



BANANA LESSON SCRIPT

What you need: Accompanying Powerpoint Presentation

1

Good morning everybody! Today we're going to focus on one simple thing. Something a lot of you eat most days of the week.

[show a banana or slide 1: banana picture]

A banana

I'm going to tell you how a banana can help children like you go to school.

First of all, where do you think bananas come from?

[take answers]

- *Where do you think they grow?*
- *Do they grow in Ireland?*
- *Do any of you have banana trees in your gardens?*
- *Why not?*
- *Do you think it has to be very hot or very cold to grow bananas?*
- *Do bananas grow underground or on trees?*

[take answers]

Bananas actually grow on huge plants that look like trees although they are in fact a type of herb.

[show slide 2: bananas growing]

Can anybody guess how many bananas we eat in Ireland in one week? In Ireland we consume over 4 million bananas every week! That's a LOT of bananas!

So if we're buying that many bananas the people who grow bananas must be getting lots of money to pay for food, water, health and education – right?

Sadly this isn't true. Many of the people who grow the food we eat do not get a fair price for the food that they grow. Sometimes they do not have enough food to feed their own families, or enough money to send their children to school or pay for medicines.

Why is this?

2

As we've said, we eat a lot of bananas in the Ireland

Because bananas are on so many people's shopping lists, supermarkets often sell them at a low price so that they can get more customers to buy.

But let's think about all the people needed to get a banana from here
[point to slide 2 still showing]
to our supermarket shelves **(point to slide 3 showing supermarket)**

Even at its most simple, there is:

1. the shopkeeper
2. somebody who is in charge of ripening the bananas so that they are ready to eat
3. somebody who brings the bananas to Ireland on a ship
4. the person who sells the bananas in the country where they are grown,
5. and of course the banana farmers themselves.

This is called the supply chain.

ACTION: [get five pupils to stand at the front to demonstrate the 5 supply chains]

This means that when we buy a banana, everyone along the supply chain should make enough money for the work they do.

Whether that's growing the banana, transporting it, or selling it to us.

When bananas are cheap, it's not always possible for everyone to make enough money. The farmer at the end of the chain is often the worst affected. This means many banana farmers live in poverty, and struggle to provide for their families.

They also have the least power to do anything about that situation, because they're not in a position to demand a higher price from huge companies and supermarkets.

(show supply chain slide 4)

That doesn't seem very fair does it?

But there is something we can do

What is different about this banana, compared to this banana?

3

[show slide 5: banana with Fairtrade Mark and bananas without]

This sticker is different isn't it – does anybody know what it means?

[take answers]

This sticker shows us that this is a Fairtrade banana.

Fairtrade means that the farmers and workers growing our food get a fairer price. You can get lots of Fairtrade products, like tea, cocoa (that is in chocolate), sugar and coffee that all work in a similar way, making sure that the farmers who grow them get a fairer price for their hard work.

All of these products are often grown on small farms. Rather than deal with big companies who want to buy their products individually, many farmers with small farms join together in what is called a co-operative so that they have more power.

The co-operative also gets a bit of extra money called the Fairtrade Premium which can be used to help the whole community.

For example let's take a look at some Fairtrade bananas from Colombia, a hot country in South America.

[show slide 6: world map]

Can anybody point to South America on this map? Can anybody point to Colombia?

[show slide 7: bananas growing]

Here are the bananas again, and as I said at the beginning these bananas are helping children go to school. This is because these bananas are Fairtrade and the co-op they come from in Columbia have spent the Fairtrade Premium on getting children into school and providing uniforms and school equipment.

They also spent money on healthcare and providing loans to improve farms or housing. This doesn't just affect the families of the banana farmers but their community as well.

So by ensuring that the bananas we buy are Fairtrade we can help farmers earn a better income, provide for their families and send their children to school.

That's something to think about when you open your lunch box at break-time isn't it?