

05

“Home and the World”

Rethinking Global Citizenship Education From Rabindranath Tagore’s Perspective

Mousumi Mukherjee & Mousumi Roy

Mousumi Mukherjee is a Professor and Deputy Director of the Centre for Comparative and Global Education at the International Institute for higher Education Research and Capacity Building, O.P. Jindal Global University, and Mousumi Roy is a children’s author and illustrator from India

Intended level

★ Primary education

★ Secondary education

Scaling up or down

★ Teacher education

This chapter is based on “Home and the World”: Rethinking Global Citizenship Education From Rabindranath Tagore’s Perspective” by Mousumi Mukherjee in APCEIU(2024), *Rethinking Global Citizenship Education from Asia-Pacific Perspectives*. This chapter was drafted by Mousumi Mukherjee, and the story and illustrations for Section 3, “Do,” were co-created by Mousumi Mukherjee and Mousumi Roy.

01

DISCOVER

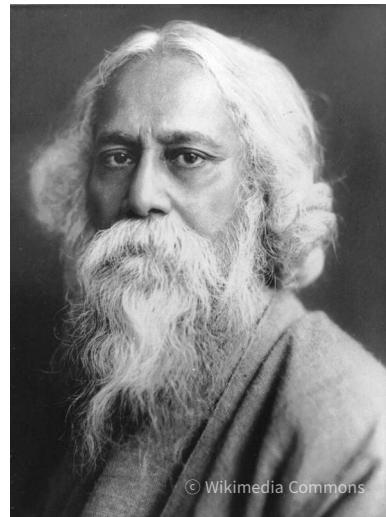
Understand the essentials!



This section deals with Rabindranath Tagore's educational philosophy and pedagogical practices to demonstrate their relevance for contemporary times. Tagore's educational philosophy emphasised holistic development and community engagement, reflecting a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of humanity and nature. He built his own school and university at Shantiniketan (meaning "abode of peace") in the early twentieth century during British colonial India to reform education based on his educational philosophy. He established an alternative decolonial system for holistic education and local community development against the mainstream colonial "factory model" of schools, which only focused on the cognitive aspect of education and standardised assessment.

This section argues that Tagore's philosophy and pedagogic reform work is increasingly relevant in addressing the contemporary sustainability challenges of our planet. It demonstrates that Tagore's pedagogic practice of integrating the 3H's—the head (cognitive), the heart (social-emotional), and the hand (behavioural)—in education is similar to the core components of global citizenship education (GCED)—that is, GCED pedagogy that involves nurturing the cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioural domains of a learner to care for the environment and all living beings for sustainable development. Therefore, Tagore's philosophy of education can inform contemporary educational practices and policies aimed at fostering critical and compassionate global citizens.

Furthermore, this section shows that Tagore's philosophy and educational practices align with UNESCO's (2014) mandate of nurturing "critical global citizens" in the twenty-first century in the context of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, also known as the Global Goals). It should be noted that the new National Education Policy 2020 in India has also emphasised GCED. Hence, Tagore's work remains influential in shaping educational frameworks in India and similar postcolonial contexts of the Global South, especially because his philosophy encourages critical thinking, empathy, and ethical action in students for environmental protection and the promotion of peace.



© Wikimedia Commons

Who is Rabindranath Tagore?

Rabindranath Tagore (born May 7, 1861, Calcutta [now Kolkata], India—died August 7, 1941, Calcutta) was a Bengali poet, short-story writer, song composer, playwright, essayist, and painter who introduced new prose and verse forms and the use of colloquial language into Bengali literature, thereby freeing it from traditional models based on classical Sanskrit. He was highly influential in introducing Indian culture to the West and vice versa, and he is generally regarded as the outstanding creative artist of early 20th-century India. In 1913 he became the first non-European to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Source: Robinson, W.A. (2025, October 9)

Tagore's philosophy of education and academic debates on global citizenship education

Tagore's educational ideals were rooted in a vision of collective identity and universal humanism, aiming to integrate individuals into society meaningfully. His vision transcended narrow nationalism, promoting a broader humanistic concern.

This section of the chapter also engaged extensively with the contemporary academic debates on global citizenship education (GCED). Thereafter, I have argued that Tagore's decolonial approach to reform education during British colonial India aligns most closely with Bosio and Waghid's (2023) framework of GCED for critical consciousness development.

As a colonial subject without citizenship rights, and observing the imperial-led capitalist destruction of the environment and the oppression of indigenous people, Tagore boldly sought to reform education from a decolonial perspective that incorporated a sense of caring ethics for people and the planet. His decolonial and ecocritical views grew out of his observation of the environmental destruction in rural India because of forced cash-crop plantations and deforestation for capitalist gains during the British Raj. The ultimate goal of Tagore's pedagogical practices was the empowerment of humanity, as is depicted in the diagram below, which shows the theoretical framework of GCED for critical consciousness development as theorised by Bosio and Waghid (2023).

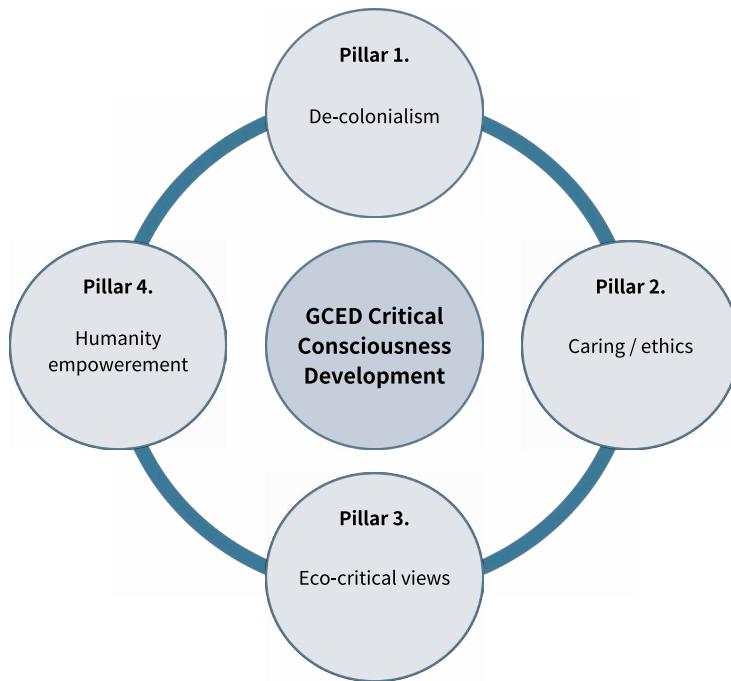


Figure 1 GCED for Critical Consciousness Development (Bosio & Waghid, 2023, p. 19)

UNESCO (2014) enumerated five competencies or characteristics of a critical-thinking global citizen in the context of the SDGs. In this chapter, I have further discussed that Tagore's philosophy of education and pedagogic practices sought to nurture a similar kind of critical-thinking global citizen in the context of British colonial India.

Tagore's educational philosophy and five characteristics/competencies of a "global citizen" according to UNESCO (2014) are:

1. Collective identity

Tagore aspired for a sense of collective identity among students, promoting the idea of world citizenship. As a colonial subject without citizenship rights, Tagore sought inspiration from India's cultural heritage, which taught us to consider all living beings on earth as part of one family, or *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* (a Sanskrit phrase from the *Maha Upanishad*). Hence, he established Visva-Bharati University in 1921 as a global university to create an inclusive learning environment that transcended cultural and religious boundaries. Tagore aimed to unite diverse cultural streams in India with the world. In fact, he invited scholars from around the world to create a global educational community. Visva-Bharati was designed to be inclusive of students and teachers from diverse backgrounds. Tagore's vision was to nurture a rooted-cosmopolitan identity among students.

2. Universal humanist values

Tagore's educational philosophy was grounded in universal humanist values, aiming to connect India with the world. Tagore envisioned Shantiniketan as a hub for universal humanism. He sought to establish his school, and Visva-Bharati University in Shantiniketan, as a centre for the study of humanity, promoting international cooperation and understanding. He criticised nationalism and sought to promote global unity. His educational initiatives were non-sectarian and inclusive. The curriculum in his school and university emphasised empathy, intercultural communication, and peace.

3. Critical thinking and decolonial perspectives

Tagore encouraged critical thinking among students, urging them to reflect on their history and societal issues. He aimed to create an inclusive educational space that addressed the complexities of caste, class, and gender. Tagore was aware of the limitations of traditional "ashram schools." Hence, he nurtured an inclusive learning environment by inviting students from diverse backgrounds, though he modelled his school in Shantiniketan as an ancient Indian "ashram school." His literary writings addressed issues of caste and gender inequities. Cultural events were organised in his school and university based on these literary writings to raise critical consciousness about social injustices.

4. Empathy and intercultural communication

Empathy and intercultural communication were central to Tagore's educational practices. He promoted understanding and peace through arts-based pedagogy and community engagement. Students participated in caring activities and shared responsibilities. The curriculum included learning of foreign languages to enhance intercultural understanding. Tagore emphasised the importance of peace and international cooperation through education. Hence, he invited artists and scholars from around the world to come to Shantiniketan as teachers and scholars.

5. Collaborative action for community development

Tagore's educational philosophy included a strong emphasis on collaborative and responsible action. He envisioned a collaborative effort to improve village life and community development. He founded Sriniketan to promote rural handicrafts and art. Then he established the Institute of Rural Reconstruction to connect students with the realities of rural life and promote community

engagement. The Institute of Rural Reconstruction was established in 1922. He published accessible educational materials for the masses and aimed to spread literacy and education to rural communities. In this way, Tagore got the entire school and university community engaged in collaborative action for community development.

The world-minded, action-oriented, responsible citizens that Tagore envisioned to nurture in his twentieth century school and university provides a framework to rethink GCED in the twenty-first century from within the context of postcolonial India.

FIVE KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 Academic debates on global citizenship education

Know about the contemporary academic conceptual debates about GCED, particularly GCED for critical consciousness development.



2 Connection between global citizenship education and Tagore's philosophy

The connection between GCED for critical consciousness development with Tagore's philosophy of education and pedagogical praxis

3 Educating the head, the heart, and the hand

Rethinking GCED and global competencies or characteristics of *critical global citizens* as enumerated by UNESCO (2014) from Tagore's perspective and connecting the "home and the world."



4 Relevance for Global South contexts

Tagore's philosophy of education and practice could be beneficial for India and similar contexts of the Global South, where postcolonial social imaginary and a sense of national identity and belonging is very strong.

5 Relevance for sustainable development

Now more than ever, Tagore's philosophy and pedagogic practices are relevant for nurturing a sense of collective identity, universal values, critical thinking, empathy, intercultural communication, and collaborative and responsible action for environmental protection and promotion of peace for the sustainable development of India and the world.



02

DEEPEN

Reflect on the questions!



The connection between the home and the world and global citizenship education pedagogy

Within the Indian context, there are concepts such as *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*—in the ancient *Maha Upanishad* Sanskrit text—which means that all beings born out of *Vasudha*, or Mother Earth, are our relatives/family, or *kutumb*. This is how the indigenous philosophy of India connects the home and the world. This indigenous belief influenced Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy of education.

It is believed that most indigenous philosophies around the world, including the Asia-Pacific region, have similar concepts connecting the home and the world, since the concept of nation-states, which divides our planet into geo-political boundaries, is a modern man-made division.

Q Are you aware of similar concepts within your own indigenous societies and philosophies that connect the home and the world?

Q If yes, then what are these concepts? How did you learn about these concepts?

Q How will you bring these concepts into your classroom to enlighten the minds of your students so that they think about their citizenship rights and duties as citizens of the world?

According to many indigenous educational philosophies, there was a symbiotic relationship between the head, the heart, and the hand. Indigenous pedagogies involved all three components: the head, the heart, and the hand. The ancient Indian concept of *karma yoga* emphasised performing actions that are selfless and altruistic, with empathy at heart and higher consciousness of the mind. Tagore sought to revive this symbiotic relationship of the head, the heart, and the hand in his school during British colonial India, when education was becoming increasingly divided into two separate streams—academic and vocational—with the instrumental goals of education becoming prioritised. By connecting the 3H's pedagogically, Tagore sought to inspire young minds in the context of colonial exploitation to become engaged in rural reconstruction and community development, selflessly, and with empathy at heart. In the context of the SDGs, GCED is calling for a similar kind of pedagogy connecting the 3H's.

Q Are there similar approaches to pedagogy in the indigenous philosophies of your region?

Q How would you connect the cognitive (head), social-emotional (heart), and behavioural (hand) pedagogic components in your classroom teaching?

03

DO

Take it into teaching!



Storytelling and drama-based pedagogy are considered active and effective methods of teaching both the young and adult learners of the world (Arda Tuncdemir, 2025; Göksel, 2020; Landrum et al., 2019). The following story illustrates how we can incorporate the 3H's—the head, heart, and hand—of GCED pedagogy through storytelling as a method of teaching. This is also a method that aligns with Tagore's pedagogy, as he sought to teach and raise the consciousness of his students about various contemporary social, political, and economic issues through his literary writings, including his stories, novels, poems, and dance dramas (Radice, 2010).

Story

1

“We Can Save Our Home and the World” – Part 1: The scene takes place at the school assembly hall

(Authors: Mousumi Mukherjee & Mousumi Roy; Illustrator: Mousumi Roy)

1 Learning objectives

This activity involves reading a story and performing a short skit that focuses on the cognitive and social-emotional aspects of global citizenship education. Through the reading and enactment of this short story:

- Students will be able to reflect on what it means to be a global citizen.
- Students will be able to learn about local and global examples of noted “global citizens” who are well-known for their work on environmental protection and education reform.
- Students will be able to reflect on their own indigenous cultural heritage and many ancient teachings that emphasises all living beings on planet Earth are part of one family.

2 Story

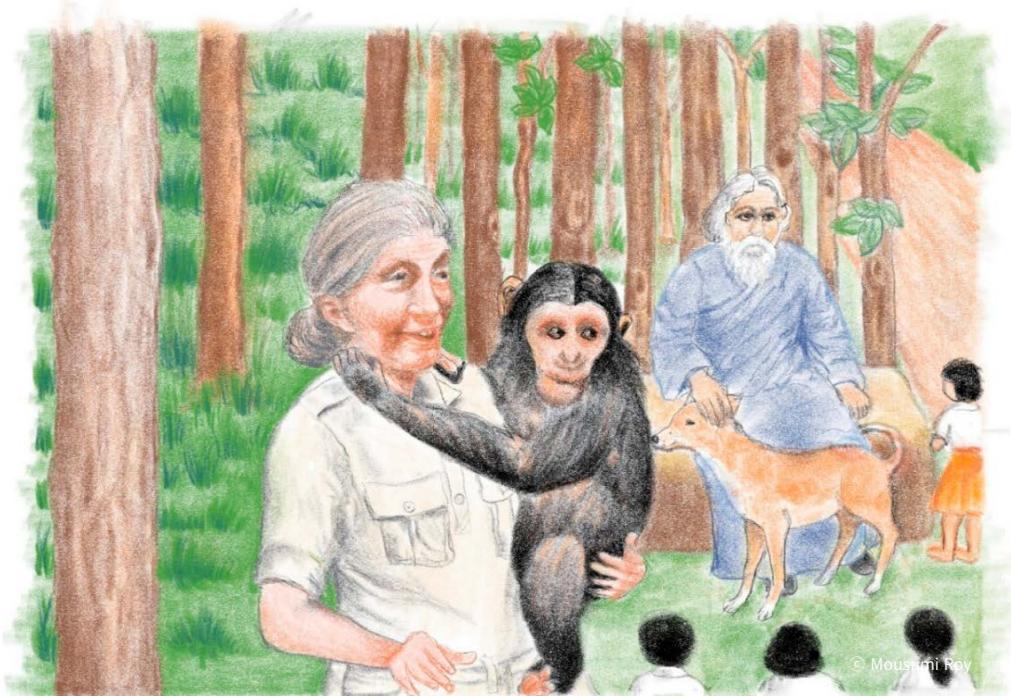
“Did you know our principal is back to school and called us for a special assembly today?” one of the students asked.

“Oh, she already returned from Mumbai?” asked another student.

The class teacher, Mrs. Roy, who was standing nearby, said, “Students, let us go inside the hall. Principal Ma’am is already there. Today she will tell all of you the story of Dame Jane Goodall.

Who is she? And why will the principal talk about Jane Goodall? We thought she would tell us about her conference in Mumbai.

Mrs. Roy: Dear Students, let’s go inside. We are running late for the morning assembly. The principal will tell you more about Jane Goodall and her conference trip.



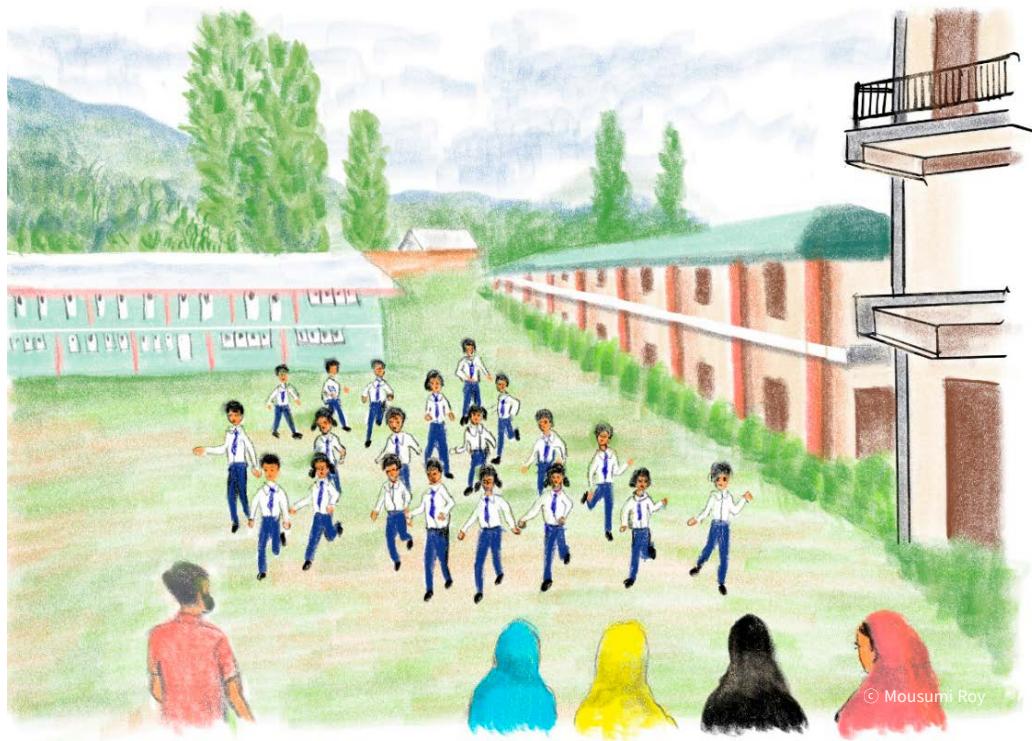
Principal: Good morning, students and teachers! Thank you for assembling in the hall on time. Today I want to share with you my experience at the conference in Mumbai. The conference was on global citizens. I learnt about many important global citizens there. One of them is Jane Goodall. She is a renowned British primatologist, paleontologist, anthropologist, zoologist, conservationist, UN Messenger of Peace, and the founder of the Jane Goodall Institute.

She has announced a partnership between the Museum of Solutions and Roots & Shoots India, in collaboration with Godrej Industries, in Mumbai. She also visited Mumbai on her Hope Global Tour to empower young people to become compassionate leaders for animals, people, and the environment. She has dedicated her life to the conservation of the environment. I learnt about all her initiatives at the conference and wanted to share them with you because all of us need to care for the environment and be global citizens in the twenty-first century.

Do you know who inspired Jane Goodall to do all this work? Well, in terms of the inspiration for her work, it was a stuffed toy chimpanzee named Jubilee given to her by her father. She loved it. Later, she went to Gombe National Park to observe chimpanzees. Her mother accompanied her. She felt close to nature, and she loved the chimpanzees. But she found that their natural habitats were being destroyed. So, she decided to protect them, and she has spent her entire life for the protection of wildlife and the habitat of animals.

To me, Tagore can be your inspiration. He showed people how to stay in harmony with nature and diverse communities over 100 years ago. Jane Goodall has also spoken about Tagore in a documentary film, *Rabindranath Tagore: The Poet of Eternity*¹, which was made by Partha Bhattacharya and released in May 2014 to commemorate Tagore's sesquicentennial birth anniversary. Goodall said in this documentary that "He [Tagore] was very religious, very spiritual person but also very practical, improving the lives of rural people in India and talking to the great thinkers of the day and really leaving behind a fabulous legacy." Rabindranath Tagore established Visva-Bharati University at Shantiniketan, whose name means "abode of peace." He welcomed students and teachers from

¹  Film: Rabindranath Tagore - The Poet of Eternity
<https://www.tagorethepoetofeternity.org/>



every part of the world. He was thinking, feeling, and acting like a true global citizen even when this term “global citizen” was not in use.

We all need peace to live happily, right? This is possible if we live in harmony. We were all very scared when we heard the news about the terrorist attack on tourists in Pahalgam and the death of so many people. But the military escalation between India and Pakistan after that was even scarier. I was at the conference in Mumbai, and I was constantly worrying about returning to our school. I heard from the vice-principal about a mock drill that took place in our school to prepare for a war-like situation. You must have felt anxious during the escalation, right?

I am very glad that the leaders of both India and Pakistan decided to de-escalate the situation and ensure that a war did not break out. There is no peace in this world. There are already too many wars happening in this world—in the Middle East, between Ukraine and Russia . . . War and its aftermath are very bad. It hurts people, it hurts flora and fauna, and it hurts the environment. War also increases the problems of pollution and extreme global warming. Mother Earth literally bleeds! We must avoid war to save Mother Earth.

Last century, Rabindranath Tagore witnessed the horrors of the two World Wars. We should not repeat those mistakes again. Tagore called for peace by writing about the horrors of war and blind nationalism. He also wrote songs calling for peace. Today in the assembly I have requested Mrs. Roy to sing a Tagore song calling for peace. Do you all know Mrs. Roy studied at Tagore’s Visva-Bharati University?

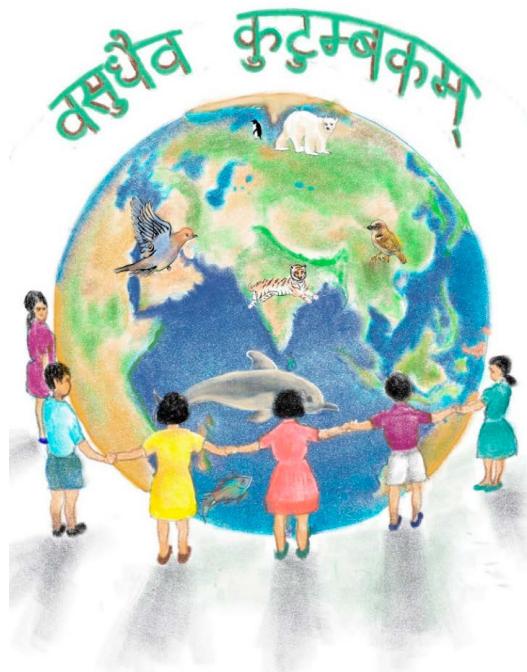
Mrs. Roy: Thank you, Principal Ma’am, for inviting me to sing. I am happy to sing the song for all of you. Indeed, the song is a musical call for peace, and it is very relevant even today. But since it is in my mother tongue, Bengali, I have requested one of my class students, Rya to recite a translation in English for other students and teachers, to understand the meaning of the lyrics.

Mrs. Roy sings the original Tagore song in Bengali  + .

Borisho dhara-majhe shaantiro baari
 Shusko hridayo loye aachhe dnaaraiye
 Urdhomukhe naronari.
 Naa thaake andhokaar, naa thaake mohopaap,
 Naa thaake shokoporitaap.
 Hridayo bimalo hok, praan sabalo hok,
 Bighno daao aposaari.
 Keno e hingsadesh, keno e chhadmobesh,
 Keno e maan-obhimaan.
 Bitaro bitaro prem paashanohridaye,
 Jayo jayo hok tomari.

Rya recites the English Translation of the song:

O Almighty, please shower the rain of peace
 With thirsty hearts people are waiting
 They are looking up to you for your blessings
 O Almighty, please shower the rain of peace
 Please remove the darkness of our greed and evil
 Please remove our sorrow and stress
 Please purify our hearts with your divine light
 Please give us strength to remove all obstacles
 O Almighty, please shower the rain of peace
 Why this anger and violence? Why this mimicry?
 Why these egotist misunderstandings?
 Please ignite your love into all the stony hearts
 Let your eternal love prevail
 O Almighty, please shower the rain of peace
 With thirsty hearts people are waiting
 They are looking up to you for your blessings



© Mousumi Roy

Principal: That was beautiful, Mrs. Roy and Rya! Our country has such rich philosophical and cultural resources. We can spread peace around the world by preserving our cultural heritage and promoting it around the world. The *Maha Upanishad* tells us- vasudhaiva kutumbakam—all living beings born by Mother Earth are part of our family—and Rabindranath Tagore has left such a wonderful legacy for all of us. Each one of us can become an ambassador of peace in this world.

Rya: If our ancient philosophy and culture showed us how to live in harmony with nature, and if Rabindranath Tagore followed this path over a century ago, then why is Mother Earth dying and why there are so many wars still going on?

Principal: Because we have forgotten the wisdom of our own indigenous philosophy and cultures. We can save Mother Earth, if we plant trees, if we are not greedy and kill others like poachers. If we could avoid buying cheap things and throwing them away, those piles of garbage and waste would not be created. They make barriers which do not allow rainwater to seep back into the earth. Soil is becoming polluted, and ground water levels are decreasing. But we cannot survive without clean water. At the same time, coastal water levels are rising due to global warming, which is melting icebergs in the polar regions. It is putting at risk the lives of animals, such as polar bears, and the livelihoods of so many people who dwell in the coastal regions of the world.

We can use eco-friendly products, plant trees, and switch off electrical and electronic goods when not using them. We can use solar, biogas, and wind energy to reduce global warming. Both the mighty royal Bengal tigers and polar bears—even tiny sparrows—must be saved. Many interconnected species are going extinct because we fail to protect them. We are intelligent but we are lacking empathy, and without empathy our education is incomplete. This is why Rabindranath Tagore tried to reform education in his school: to promote empathy and environmental protection. I am concluding today's assembly with this hope that all of you will save Mother Earth as global citizens. See you again tomorrow.

3 From story to reflection

Educators encourage students to reflect on the questions after reading the story.

Q What does it mean to be a global citizen?

Q Can you name some global citizens known for protecting the environment or improving education?

Q Write about your own cultural heritage and what it teaches about living in harmony with nature and all beings.

Story

2

We can save our home and the world – Part 2: The scene takes place inside the classroom

(Authors: Mousumi Mukherjee & Mousumi Roy; Illustrator: Mousumi Roy)

1 Learning objectives

This activity involves reading a story and performing a short skit that focuses on the behavioural aspects of global citizenship education. Through the reading and enactment of this short story:

- Students will have a chance to reflect on their own responsibilities as global citizens to save the planet and all species.
- This second activity will begin with a student raising a question as part of the skit.
- The teacher will answer the question through storytelling and music in a biology class, following interdisciplinary GCED pedagogy.

2 Story

After the morning assembly, the students followed Mrs. Roy to their classroom while murmuring to each other. As Mrs. Roy was about to begin her biology lesson on the food chain, one of the students raised her hand and asked:

Rya: Ma'am, could we ask you a question?

Mrs. Roy: Yes, of course!

Rya: We understand what the principal said. But, even if we listen to you and what our ancient philosophy and Rabindranath Tagore said about taking care of nature, humans, and animals, what difference can we make? Who will listen to us? We are too small and young. Adults have created this polluted world of war and anxiety. What can we do to change anything?

Mrs. Roy: Children don't think you are too small and weak to do anything. Even a single step—a simple initiative—can make a difference. Let me tell you a story now.

It was a summer afternoon. My daughter and I were busy reading a storybook. We heard the soft sound of a bird chirping. We stopped reading. We thought the parents of the baby sparrow may have come back, so the chick was chirping out of joy. Within a second, we heard a painful cry. We got up hurriedly and rushed to the origin of the sound. It was our balcony. The bird's nest was there. Both of us felt sad to see the baby sparrow lying on the floor! The baby sparrow's parents were not there. We started to think about how we could help the baby. It was very cute. We went near the baby. But it was trying to move away from us. We felt sad. But the chick was fearful of us! It may be because of our big size or because we don't know how to properly show love towards them. So, what did we do to help the baby sparrow?

I lifted the chick in my palm. We made small granules with wheat dough to feed her. But the fearful baby didn't eat those. We tried to feed it sweetened water. I held the baby gently in my palm and my daughter poured the sweetened water on my palm slowly. She was very happy and excited. But I told her to hold her nerve until our job was done. The chick tried to have all the water at once. Then suddenly it became restless and started flapping its wings. I became cautious and gently put the chick on the floor. It was moving by hopping and flapping its wings. But suddenly the tiny baby fell through the grill! We became worried and a bit nervous. We shouldn't be nervous in such a tough situation. We knew we had to remain calm, hopeful, and mentally strong.



We kept peering down into the balcony grill. The chick fell in between the two walls and landed on the parapet. Suddenly we heard a loud chirping sound. The parents were coming. We were peering through the balcony grill. They were screaming and hovering as their baby had fallen from the nest! We decided to help them because they were helpless. So, we tied a lock to a long string. We tied the other end with the grill tightly. Then we dropped it slowly in between the walls. The parents went down. After a few minutes they came out with their baby with the help of the string. They supported their baby with one of their wings to fly up to the nest from the parapet. Their wings worked like hands and in a similar way to how our parents used to hold our hands when we were toddlers.

You see, we didn't save the baby sparrow. The parents saved their baby. We just helped them. It was endless bliss. You can save life if you love and care. You can save anybody by taking simple steps. You are the next generation who will shape the future as global citizens. Small drops of water can make a big ocean. Your small acts of love and care can save the lives of other species on this planet.

Rya: That's a beautiful story, Ma'am. Thank you for sharing that with us. But what difference can we make by saving one little sparrow?

Mrs. Roy: A big difference. We are supposed to learn about the food chain today in class, right? Well, sparrows are vital to the food chain. They are both predator and prey. They eat pest insects and thereby control their population growth. On the other hand, sparrows are a source of food for larger predators like hawks and snakes. By eating fruits and berries, sparrows help spread seeds, which is important for the germination and survival of various plant species. A decline in sparrows can disrupt the ecological balance by negatively impacting their predators, causing a ripple effect throughout the food web. If sparrows disappear, there could be an increase in insect populations, leading to damaged crops and potential disease spread.

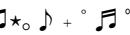
Rya: Ma'am, this is incredible. We didn't know that saving a little sparrow can save so many lives.

Mrs. Roy: Yes, your little act of kindness and care has a ripple effect. India is now the most populous country in the world, with a majority of the population being young people. You are the future of this world. Every little thing you do each day has an impact on the world around you. We can have a world of peace and prosperity only if you work toward it. Don't think you are too young and powerless. Don't think about what you can do alone to bring about change. Your little acts of kindness and care will help save the planet and all living beings. Students, remember what Rabindranath Tagore said: "Jodi tor daak shune keu na aashe tobe ekla cholo re" (If they pay no heed to your call, walk alone for the just cause).

Children, let us all sing a song in today's class and let us all take a pledge to walk the talk to save our planet, Mother Earth, and all living beings. Once we take the first step courageously, others will eventually follow you.

Rya: Ma'am, can we sing the trilingual—English, Bengali, and Hindi—version of the song written by Clinton Cerejo and sung by Amitabh Bachchan in the movie *Kahaani (Story)*? All of us can then sing.

Mrs. Roy: Good idea! Let's sing.

All of the students start singing together, with Mrs. Roy and Rya taking lead 

*Open thy mind, walk alone
Be not afraid, walk alone
Jodi tor daak shune keu na aashe tobe ekla cholo re (2)
Tobe Ekla cholo ekla cholo ekla cholo ekla cholo re.
Open thy mind, walk alone
Be not afraid, walk alone
Jodi keu kotha na koy
ore ore o obhaga keu kotha nakoy
Jodi shobai thaake mukh phiraye shobai kore bhoy (2)
Tobe poran khuley... (2)
O tui mukh phutey tor moner kotha ekla bolo re (2)
Jodi tor daak shune keu na aashe tobe ekla cholo re
Tu ru ru ru ru ru.....
Jab kali ghata chaye
Ore o re o andhera sach ko nigal jaye
Jab duniya sari dar ke age sar apna jhukaye (2)
Tu shola banja.....
Wo shola banja...
Jo khud jal ke jahan raushan karde ekla jalo re (2)
Jodi tor dak sune keu na aashe tobe ekla cholo re
Open thy mind, walk alone
Be not afraid, walk alone (2)*

The principal was taking her usual stroll across the corridor to check if all classes were running properly. She stopped outside Mrs. Roy's biology class, as she heard storytelling going on instead of any teaching about the food chain. Once the song ended, she entered the class.

Principal: That was so beautiful and powerful! Thank you and all the students. I truly appreciate your innovative teaching method, Mrs. Roy, and how you brought storytelling and music to a biology class! This is excellent. You and your students should sing this song again in the assembly tomorrow with me and the entire school. All of us will take the pledge as global citizens to save our only home—this beautiful blue and green planet called Earth. We will fulfil the mission that Rabindranath Tagore envisioned over a century ago!

3 From story to action

Educators encourage students to identify small actions they can take after reading the story. They can provide feedback on students' activities. Then, they can organise a poster presentation day at school and invite parents and other community members from outside the school to encourage students to become more engaged in mass education about peace and environmental issues. Educators can provide feedback on students' poster presentations.

Actions	
Step 1	With your classmates, talk about the little tasks you can do daily to care for the Earth and all living species.
Step 2	Take pictures of these daily tasks and make a collage of these pictures on chart paper to showcase your little tasks to protect life on Earth.
Step 3	Present your poster!

1 Scaling up or down

How to adjust the activities for teacher education

- a) For pre-service student teachers in the university and higher education institutions, you can ask them to reflect on the 3 H's—the head, heart, and hand—of the GCED pedagogy and the core competencies/characteristics of being a global citizen as enumerated by UNESCO and as it was envisioned by Rabindranath Tagore.
- b) You can ask them to write a reflective essay on how the short story "We Can Save Our Home and the World" incorporates the GCED pedagogy of the 3H's and then enact a short skit.
- c) Based on their disciplinary area and school subject, you can ask the student teachers to write a lesson plan incorporating the GCED pedagogies.

Q Think about the content and resources through which the students would acquire the conceptual knowledge from the lesson.

Q Think about activities that can engage students socially and emotionally with the concept.

Q Think about an activity through which students can demonstrate their learning of the concept.

References



Arda Tuncdemir, T. B. (2025). The power of creative drama: integrating playful learning approaches in teacher education. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2025.2457745>

Bhattacharya, P. (2014). “Rabindranath Tagore - the poet of Eternity”. Retrieved from <https://www.tagorethepoetofeternity.org/>

Bosio, E., & Waghid, Y. (Eds.). (2023). *Global Citizenship Education in the Global South*. Brill. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004521742>

Göksel, E. (2020). Drama-based pedagogy: Activating learning across the curriculum. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 25, 655–656.

Landrum, R. E., Brakke, K., & McCarthy, M. A. (2019). The Pedagogical Power of Storytelling. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/stl0000152>

Mukherjee, M. (2024). “Home and the World”: Rethinking Global Citizenship Education from Rabindranath Tagore’s Perspective. In Lim, H. M., Ji, S., & Lee, Y. Y. (Eds.), *Rethinking Global Citizenship Education from Asia-Pacific Perspectives*. Seoul, Republic of Korea: Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU).

Radice, W. (2010). Never not an educator: Tagore as a poet teacher. *Asiatic*, 4(1), 41–51.

Robinson, W.A. (2025, October 9). Rabindranath Tagore. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rabindranath-Tagore>

UNESCO. (2014). *Global Citizenship Education: Preparing Learners for the Challenges of the 21St Century*. UNESCO.