

# WAC - Frequently Asked Questions

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## **What is the World Affairs Challenge?**

The World Affairs Challenge™ is an innovative academic program and competition on international affairs for middle and high school students that focus on an annual global theme.

## **How does the Challenge benefit students?**

The World Affairs Challenge educates youth about community and world affairs and builds important skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, public speaking and leadership. It is fun and allows students to be creative and engage in project-based learning while still building the skills and content knowledge to be successful global citizens in the 21st Century. The Challenge empowers youth to see themselves as lifelong global citizens and encourage them to become agents of change in their communities, both locally and globally.

## **What is the theme this year?**

The theme for 2010 is "Water around the World". [The 2009 theme was "6 Billion on the Move: Human Migration in a Global Society."]

## **When is the Challenge?**

The 2010 WAC will be held in San Francisco on Saturday, April 17, at San Francisco State University.

## **How does it work?**

Students spend up to four months preparing for the competition, with research and administrative support provided by World Savvy. An international thematic area is selected each year as the focus of study. Within this focus of study, Challenge teams identify a more narrow and specific aspect of the theme for their team presentation. The end of the research process culminates with the World Affairs Challenge, which occurs each spring. During the Challenge, students compete in four different events that test their global awareness knowledge, their presentation skills, and their ability to work collaboratively with their peers. Teachers serve primarily as coaches, helping their students prepare for the events. Often, teachers incorporate the Challenge theme into their course curriculum.

## **What are the four events?**

**The Formal Presentation:** In a format of their choosing, each team presents its extensive research and analysis, identifies the major policy issues raised, and proposes reasonable solutions. Presentations often take the form of creative skits or simulations as students communicate their understanding of the topic's complexities.

**The Global Awareness Quiz:** A short, multiple-choice test that assesses students' conceptual knowledge of global geography, world events, and aspects of the annual theme. The quiz is scored individually as well as averaged for each team.

**The Collaborative Question:** An improvisational exercise in which students apply the teamwork and problem solving skills they have been developing in preparation for the Challenge. Participants are organized into new teams with peers from other competing schools. Students are presented with a real-world scenario and asked to devise a viable solution. The teams receive support materials and data, including maps and statistical information but are left alone to address the task as they see fit. Judges later join the Collaborative Question teams to hear their ideas and discuss the scenario.

**Discovery Poster:** The Poster is a visual representation of each team's Formal Presentation. This component allows students to see each other's research, analysis, and findings.

## **How does it connect to Social Studies Standards?**

World Savvy creates a curriculum guide that connects the program to social studies standards in US History, Geography, World History, Civics and Economics. We also provide connections to Language Arts and Science standards. Through structured activities and individual research, students will learn about the topic at the local, national, and global level and examine the economic, environmental, political, and social aspects of the issue.

### **What is required of Teachers?**

While the program is largely youth-led, teachers act as team coaches by facilitating team meetings in or out of class and supervising research and Challenge preparation. The time commitment for teachers includes a brief orientation one evening in February, advising team meetings of 2-3 hours per week for 12-16 weeks leading up to the Challenge, and one Saturday for the Challenge. World Savvy will provide ongoing support for teachers along the way.

### **How much does it cost?**

Participation in the Challenge costs \$40 per team member. We hope to have at least 10 students participate. This cost includes breakfast and lunch for students and coaches the day of the Challenge, a t-shirt for each participant, and support from World Savvy during the research and preparation phase (see below for details).

### **Who judges the competition?**

Judges are prominent community members who volunteer their time to participate in the Challenge. They have an interest in international affairs and come from a variety of backgrounds and professions. Their role is to judge the Formal Presentation, and the Collaborative Question.

### **How does the Challenge benefit business and the community?**

The World Affairs Challenge illustrates the local community's increasing role in the international global economy and the need for students to understand these new connections. We hope to develop a work force and an electorate attuned to international events and how these events relate to the lives of global citizens. The Challenge affords community members an opportunity to participate in an innovative academic program that showcases the amazing talent and vision of our young people.

### **Want more information?**

Visit [www.worldsavvy.com](http://www.worldsavvy.com) or see the coaches: Mrs. Casey or Mrs. Pozniak