

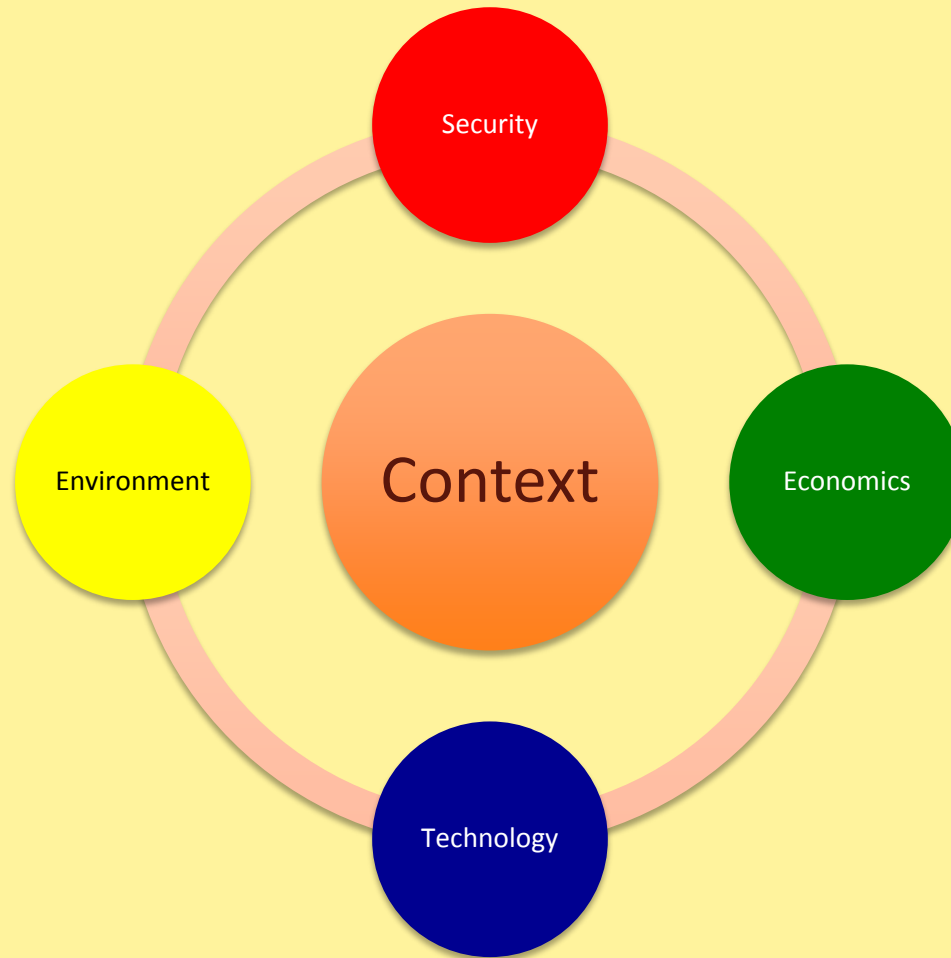
A Precarious Stage and a Critical Opportunity

The Turbulent Context Facing
Today's Educational Leaders

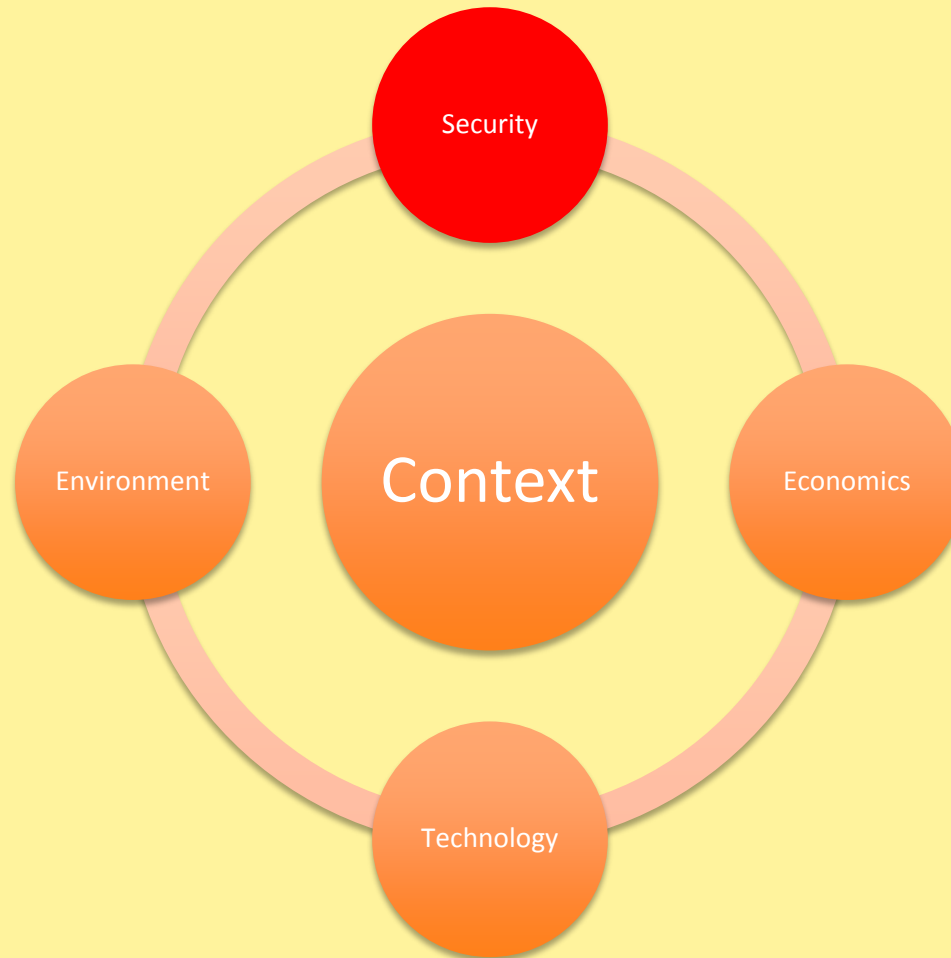
Steven Jay Gross

2016

Four Facets to Our Context



Facet 1: Security



A Century of Insecurity

- Instability pre and post WWI leading to WWII.
- The Legacy of Colonialism
- Cold War and its Aftermath.
- Current international hot-spots- North Korea, Iran, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, Iraq. (Think of how many of these refer us back to colonialism and/or the Cold War eras.)



Challenges to individual security.

- Attacks on women around the world

(“Up to 70% of women experience violence in their lifetimes.” United Nations Secretary General’s Campaign to End Violence Against Women”)

- Safety of the poor world wide

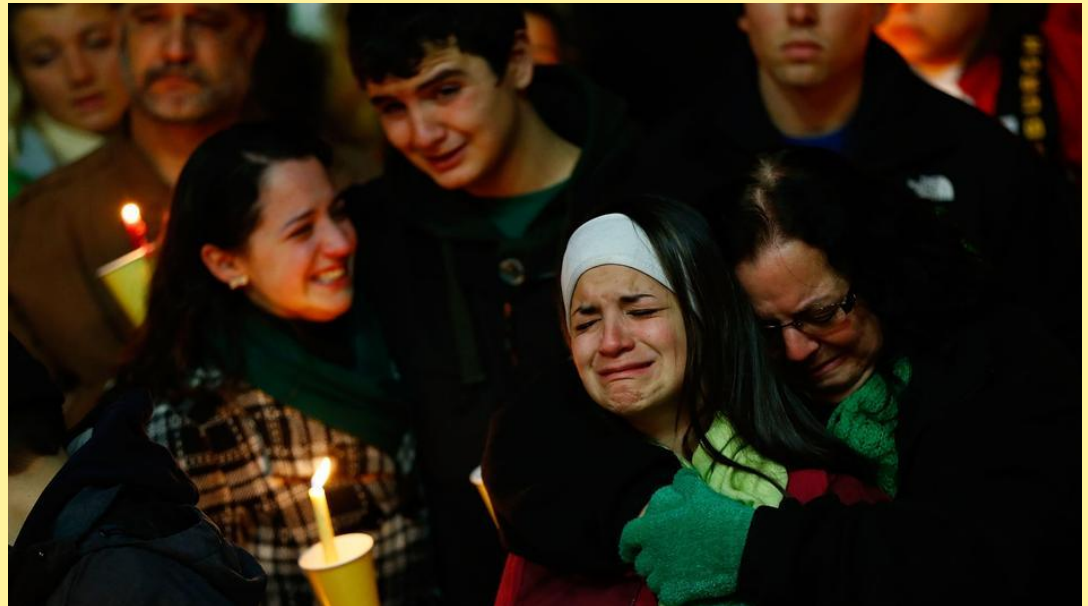
- The legacy of 9/11 and our sense of vulnerability in the face of terrorism and regional war.

(Including cyber attacks, drones and sectarian killings)



Violence to Our World's Young

- Boston Marathon 2013
- Brazil 2013
- Sandy Hook 2012
- Norway 2011
- Germany 2009
- Finland 2007
- Canada 1999
- 300,000 child “soldiers” in 50 countries throughout the world.

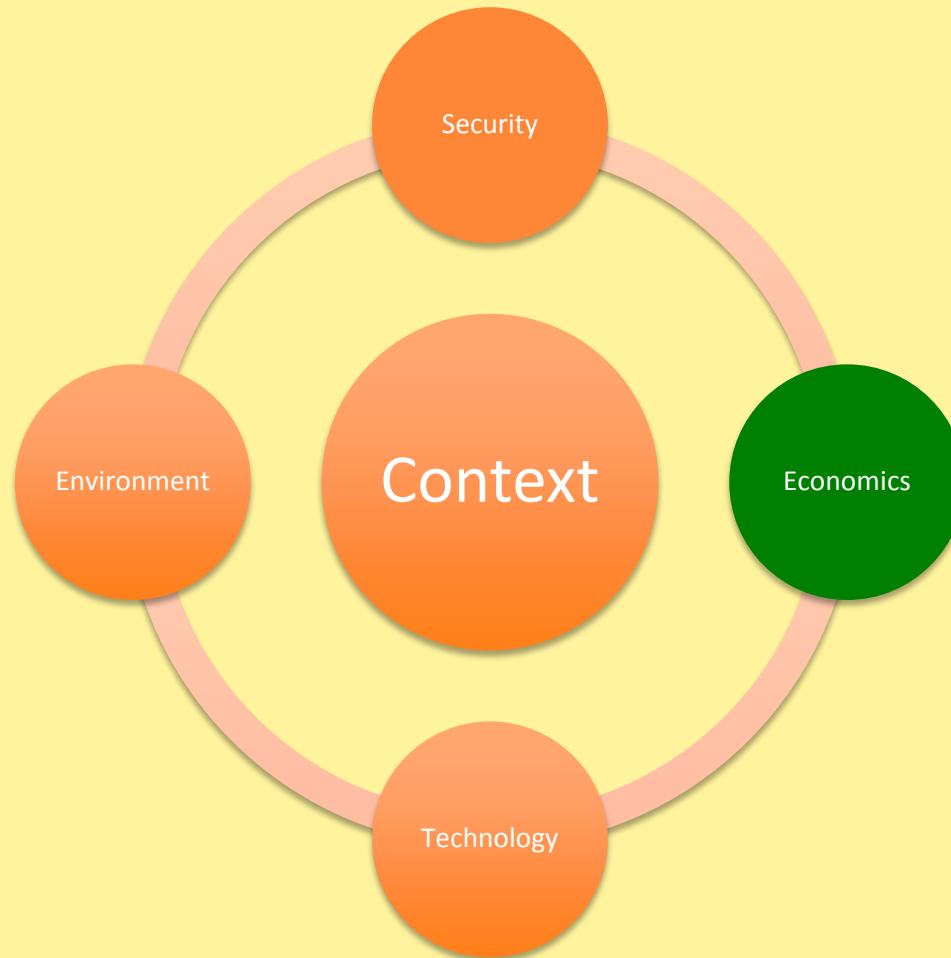


The Security Facet & Questions for Educational Leaders:

- In a dangerous world, how do educators contribute to a sense of realistic security for our society's children?
- In a world filled with tensions and adversarial relationships, how do we help our young expand the sense of "we" to include "the other"?



Facet 2: Economics



The Great Recession and its Legacy

- Millions unemployed in the US slowly going back to work (But often at lower paying jobs with fewer benefits.)

- States cutting funding to schools and universities. (See Philadelphia school budget crisis)

- Expanding child poverty
2009: 23.1% in US compared to 5.3% in Finland, (a country whose educational progress we often compare)

- Record levels of unemployment and double dip recession in Europe.

(Euro zone 12%, Spain 26.3% in February 2013 Eurostat)



A Divided Society

- Widening Income Gap

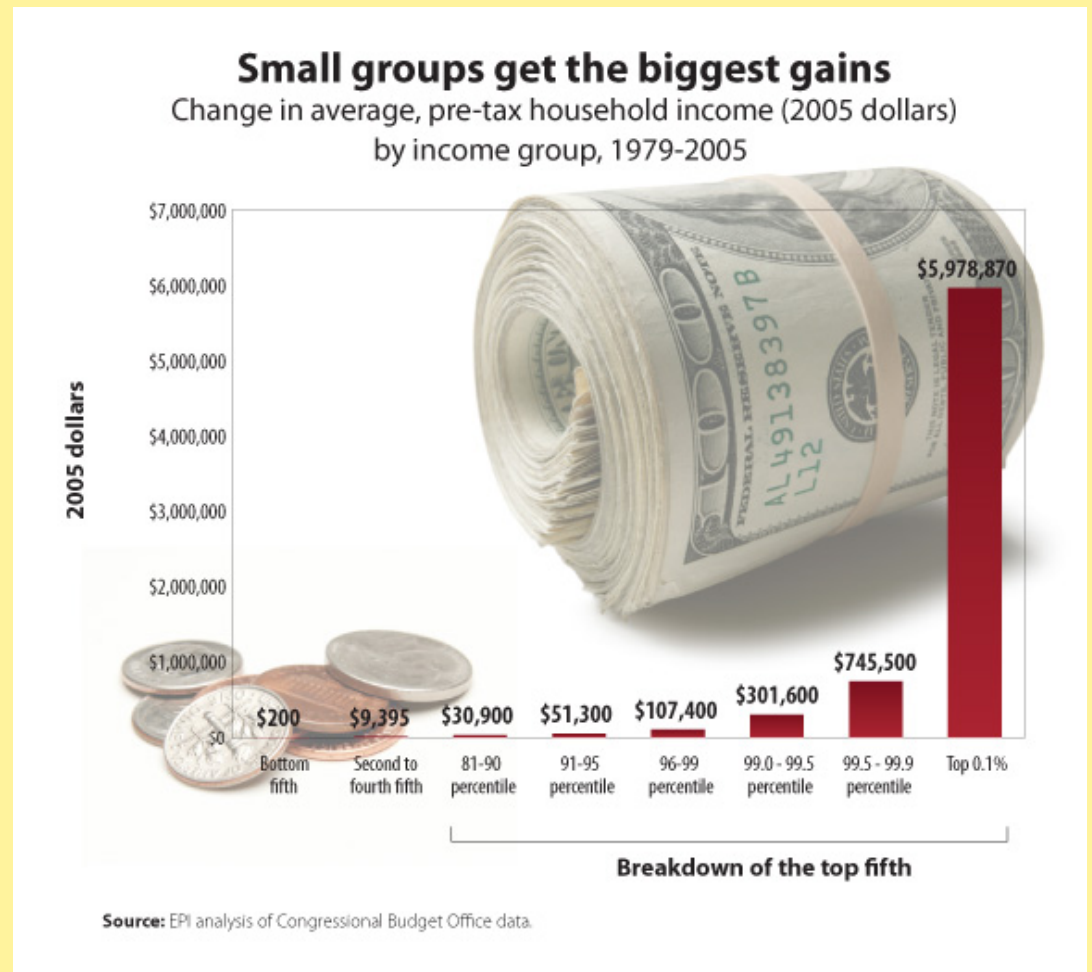
(see EPI chart)

- Student Loan Bubble:

(The average Temple graduates assumes about \$30K of debt)

- Economic Rights versus “Creative Destruction”- FDR versus Market Forces “Reforms”

(Consider the current debates in Washington on “Entitlements”, privatization, “Right to Work”, Venture Philanthropy)



Dynamic Rising Economies, Global Trade and their Impact

- The rise of the BRIC nations.

(Brazil, Russia, India, and China) China's planned 7.5% "moderate" growth.

- Tension and competition. ("Keeping up with Finland" syndrome in education and beyond.)

- Workers rights.

(Bangladeshi Clothing factory collapse. Reflections of the NY Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911)

- The impact of raw material supplying nations.

(The difference between Australia and Africa.)

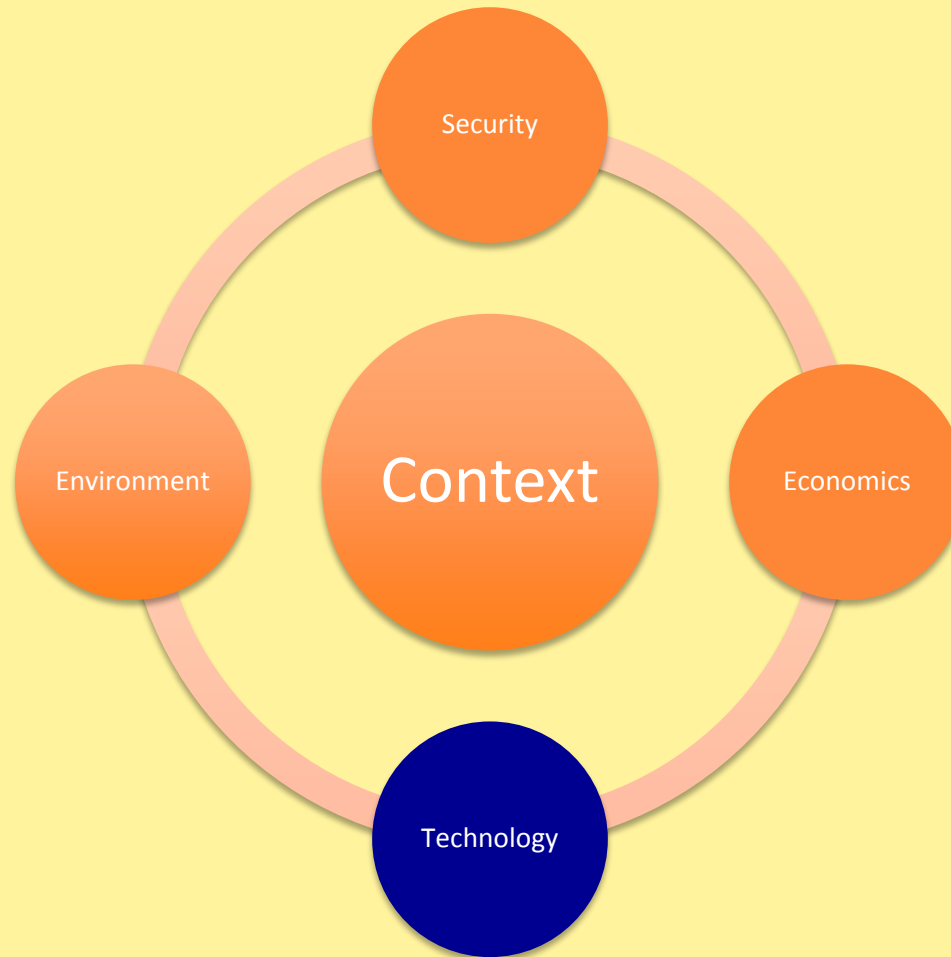


The Economic Facet and Questions for Educational Leaders:

- How shall we advocate for our most needy school children and their families in a time of budget cutting?
- What kind of economic security do we envision for our youth and how might we advocate for that vision?
- How broadly can we define “we”?



Facet 3: Technology



A Proliferation of Technology

- 6 Billion people with access to mobile telephones

(4.5 Billion have access to working toilets. 2 billion people have internet access worldwide)

- Borders re-defined

(Consider the networks we now join around the world compared to earlier generations)

- 95% of US Teens using the Internet.

(Studies show 90% have used social networking).



Associated Press / Erin Murphy

A Tsunami

- The up-ended world of publishing
On-line replacing newspapers,
(ex:Zite), e-readers vs books, Amazon
vs local stores of every kind.)
- Time measured in nanoseconds
(Multi-tasking but never really keeping
up. Stress, John Sculley and
sleeplessness.19th century vacations)
- The Rise of Artificial Intelligence:
(iPhone's Siri, GPS linked to data-bases
steering customers to shopping, away
from traffic jams. Google's driverless
cars. Who's really flying the airplane?)
- E-mail to Facebook to Twitter to
Instagram to???
- (When did you last receive a
handwritten note?)



•The Impact on Schools

- A mixed history

(Typewriters, overhead projectors, records, radio, television Wonderful promises...Schools as cash cows for industry.)

- MOOCs*?!?

(MOOCs in California Higher Education. Larger questions re on-line learning. The “flipped” classroom opportunity)

- A 2-Track System?

(Traditional human interaction and community building for the few, electronic access for most.)

- Tech leading to global education standards & standardized neo-liberal approaches

- (See 19th century trains schedules and standardized time keeping.)

*Massive Open On-line Classroom

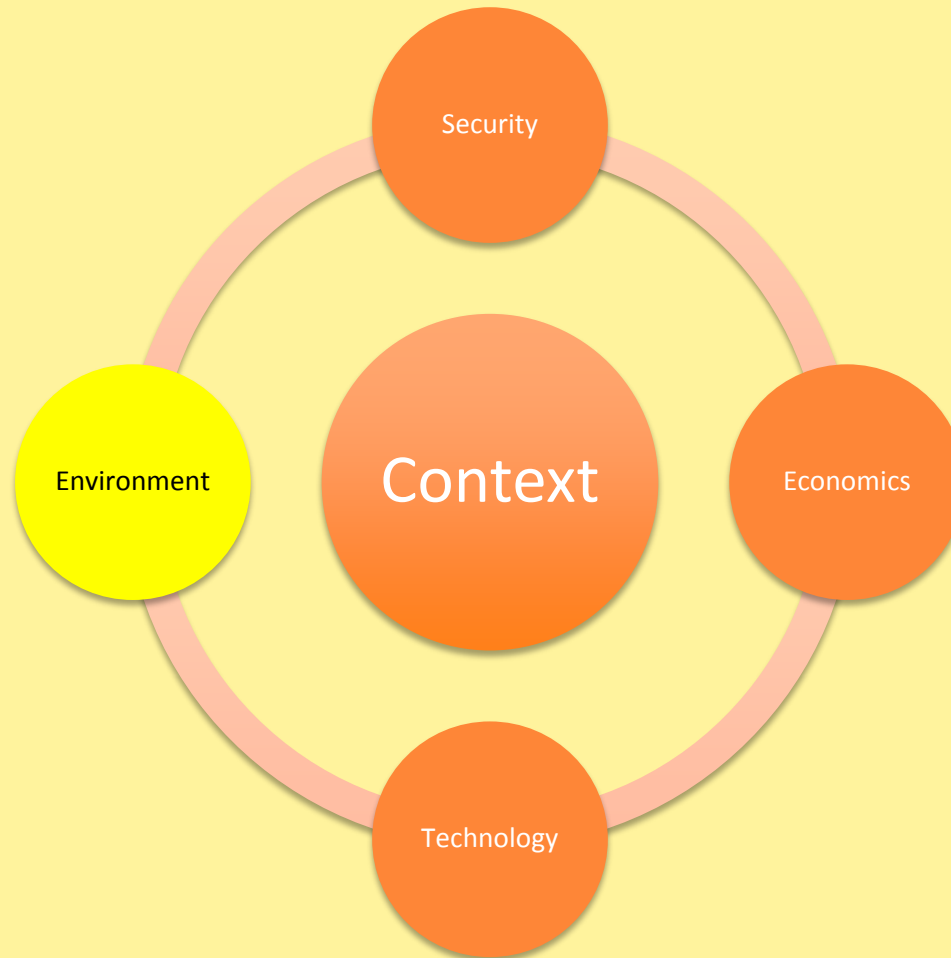


The Technology Facet Raises Questions for Educational Leaders:

- How can we move our systems toward valuing students more than corporate profits?
- How do we encourage technologies that do not exploit fellow educators (the on-line challenge)?
- What can we do to help our young use technology rather than being used by technology (including cyber bullying, hyper-consumerism, hurried lives)?



Facet 4: Environment



Global Warming

- Wealthy nations' responsibility
(2/3 of CO2 coming from US and Europe compared to <3% from Africa. "Poor Nations Bear the Brunt as World Warms. A.C. Revkin, NY Times 4/1/2007.)
- The "rights" of rising economies versus established economies.
(China now at 28% of all CO2 emissions. India also rising. "India, China Power CO2 Emissions Growth in 2012 Study" D. Fogarty 12/2/12 Reuters)
- Species Extinction
- Positive Feedback Loops
(Ex: Warming melts ice, exposing darker seas, increasing temperature, melting more ice, exposing more darker seas.)



The Current and Impending Fresh Water Crisis

- Impact on farming and remembering the Dust Bowl

(80% of US agricultural land faced drought in 2012) (USDA report)

(US 2012 drought reminder of the 1930's. The great US underground reservoir headed for depletion in the coming decades.) (See "The Worst Hard Times.")

- World demands and supplies

("About 3.5 planet earths would be needed to sustain a global population achieving the current lifestyle of the average European or North American" . UN World Water Development Report 2012

"In 2030, 47% of the world population will be living in areas of high water stress." UN World Water Development Report 2012. See: unwater.org)



Whose World is it anyway?

- Our addiction to perpetual economic growth.

Why are we addicted to the concept of perpetual growth? What are the impacts of that concept? Dare we challenge this notion? Dare we not?)

- Our Current Definition of Wealth and an Alternative.

(The ability to waste and think we're getting away with it, or having the time to share with people and activities deeply meaningful to us?)

- 7th Generation Thinking

("Owning" the world or borrowing from future generations?)

See: Eric Erikson's Generativity versus Stagnation)

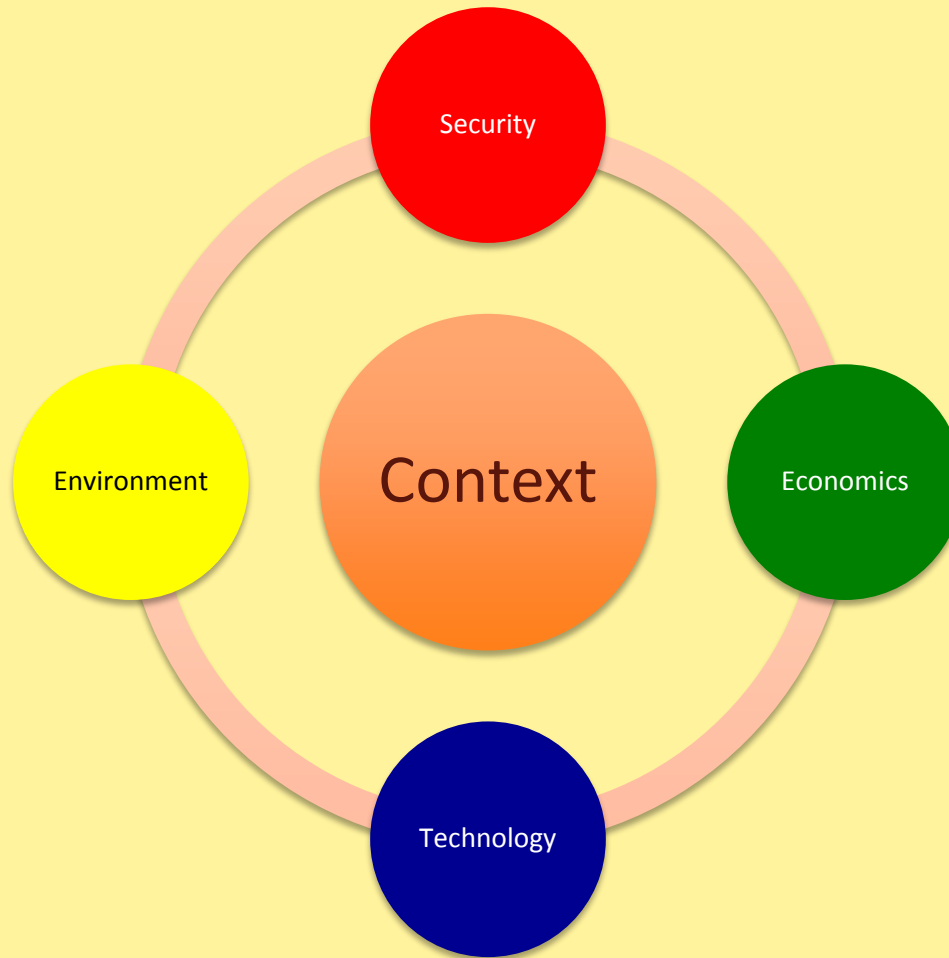


The Environment Facet Raises Questions for Educational Leaders:

- How can we raise awareness of the environmental price we ask the world to pay for our lifestyles in a fair and constructive way?
- What vision do we want to share with our children for the world they are to inherit from us?
- What kind of models do we want to be for saving the environment from abuse? How will we infuse the curriculum with these ideas?



Combining the Facets



Of course, the 4 Facets Combine

Technology and Security: In May 2013 a plastic pistol called Liberator was created by using a 3D printer and some small parts easily available in any hardware store. Plans for the pistol were made available by the Defense Distributed company on the internet and downloaded thousands of times.