

MODES DE LA CONNAISSANCE | FORMAS DE CONOCIMIENTO | WAYS OF KNOWING

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Learning Across Boundaries: The World Studies Extended Essay

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The World Studies Extended Essay



An in-depth
interdisciplinary
study of an
issue of global
significance.



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The development of the WSEE

- The World Studies EE was developed in partnership with Harvard University Project Zero after initially being proposed as a course by UWC Mahindra.





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The WSEE

- Mainstream in 2011, for first assessment in 2013.
- Approximately 800 submissions in 2013.
- 1400 submissions in 2014.
- 10th biggest EE submission.
- Expected to grow each year.



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An essential feature

The chosen topic *must* address both an issue of **global significance**, and invite an **interdisciplinary approach**. The most successful topics reveal connections between specific and/or local places, people, phenomena or experiences, and the larger global framework in which they take place (IBO 2010).



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Interdisciplinary research

- Real problems often invite an interdisciplinary approach.
- Different individuals bring different perspectives, areas of expertise, and interests to the same topic.
- Spending time thinking about the issue and exploring multiple points of interests will yield a rich exploration of the research focus.
- Crafting a research question does not begin with the subject but with the issue.



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The WSEE

Integrative

Purposeful

Grounded

Integrative

Brings together concepts, methods, or forms of communication from two or more disciplines.

Purposeful

Connects disciplines to solve real world problems, or address complex issues in new ways.

Grounded

Clearly rooted in disciplinary knowledge and understanding.

Tripartite system espoused by Boix-Mansilla and Gardner in *Assessing Interdisciplinary Work at the Frontier*. Conference paper: *Rethinking Interdisciplinarity*, 2003



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Global themes





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See, think, feel

- In your envelope you will find some photographs.
- In small groups, discuss the photographs in terms of what you see, think, feel.
- How might these images be linked to global issues?
- If you were to explore these issues further, can you think of possible research questions?
- Which DP subjects would you use to explore your research question?

Be prepared to share!



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Cusco, Peru



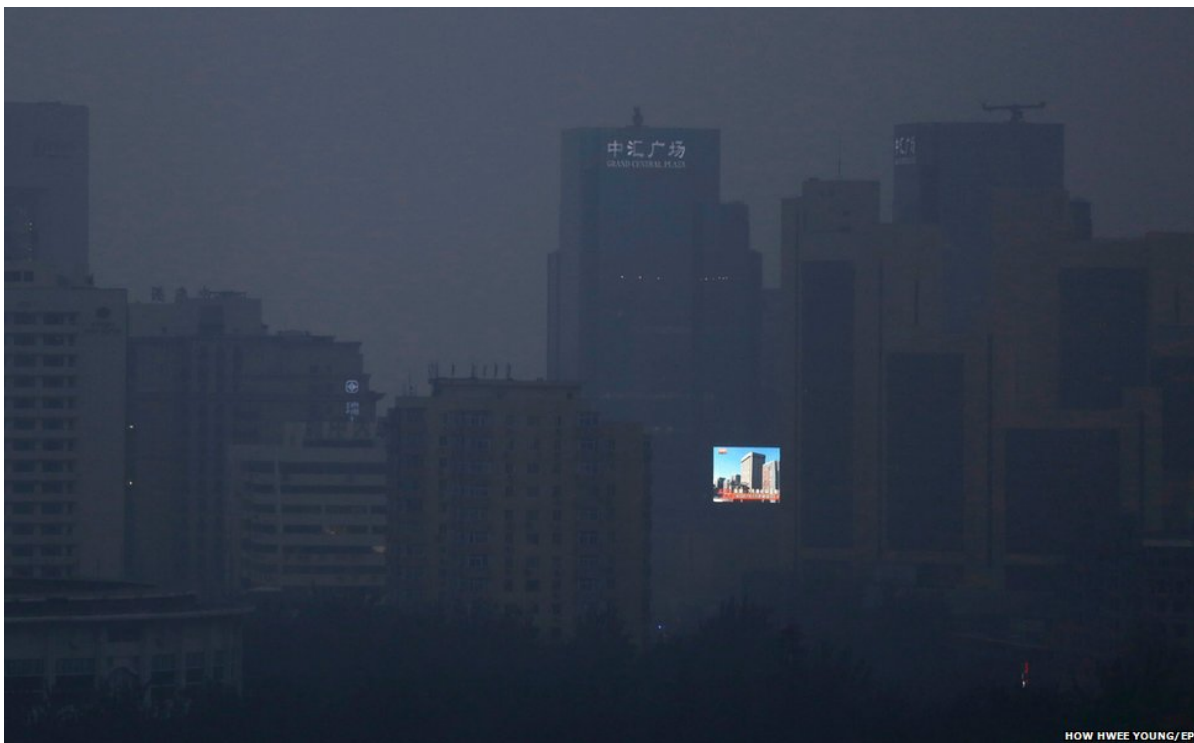
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Kelvin Williams
Ko Samet, Thailand



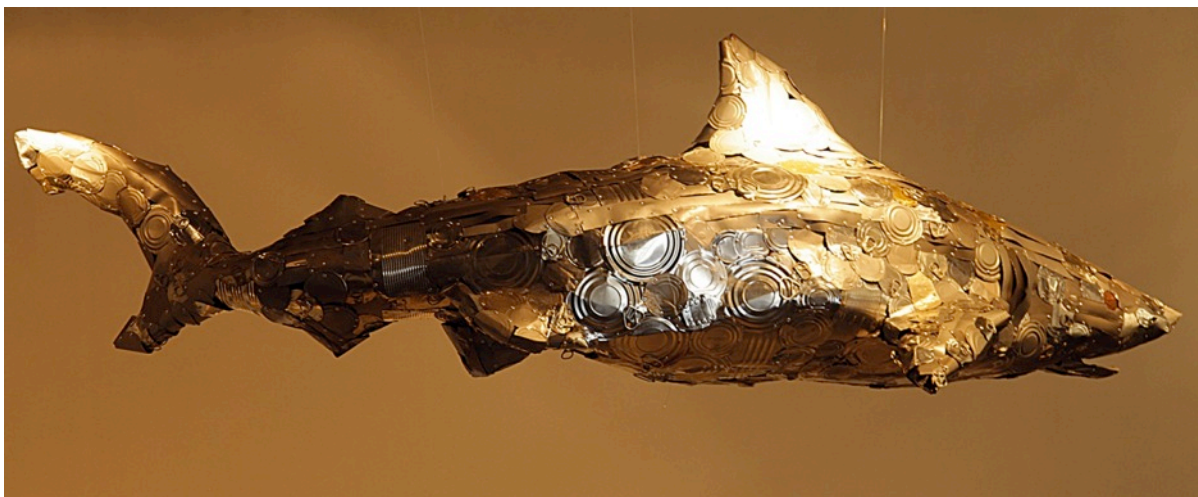
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<http://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-29374980>



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The Clipperton Project
A tuna fish made with tuna cans



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Jan-Willem van Hees



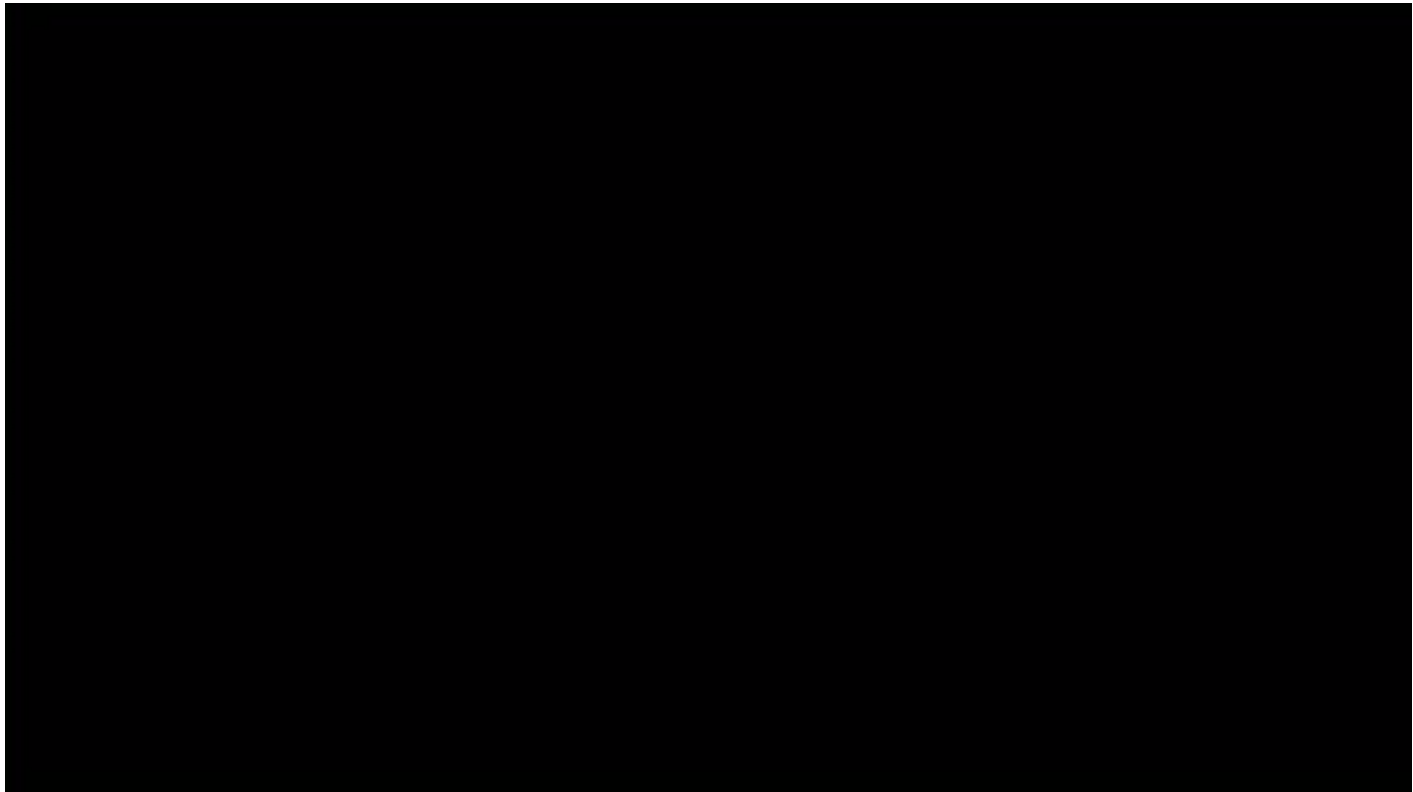
Some examples

- In your envelope you will find some examples of research questions explored by students.
- Firstly, identify which of the global themes you would place the research question in:
 - Conflict, peace and security
 - Culture, identity and language
 - Environmental and/or economic sustainability
 - Equality and inequality
 - Health and development
 - Science, technology and society
- Now, decide which DP subjects might have been utilised to explore these issues.



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Inspiration for a WSEE





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The Researcher's Reflection Space (RRS)

- The RRS is a personal learning environment that can be either a physical or virtual support tool.
- A space in which students are able to record reflections on what they are reading, writing and thinking.
- It supports learning, thinking, critical analysis and evaluation and contributes not only to the development of a successful extended essay but also to skills and competencies for pathways beyond the Diploma Programme.
- It can be used to:
 - Record their reflections;
 - Respond to artefacts, such as photos, newspaper clippings, twitter feeds, blogs, etc;
 - Respond to prompts and questions that may arise in the students' subject areas, TOK classes or other aspects of the DP;
 - Create Mind Maps®;
 - Record emerging questions.



An example from a RRS



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The WSEE: Truly IB

Global Consciousness

- **global sensitivity:** *sensitivity to local phenomena and experiences as manifestations of broader developments*
- **global understanding:** *the capacity to think and act in flexible and informed ways about issues of global/local significance*
- **global self:** *a perception of self as a global actor and member of a local community, a city, a nation and humanity, capable of making a positive contribution to the world (IBO 2010).*



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'In an increasingly interconnected world, future employers will demand graduates who are able to engage with complex issues from multiple perspectives; transforming the way in which we respond to the challenges of our changing world.'

'Blurring the lines and thinking across boundaries are important features of an inquiring, reflective IB student and the WSEE adeptly embodies this. It is an opportunity for students to begin to see their position in the world as global citizens and to consider how they can, indeed, bridge the gap in understanding global issues.'

Angela Rivière (2014), *'Learning across boundaries: the WSEE bridges the gap in understanding world issues'*,
International School Magazine, Vol 16, Issue 2, A John Catt Publication



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Questions



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Thank you.

Please send comments or questions to
dpdevelopment@ibo.org