in the UK a Fairtrade cuppa. More than 20 million people in developing countries depend on the tea industry to make a living, but many small-scale farmers and workers live hard lives – doing tough work for low pay. Read stories from farmers and workers themselves by downloading 'The people behind your cuppa' from www.makeitfair.org.uk.

Fairtrade is the only system that guarantees a minimum price and gives an extra premium payment to invest in tea farmers' communities. It also gives farmers and workers a real voice in how the system works.

Fairtrade can make a real difference to people's lives, yet less than 10% of the tea we drink in this country is Fairtrade. Isn't it time the five biggest tea brands switch to Fairtrade? Together these companies – Tetleys, PG Tips, Twinings, Yorkshire Tea and Typhoo – have 72% of the UK tea market.

To learn more, please read our Questions and Answers sheet, available at www.makeitfair.org.uk

Campaign action for schools and young people

Take part in Make It Fair and do something to tackle poverty and unfairness in the tea industry! Use 'The people behind your cuppa' PowerPoint, available at www.makeitfair.org.uk to give children an introduction to the issues faced by tea farmers and workers before doing the activities.

Here are some suggested activities children and young people can then use to learn more, have fun and become active global citizens:



Transform tea bags

Online photo petition

1. Use stickers to decorate your tea cup, mug, tea pot or packet of tea.
2. Take a photo to show your support for the Make It Fair campaign and send to Traidcraft at campaign@traidcraft.org. Your pictures will be used to form a visual online petition.
Why not hold a photo shoot of teachers having their tea break?
3. Go further: send your photos to the companies directly to show your support for the campaign. Write a letter to go with it explaining why you think Fairtrade is important. And don't forget to let the companies know if you or your family buy their tea – the message is even more powerful if it comes from their customers! You could even attach the packet or receipt with your message.

What you will need:

- Make It Fair stickers. Order via www.makeitfair.org.uk
- Camera
- Tea company contact details available at www.makeitfair.org.uk
- Tea cups, pots and packets from home

Other activity ideas:

- **Take the tea quiz.** Download from www.traidcraft.co.uk/bigbrew
- **Transform tea bags.** Add your own note to a tea bag. Cut two identical shapes (hearts, circles and squares work well) out of coloured card, as shown in the photo below. Write a short message on one of them. Next, remove a tea bag tag and, at the end of the string, affix the two shapes, back-to-back, using double-sided tape or a stapler.
- **Decorate templates of tea cups and tea pots and write your own 'make it fair message'.** Templates can be downloaded from www.makeitfair.org.uk
- **Hold a competition to guess how many tea bags in the jar.** Fill a jar with 165 tea bags representing the 165 million cups of tea we drink every day in the UK. Ask children to guess how many are in there. Now ask them to guess how many of those are Fairtrade. Less than 10% of the tea we drink is Fairtrade. This means 16.5 of the 165 tea bags would be Fairtrade.
- **Use a map to mark the countries where tea is grown.** Use www.gapminder.org to help you find the information you need.

Things you can't live without - Tea assembly

As the children come into assembly, you could play 'I can't live if living is without you' by Mariah Carey.

Give an example of something that makes your life much easier and ask the children 'What couldn't you live without? What means so much to you that you feel as if your life would be almost unbearable without it?'

You might mention your television or a particular item of clothing you love... (try to keep things fairly light-hearted at this stage)

When you have taken a few answers from the children, explain that you now want them to guess something else that you can't live without.

Give them clues that get progressively easier:

- Its name is the same as one of the letters of the alphabet
- It's grown in countries like China, India and Tanzania
- It is full of antioxidants
- Most people in the UK take it with milk
- Some people make it from a bag and others from leaves
- It's a hot drink

Continue to give clues until one of the children guesses correctly.

'Yes that's right - it's tea!'

Talk a bit about the traditions and stereotypes around drinking tea.

For example:

How many of you have heard people say 'Ooh, I'm dying for a cuppa!' Maybe when they get in from shopping? Or first thing in the morning? Or after a long journey? You could talk about how you used to complain about the amount of tea your parents seemed to drink or how your children complain about how much tea you drink.

'What's so great about tea? Why do people insist on drinking TEA even in the summer when it's hot?! Why don't they have a cold drink?'

'It's like people can't live without it!'

You could talk about the fact that tea contains caffeine and the fact that there's also something soothing and satisfying about taking the time to drink a cup of tea. How it often makes people feel better.

'So many people do feel that they couldn't live without it.'

'Well - I want to tell you about some other people who can't live without tea. That's the people who grow it.'

'Did you know that tea grows?' Explain to the children that tea grows as a plant in the fields, the leaves are picked and then turned into the tea that we buy in teabags to drink. The leaves have to be plucked in a particular way, without twisting the stem or crushing the leaves, or it affects the quality of the tea. The leaves are cut and dried, then blended to produce the right quality and taste of tea.

Millions of people in developing countries depend on growing tea to make a living. But sometimes when people come to buy the tea from the growers, they only pay them very little money.



This is the story of some tea farmers in Malawi, Africa that you could read out.

The 3 Mphupha sisters live in Malawi and they grow tea. They support themselves and their orphaned grandchildren aged 6 and 10. They get up at 3am every day to work in their tea fields and get their tea leaf to market on time but earn an average of just £34 (8,000 Malawian Kwacha) for a month's work. The family often goes hungry as what they earn is not enough to cover their basic needs. When the children finish their free primary education things will become even more difficult as secondary education in Malawi must be paid for.

In the months when the tea yield is low, the sisters receive no money and get by through doing piece work such as plucking, pruning or weeding on big tea estates.

"It's not enough for everyday life. We go for a whole day with empty stomachs. We go hungry; there is a problem with food shortage so we can go without food for 2 or 3 days."

You can find photos of the Mphupha sisters in the accompanying PowerPoint slides.

Explain that Fairtrade makes things better for people like the Myphupha sisters and that is why Traidcraft is urging the major tea brands in the UK to switch to Fairtrade. 72% of all the tea drunk in the UK is bought from 5 brands: Tetleys, PG Tips, Typhoo, Twinings and Yorkshire Tea.

Some of these companies have taken steps in the right direction to ensuring conditions improve for their suppliers - but none have yet taken the step of converting all their tea to Fairtrade. Now is the time to take the next step.

Traidcraft is aiming for every cup of tea drunk in the UK to be Fairtrade because Fairtrade is the only system that guarantees producers a minimum price for their tea, and gives an extra premium payment for investment in their community.

Encourage the children to look out for the Fairtrade Mark when they are shopping; to buy Fairtrade products when they can and to encourage their teachers and parents to make sure the tea they are drinking is Fairtrade.

If the children are very young you could end with a rhyme such as:

'I'm a little teapot' or

'Polly put the kettle on'

If they are older you could read them some of the tea quotes in the box to the right or even do a quiz with multiple choice answers of who said them.

Tea quotes:

"You can never get a cup of tea large enough or a book long enough to suit me."

CS Lewis

"Where there's tea there's hope."

Arthur Pinero (English actor 1855-1934)

"The spirit of the tea beverage is one of peace, comfort and refinement."

Arthur Gray, English statesman

"Tea tempers the spirit and harmonizes the mind; dispels lassitude and relieves fatigue, awakens thought and prevents drowsiness."

Lu Yu "the Sage of Tea"

"If man has no tea in him, he is incapable of understanding truth and beauty."

Japanese Proverb quotes

"Never trust a man, who when left alone with a tea cosey... doesn't try it on"

Billy Connolly

"If you are cold, tea will warm you; If you are too heated, it will cool you; If you are depressed, it will cheer you; If you are excited, it will calm you."

Anon

"Thank God for tea! What would the world do without tea! How did it exist? I am glad I was not born before tea."

William Gladstone, British Prime Minister.

"My dear, if you could give me a cup of tea to clear my muddle of a head I should better understand your affairs."

Charles Dickens

