**Contemporary Issues: Map Analysis and Case Study**

In 1958, China under Mao Zedong launched the Great Leap Forward. This program aimed at advancing the country's economy by taking advantage of China's population of nearly 650 million people. It called for the intensive use of human labor, rather than heavy machinery, as a means of industrializing.

The program set high goals for the production of grain to feed China's workforce and increase exports. To achieve these goals, the government moved Chinese peasants onto huge collective farms. The government thought that the collectivization of farming could vastly increase China's agricultural output. However, collectivization had the opposite effect. Collectivization disrupted rural life, causing a huge drop in grain production. Combined with the natural disasters of droughts and floods, the effect on China was catastrophic. Between 1959 and 1962, some 20 million Chinese died, mostly of starvation.

In spite of having a wealth of resources, the Chinese economy only limped along. Politically, China isolated itself from the international community.

Starting in the 1970s, however, China undertook reforms. It reversed old policies and moved toward a market-oriented economy, with a robust private sector. By 2001, only the United States had a larger economy. China also carved out a role for itself on the world political stage. For example, it sought and gained a prestigious seat on the Security Council of the United Nations.

China's success, however, generated new problems. Rapid economic expansion led to severe environmental damage. A rising population, which reached 1.34 billion in 2010, tested China's ability to provide jobs for the young people and migrants from the countryside who were flooding the labor market. China's struggles are not unique. Population growth, resource management, economic development, and the search for peace and security are global issues that all countries must deal with in the 21st century.

**Directions:** In your teacher assigned group, at each station read the essay and then answer the questions using the map and the case study on the poster.

**Station One: Population**

1. Define the following terms:
   1. Birthrate:
   2. Life Expectancy:
   3. Population Density:
2. Describe the population challenges in each of the following countries. Use at least ONE of the population terms above in EACH answer.
   1. India:
   2. Germany:
   3. Rwanda:
3. **Democratic Republic of Congo:** What factors might have led to the Congo’s high birthrate?
4. **China:** Why did China try to limit its birthrate?
5. **Japan:** Why do you think industrialized countries have lower birthrates?
6. **Critical Thinking Question:** What has caused birthrates to differed throughout the world?

**Station Two: Environment**

1. Complete the matrix below. Under each resource circle which form of natural resource it is: renewable, nonrenewable, or flow. Then fill in the matric with the location(s) where each resource can be found and the environmental or political problems that have resulted from human use of this resource.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Resource** | **Location** | **Problem** |
| **Fossil Fuels**  Renewable  Nonrenewable  Flow |  |  |
| **Fresh Water**  Renewable  Nonrenewable  Flow |  |  |
| **Rare-Earth Minerals**  Renewable  Nonrenewable  Flow |  |  |

1. **Brazil:** What strategies has the Rainforest Alliance used to protect rainforest habitats?
2. **Kenya:** How might work in local communities relate to the goal of protecting wildlife?
3. **India:** What role do you think education plays in conservation projects?
4. **Critical Thinking Question:** How can the world best protect and manage its natural resources?

**Station Three: Economic Globalization**

1. Fill in the T-Chart below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Globalization** | |
| Benefits | Drawbacks |
|  |  |

1. **China:** Why do you think China is the largest recipient of foreign investment in the world?
2. **Mexico:** How do you think NAFTA has affected the level of foreign investment in Mexico?
3. **Rwanda:** To what extent has globalization affected Rwanda?
4. **Critical Thinking Question:** Is economic globalization a positive force in our world?

**Station Four: Conflict**

1. Where has ethnic violence flared up in the years since the end of the Cold War? In each case, which groups were in conflict?
2. Why did the United States fight wars in Afghanistan and Iraq?
3. Fill in the cause and effect chart below. Fill in at least THREE causes and THREE effects of the Arab Spring uprisings.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Causes** | **Arab Spring** | **Effects** |

1. **Sudan:** What caused conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan?
2. **Pakistan:** What types of conflict has Pakistan experienced?
3. **Libya:** What causes civil war to break out in Libya?
4. **Critical Thinking Question:** What forces have caused conflict in the recent past?

**Exit Ticket**

Directions: Answer the question below using complete sentences, the ACES + C Writing Protocol, and at least three pieces of evidence.

*Evaluate the impact of ONE of the following challenges as a positive or negative influence on our world:*

1. *changes in world population*
2. *managing natural resources,*
3. *patterns of global economic interaction*
4. *conflict, cooperation, and security*

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