

Banana split game

KEY STAGE 2 UPWARDS

Notes for teachers

Aim: To unpeel the story of bananas from farm to fruit bowl, and see what Fairtrade and justice mean along the way. Through role play, pupils will bargain over how the cost of a banana is split down the supply chain, and discuss the fairness of this. In the second round, they will take roles to argue whether to switch to Fairtrade.

Themes: Common Good, Fairtrade, justice and fairness, global neighbours.

- Year 6 RE: Universal Church: Common Good; issues of fairness and injustice.
- Key Stage 3 and GCSE: Stewardship of Creation and of wealth; exploitation of the poor.

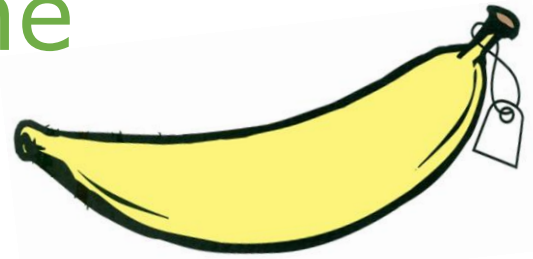
Materials needed: Print and cut out the role cards pp5-8 (*use one-sided print*). Either print the Banana Split diagram (p4) at A3, project it, or sketch up a large version. Optional: access to internet for short Fairtrade film; some real Fairtrade bananas. Use the Background Notes for Teachers to inform the debate.

Time needed: Keep to 40 minutes by moving the discussion along quickly, or stretch it out to a longer double session or part of an off-timetable day by exploring the issues more deeply.

Introduction

Ideally, show the 3-minute film 'Make Bananas Fair' about farmer Foncho on the Fairtrade Foundation schools website. Or, use this text:

Have you ever noticed a Fairtrade sticker on your bananas? These have a very interesting story behind them.



In the UK we eat 13 million bananas every day. Big supermarkets want us to buy bananas from them, so they price them as low as they can. That's good for shoppers, but can make life hard for banana workers and farmers. Let's see how the real cost of a banana is split, and how we can be good global neighbours by making bananas fair.

ROUND ONE: The banana split

1. Roles:

- Banana worker
- Plantation owner
- Shipper
- Importer
- Supermarket buyer

Display the Banana Split diagram.

Divide pupils into five groups, one per role, explaining that each has a part in the banana production process. Give out the **Round One** role play cards, and give them a few minutes to read.

2. Split the cost: Pointing to the diagram, tell them that one non-Fairtrade banana costs 15p, which has to be divided up between their five groups. Ask them to decide how big their share should be. Give them a few minutes to prepare their arguments.

3. Bid: Each group says how much they deserve and why. Record the amounts on the Banana Split diagram (leave space for the real figures). The total amount is usually well over 15p.

Bargain (optional): Say the cost is too high, so they must haggle down to 15p.

Now add the real-life figures to the diagram (PTO). Discuss.

The banana split

Banana worker	0.5p
Plantation owner	2.5p
Shipper	2p
Importer and ripener	3.5p
Supermarket buyer	6.5p
TOTAL	15p*

** Representative figures. The split differs slightly between countries, and between big and small plantations. Supermarket prices also differ.*

4. Discussion prompts:

- Is their cut of the money fair?
- Why do they think the banana money is split like this?
- Who loses out most in the banana split?

Now discuss why bananas are so cheap in our shops – from 15p to as low as 11p each (UK apples typically cost around 20p – and they don't have to travel so far.) Explain that supermarkets compete over how cheap they can make really popular products like bananas. They do this even if they lose money on them, just to get shoppers through the door ("loss leaders").

- Why might supermarkets sell bananas at less than they paid for them?
- How do you think they make up that loss?
- What do low prices mean for banana farmers and workers? What about shoppers?



ROUND TWO: Making bananas fair

Explain that they are going to try and debate a possible switch to Fairtrade Standards at Daniel's banana plantation.

1. New roles: Hand out the **Round Two** role cards. Give pupils a few minutes to read their new stories and prepare their arguments. The 'not sure' roles can decide which way to go, or leave this till the debate. Frank the Shipper has now become a Shopper/Dad, (shipping costs stay the same whether bananas are fairly traded or not).

2. Shall we switch?

Have the teams present their arguments, and hold a negotiating round over whether to switch to Fairtrade. Is it in everyone's interest? The teacher can play an antagonist role here if needed, arguing against Fairtrade to keep things lively. You could bring different teams into the debate at different points depending on how it is going – the worker and shopper for example can try to push the others to switch.

3. Discussion prompts:

- If the class switched to Fairtrade, who was hardest to persuade?
- If teams couldn't agree, how do you think this reflects real life?
- How is Fairtrade a better choice?
- What choices is Frank the Shopper making about how to spend his money, and what does being a global neighbour mean in this context?
- What other Fairtrade items can we buy? [Coffee, tea, chocolate, flowers, sugar, cotton – and gold!]



Fairtrade bananas – *how it works*

One in three bananas in the UK are Fairtrade – that's **1.2 billion** bananas each year. The Fairtrade Foundation works with people in the banana business to make sure that **22,000** plantation owners and workers are getting a fair deal, in West Africa, South-East Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America.

People sometimes ask what the 'banana split' is for a Fairtrade banana, to compare with the costs in this game. But for a number of reasons, it's complicated to compare. The amount a Fairtrade banana farmer gets varies from one place to another, depending on local costs. There's also a difference in how profits are shared from bananas exported from small farms or large plantations. Producers may not actually make more profit per banana, but they do benefit from better conditions instead.

Fairtrade products typically used to cost a little more for consumers, to reflect higher wages, but this is no longer always so. In the case of bananas, some supermarkets are selling loose Fairtrade bananas as cheaply as standard ones due to intense competition between supermarket chains over prices.

This creates serious problems at the heart of the banana business. Bananas are being sold at a much cheaper price by supermarkets while the cost of producing bananas is increasing, making it harder and harder for people who grow our bananas to make a living.

The discussion with pupils will focus on fairness, on conditions for workers, and on our role as global neighbours. Too often in poor countries, workers are

exploited, operate in unsafe conditions and do not earn enough to meet their basic needs.

Fairtrade helps banana farmers and workers build a more stable future by offering three important advantages:

1. A minimum price

The amount producers get for their bananas often goes up and down, but for Fairtrade producers it will never go below a certain price. This means the producers can plan ahead, whatever the cost in the supermarkets.

2. A top-up (Fairtrade Premium)

Producers receive a top-up per box of bananas, which they must use to invest in their business or give to their workers for community projects. An extra dollar per box builds up to buy a school block for workers' children, a clinic or a clean water facility. (E.g. if a small farm of 1.3 hectares produces 67 boxes of bananas per week, that's \$67, about £55 a week.) For plantation workers, some of this can be used for cash payments.

3. Good working conditions (Fairtrade Standards)

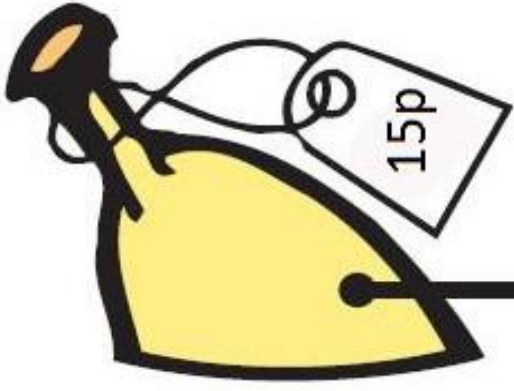
For workers on larger plantations, Fairtrade Standards help improve working conditions and protect workers' rights. This means people stay safe at work, can join a union, and get a living wage.

Find out more

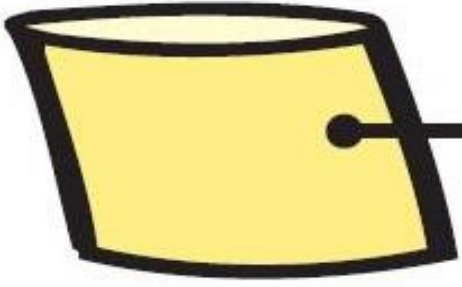
cafod.org.uk
fairtrade.org.uk
bananalink.org.uk



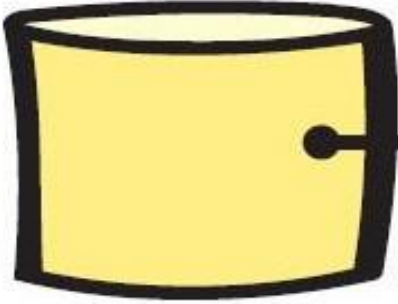
Adapted from a game originally published by Christian Aid. Data correct as of January 2017. Illustrator: Garry Lambert. Charity no. 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no. 9387398.



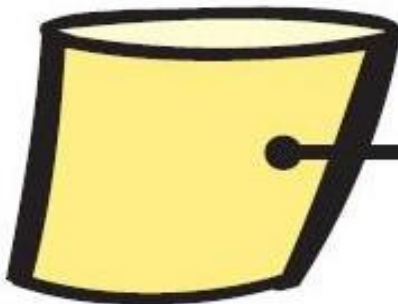
Importer and ripener



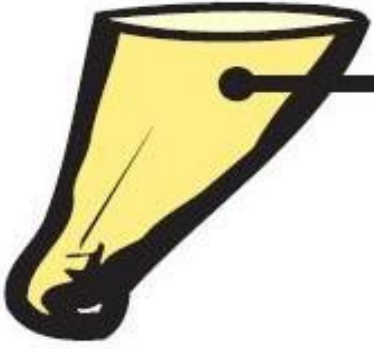
Shops and supermarkets



Shipper



Plantation owner



Banana worker



ROUND ONE: Roles for producing a non-Fairtrade banana.

Mireya Banana worker



ROUND ONE: I work hard on a farm packing bananas into boxes all day. Because my pay is low I worry about how to keep my kids in school, pay the doctor and buy enough food.

My hours here are very long. Worse, there are nasty chemicals on the bananas, which make us sick. We want the boss to stop using them, but he says they help the bananas grow and keep bugs off.

We're scared to ask for better conditions because we don't want to lose our jobs. The boss needs us, he should look after us. It's not fair.



Daniel Plantation owner



ROUND ONE: My workers think I'm rich. But running a plantation costs so much. I have to pay for the land, and for wages, including training my workers.

I have to buy tools and machinery, and expensive chemicals to help the bananas grow and keep off bugs.

The price Tom pays for my bananas can suddenly drop, then I lose money. Supermarkets in Europe are always pushing for lower prices. I am also worried about climate change; my bananas can be damaged if there are storms and high winds. I'm afraid I could go bust.



Frank
Shipper



ROUND ONE: I own a shipping company and importers like Tom pay me to transport their bananas to Europe. He has to pay me well because ships cost such a lot to buy and run. Think how much fuel I have to put in my huge ships!

We need big fridges on board to stop the green bananas from getting too ripe before they arrive. The fridges are very important, but really expensive. I also have to pay to keep my ship in port at both ends – it's like paying for parking a massive car.



Tom
Importer



ROUND ONE: I buy bananas from farmers overseas and sell to supermarkets. I arrange for ships to transport the bananas, and then I get them trucked to big warehouses to be ripened. Then I need more trucks to get to the shops - that's a lot of costs! I also sometimes have to make a payment called a tariff for the bananas to be allowed into Europe.

The farmers and the supermarkets depend on me. I have to keep the chain going, buying from one and selling to the other. The supermarkets always want to pay less but the farmers need more money. I'm stuck in the middle!



Ayah
Supermarket
buyer



ROUND ONE: I buy fruit and vegetables for a UK supermarket chain. Bananas are really important for us, because so many people buy them. 13 million bananas are sold in the UK every day!

One of the other chains has just lowered their price for loose bananas to 11p each. We can't make a profit at this price, in fact we'll lose money, but if we don't match the price we could lose customers.

I'm always trying to persuade Tom the importer to sell to me for a lower cost, but he says he can't pay the banana producers any less. The supermarket will just have to lose money on bananas, and make it up on other products. We need money to pay our rent, wages, lighting, transport, uniforms, advertising and many other things!





ROUND TWO: Use these role cards to debate a Fairtrade switch.

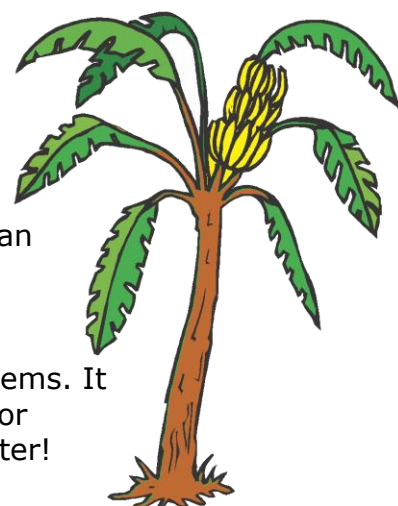
Mireya
Banana
worker



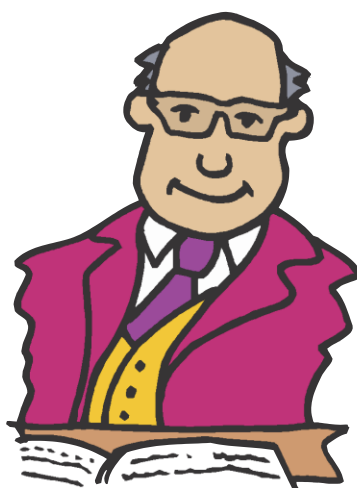
ROUND TWO: I wish we had the Fairtrade sticker. To get it, Daniel the boss must protect us from chemicals that make us sick, treat us well and pay us enough to live on. He'll be checked up on to make sure he keeps his promises.

We will get an extra \$1 for every box of bananas. It's called the 'Fairtrade Premium'. This goes to us workers to pay for things we need. We can decide if we want to save up for a school block, a health clinic or a clean water storage tank, for example.

We would also be allowed to join a workers' group called a *union*, to talk about our problems. It means we can back each other up and ask for things we need. Our lives would be a lot better!



Daniel
Plantation
owner

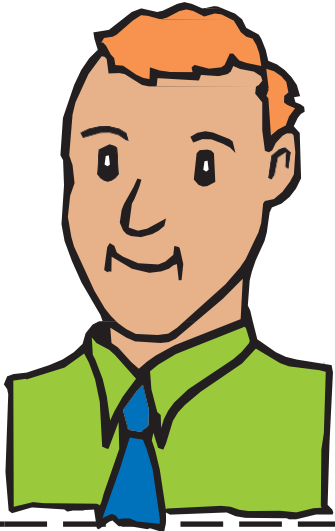


ROUND TWO: Mireya has got me thinking. Maybe we should be a Fairtrade plantation. I'll have to persuade Tom though, he has to promise never to give me less than the minimum Fairtrade price, whatever the world banana price is. He also has to top up with an extra \$1 per box to help my workers, so they can save up for things to improve their lives.

I'll have to spend more at the start to give them the right safety equipment, but if they don't get hurt or sick so often they can work better. We may even be able to produce more bananas. The Fairtrade people will help me to plan ahead, and give me advice about climate change. Hmmm... won't it cost me more though? I'm not sure.



Frank
Shopper, dad



ROUND TWO: I'm looking for Fairtrade bananas but they don't have any left in my supermarket today. I'd like to know that banana workers are treated fairly so I always look for that little sticker when I'm buying bananas – and other things like coffee, chocolate and sugar too.

That way I know that I'm doing my bit as a global neighbour to people in poorer countries who work really hard to bring fruit to my family. We have so much more than they do. I've explained it to my kids, so they know about making bananas fair.

I'm going to ask the manager why they haven't got enough Fairtrade bananas! Otherwise I'll go to another supermarket. It's the right thing to do.

Tom
Importer



ROUND TWO: Daniel wants to switch to Fairtrade, and the supermarkets say their customers are asking for Fairtrade bananas. I'll have to promise never to go below a certain price, even if other costs go up. Then there's the Fairtrade Premium, that extra dollar a box can mean 10% extra for me. Can I manage? I'm not sure.

I can see the point though. If Daniel's farm is running better, he's more likely to have enough bananas to sell to me every harvest. That means I have a sure supply. With a Fairtrade deal, Ayah at the supermarket is more likely to keep buying from me. That means a more secure future for all of us.



Ayah
Supermarket buyer



ROUND TWO: I think we need more supplies of Fairtrade bananas. Shoppers keep asking for them, they really do seem to care about making bananas fair. More and more people use their power as shoppers to make sure that the people who produce our food are safe and well treated.

Also, it is good publicity for us to be seen to be doing the right thing. It makes good business sense, but it's true that we sometimes have to sell our bananas at a loss.

I'll ask Tom to get us more Fairtrade suppliers, but I'll have to keep pushing him down on those costs. We can't let prices move up when we're losing money on bananas already. I do care about poor farmers - but I've got to meet my targets. I'm not sure.

