

Course Rationale

State of the Planet

Although the Earth is 4.6 billion years old, modern humans have been around for just a small fraction of that time - about 250,000 years. Since then, somewhere between 60 and 110 billion people are thought to have lived on this planet, civilizations have come and gone, and through all this time the Earth has nourished and sustained life. Until recently we have not paid a great deal of attention to the impact of human activity and civilizations on the state of the planet, nor have we paid adequate attention to the needs of our fellow humans.

In recent years, people have watched with increasing concern as significant environmental changes have become more apparent. We are beginning to realize that these changes may be the result of human activity – and, even worse, that our future on Earth is no longer certain.

The 20th century has also seen the beginning of global efforts to improve human quality of life by working toward collective social goals. In 1948, the United Nations *Declaration of Universal Human Rights* marked a significant turning point in concern for the dignity of all human beings, while in the year 2000 the UN established the Millennium Development Goals to improve life for people across the globe.

Although some progress has been made, if we are to improve the human condition and sustain the Earth for future generations, more work must be done. We cannot continue along the path we are on – we need to change the way we live, reconnect to the natural world, develop an ethos based on ecological thinking and global concern, and teach our children to do the same.

Why students should take this course

Social studies examines human societies and the complex interactions of human beings living together in a shared world. This course provides a lens of ecological literacy through which students can study and understand the complex and often critical global issues that societies face today. Through this lens, students apply concepts related to sustainability, learn about the interdependence of environmental, social, political and economic systems, and develop competencies for thinking and acting as ecologically literate citizens committed to social justice.

The overall purpose of this study is not to instill fear in the next generation, nor to make students feel guilty for problems which are the cumulative legacy of many generations of mistakes, recklessness, and, in some cases, deliberate neglect or exploitation. Rather, the intent is to help students understand that human societies and institutions can and should be renewed, beginning with matters of personal

Millennium Development Goals

1. [Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger](#)
 2. [Achieve universal primary education](#)
 3. [Promote gender equality and empower women](#)
 4. [Reduce child mortality](#)
 5. [Improve maternal health](#)
 6. [Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases](#)
 7. [Ensure environmental sustainability](#)
 8. [Develop a Global Partnership for Development](#)
- <http://www.undp.org/mdg/>

lifestyle, and extending through to collective, large-scale social change. The role of education in this change is vital, hence the importance of this course both as an instrument of critical understanding – seeking the truth – and as an instrument of hope – seeking to create a better future.

The role of education in social change

Education plays a crucial role in motivating and informing both personal and social change. With this in mind, this course is designed to help students acquire a critical awareness about global issues, to alert them to the need to be vigilant about the consequences of their decisions and actions, and to provide them with opportunities to take action for positive change.

This course consolidates learning across the disciplines and helps students develop competencies as citizens who are mindful of their place in nature and in society and who are willing to work together toward a sustainable future. The pedagogical approach is based on the principles of active democratic citizenship, ecological literacy, critical media literacy, and ethical decision-making. Throughout the course, students examine the social, political, environmental, and economic impact of emerging issues on quality of life – locally, nationally and globally. They are provided with opportunities to engage in inquiry, active experiential learning, dialogue, collaboration, reflection and decision-making. With a view to transforming life practices, this course includes the planning and implementation of a school or community based action-research project.

Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and, by the same token save it from ruin which, except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and young, would be inevitable. And education, too, is where we decide whether we love our children enough not to expel them from our world and leave them to their own devices, not to strike from their hands their chance of undertaking something new, something unforeseen by us, but to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world.
Hannah Arendt (1968). *The crisis in education*. New York: Penguin Books, p. 196

Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability

	Enduring Understandings	Take Action	
<p>Learning to know</p> <p><i>Acquire knowledge and understanding, and think critically about our complex and changing world.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ecological literacy through an understanding of the interdependence of society, the environment, and the economy. Be open to new ideas and divergent thinking. Seek knowledge from diverse sources and perspectives. Use creative, critical, and systems thinking to address complex questions. Conduct focused in-depth inquiry. Explore alternative approaches to issues without fear of challenging the status quo. Engage in long-term thinking, and articulate a vision for a sustainable future. 	<p>Our ecological footprint is exceeding Earth's capacity to sustain biodiversity and human life.</p>	<p>Minimize your ecological footprint, and live more responsibly (e.g., use fewer non-renewable resources; reduce waste; limit dependence on petrochemicals; seek sustainable and ethical food choices...).</p>	<p>Learning to be</p> <p><i>Build self-knowledge and be conscious of connections to nature and society.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciate the natural world and live by ecological principles. Be willing to contribute to the present and future well-being of all. Be introspective, reflective, and self-aware. Acquire a strong sense of self-knowledge and personal identity. Accept and express multiple identities, allegiances, and influences. Know how to be and how to live with others in shared spaces. 
<p>Learning to do</p> <p><i>Learn to participate effectively in local, national, and global communities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act responsibly towards self, others, and the environment. Be willing to let go and give back, and to make changes so as to live sustainably. Be an empowered and committed agent of change, willing to take a stand and engage in action for a sustainable future. Cultivate and share personal skills, talents, and gifts. Practise helpfulness and share hopefulness. Demonstrate care and respect through language and actions. Apply intuitive and innovative thinking and decision-making skills. Plan informed courses of action. 	<p>Our decisions and actions matter; they have social, environmental, economic, and political consequences.</p>	<p>Recognize the consequences of your decisions, and take action as a citizen for a sustainable and just future for all.</p>	<p>Learning to live together</p> <p><i>Learn to live peacefully with others and to care for our common homeland.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect Earth as a shared commons made up of complex and interconnected systems. Recognize the solidarity of all human beings and their dependence upon the planet. Respect diversity and value equity. Engage in intercultural dialogue and cultivate a widening circle of empathy and concern. Respect the inherent, inalienable, and universal nature of human rights. Be willing to collaborate, lead, and support. Resolve conflicts peacefully.
	<p>Individuals, groups, governments, and corporations have the power to effect change and the responsibility to contribute to a sustainable future.</p>	<p>Be an ethical decision-maker, take a stand to support quality of life for all, and challenge the unethical and the unsustainable.</p>	
	<p>The media do not provide neutral reflections of reality; they affect our decisions and actions.</p>	<p>Evaluate the purposes of media, critically question information sources and our responses to media, and make decisions accordingly.</p>	
	<p>A global economic system that depends upon and perpetuates unrestrained consumerism is unsustainable.</p>	<p>Make consumption decisions that follow ecological and ethical principles, and be respectful of nature, self, and society in your actions.</p>	
	<p>Economic and technological development has contributed greatly to society, but often with harmful human and environmental consequences.</p>	<p>Assess the relative value and sustainability of economic and technological developments in order to make informed decisions.</p>	
	<p>Indigenous knowledge and world views offer alternatives to prevailing assumptions about how to live with one another within the environment.</p>	<p>Explore indigenous perspectives to extend the boundaries of the familiar and to challenge assumptions and practices.</p>	
	<p>Political systems distribute power, privilege, and wealth in different ways, some more justly than others.</p>	<p>Support democratic citizenship and be vigilant about political decisions that affect social, economic, and environmental conditions.</p>	
	<p>A just society respects human diversity and recognizes universal, equal, and inalienable human rights.</p>	<p>Be committed to universal human rights, regardless of gender, age, physical ability, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, political beliefs, ethnicity, national or social origin, or status (e.g., property, birth, economic...).</p>	
	<p>There is no <i>them</i> or <i>over there</i>: we all belong to the human species, our concerns are interdependent, and we are part of the natural world.</p>	<p>Uphold the value of every person and strive to build community; act in ways that acknowledge human solidarity and the complexity and interrelatedness of all life.</p>	

Citizenship as a Core Concept

Citizenship is the core concept of the Manitoba social studies curriculum from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Citizenship is fundamental to living in a pluralistic democratic society and our complex and interdependent world. Social studies, as the study of people in relation to each other and the world in which they live, plays a particularly important role in education for citizenship.

Students acquire the knowledge, understanding and competencies necessary to live as active democratic citizens engaged in their local, national and global communities.

Education for citizenship is not restricted to learning facts about Canadian society and the world. It involves more than conforming to the dominant worldview about the meaning and implications of citizenship. Learners – students and teachers alike – are connected to diverse cultural, social and interest groups, in which a wide range of approaches to citizenship and civic engagement may coexist or even conflict. In order to build competencies as active democratic citizens, learners need to consider how their worldview is shaped and think critically about the many factors that influence their decisions and actions. As students examine issues of today's world, it is particularly important that they acquire ecological literacy and a sense of environmental responsibility. It is also essential that they cultivate the ability to engage in dialogue across a range of diverse perspectives.

Global Issues: Sustainability and Citizenship provides learners with opportunities to reflect upon diverse worldviews and perspectives as they conduct inquiry into issues that are crucial to living in a contemporary, connected, interdependent world. The course is intended not only to enrich learners' awareness of significant global issues, but to develop an ethos of concern as they come to understand their own capacities as contributing members of their local, national and global communities. As they develop and practice the competencies of citizenship, students become able to envision and work toward a better future for all. They develop an ethos of engaged citizenship founded on the recognition of the importance of ecological principles as they address issues of social justice, economic sustainability and quality of life on Earth.

Active Democratic Citizenship

An ethos of active democratic citizenship involves developing a set of coherent ethical principles upon which to base decisions and practices. Citizenship is a fluid concept that is subject to continuing change over time: its meaning is often contested, and it is subject to interpretation and debate. In the course of history, citizenship has been used both as a means of strengthening human solidarity and a means of excluding or maltreating groups or individuals while conferring superior privilege and power to others. An ethos of active democratic citizenship in the contemporary world is often referred to as *global citizenship*, since it is based not on nationhood or ethno-cultural exclusivity, but on a fundamental acceptance of the inherent, equal, universal and inalienable rights of all human beings.

However, the concept of *global citizenship* is a fairly recent phenomenon, and it too is subject to interpretation and debate. While some thinkers embrace global citizenship as a vision for a sustainable

future for all, others argue that citizenship can only truly exist within the bounds of a nation state; hence the idea of global citizenship is either pure idealism or an imposition of Western liberal democratic ideology. Regardless, our students live in a world where national boundaries and identities may not have the same meaning as they did for previous generations, and students today more easily see themselves as citizens of an interconnected global community.

Active democratic citizenship involves developing a widening circle of empathy so as to come to a sense of solidarity with all humanity. It involves a recognition and acceptance of a collective responsibility for the continued economic and social well-being of humans while preserving the environmental integrity of the planet. This course has been designed to help students develop ecological literacy, so as to understand the relationships that link environmental, economic, social and political well-being. As students become conscious of their competencies as citizens, they are empowered by a sense of personal efficacy to address issues facing today's world.

This learning process may be seen as a process of moving from a sense of *me* to *we* – from passive to active, from detachment to engagement, from status quo to change, from indifference to concern, and, practically speaking, from consumer to citizen. Active democratic citizenship is an ethos motivated by concern for humanity, society, the planet and the future, and is activated by self-empowerment. Students will devote considerable time throughout this course to examining personal and social values and the factors that influence their decision-making. This reflection will take place in the context of recognizing our collective human responsibility for the well-being of future generations and our individual responsibility to contribute to a better future.

Four Pillars of Education for the Future

According to the report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the 21st century (1996), education must be organised around four fundamental types of learning in order that all people be empowered as lifelong learners, capable of contributing to their communities now and in the future:

- *learning to know*
- *learning to do*
- *learning to be*
- *learning to live together*

The overarching goal of this course is the development of active democratic citizenship based on these four pillars, with a particular focus on ecological literacy and social justice. The following descriptors summarize the key competencies this course seeks to develop, organized under the four UNESCO pillars of learning.¹

¹ The four pillars are based on *Learning: The Treasure Within*, the report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century: http://www.unesco.org/delors/delors_e.pdf
The descriptors attached to each pillar were developed in Manitoba for the purposes of this curriculum.

Learning to know Acquire knowledge and understanding, and think critically about our complex and changing world

- develop ecological literacy through an understanding of the interdependence of society, the environment, and the economy
- be open to new ideas and divergent thinking
- seek knowledge from diverse sources and perspectives
- use creative, critical, and systems thinking to address complex questions
- conduct focused in-depth inquiry
- explore alternative approaches to issues without fear of challenging the status quo
- engage in long-term thinking, and articulate a vision for a sustainable future

Learning to do Learn to participate effectively in local, national and global communities

- act responsibly towards self, others, and the environment
- be willing to give up and give back, and to make changes so as to live sustainably
- be an empowered and committed agent of change, willing to take a stand and engage in action for a sustainable future
- master and share personal skills, talents, and gifts
- practice helpfulness and share hopefulness
- demonstrate care and respect through language and actions
- apply intuitive and innovative thinking and decision-making skills
- plan informed courses of action

Learning to be Build self-knowledge and be conscious of connections to nature and society

- appreciate the natural world and live by ecological principles
- be willing to contribute to the present and future well-being of all
- be introspective, reflective, and self-aware
- acquire a strong sense of self-knowledge and personal identity
- accept and express multiple identities, allegiances, and influences
- know how to be and live with others in shared spaces

Learning to live together Learn to live peacefully with others and to care for our common homeland

- respect Earth as a commons in which human and natural systems interact
- recognize the solidarity of all human beings and their dependence upon the planet
- respect diversity and value equity
- engage in intercultural dialogue and cultivate a widening circle of empathy and concern
- respect the inherent, inalienable, and universal nature of human rights
- be willing to collaborate, lead, and support
- resolve conflicts peacefully

Sustainability

We cannot simply think of our survival; each new generation is responsible to ensure the survival of the seventh generation.

- *Our Responsibility to the Seventh Generation, Indigenous People and Sustainable Development*, Winnipeg, IISD, 1992. http://www.iisd.org/pdf/seventh_gen.pdf

Enough for everyone, forever.

- African Elder

Why sustainability?

Sustainability is a complex topic, and there is considerable disagreement as to what the concept means as well as how it should be pursued as a goal for human societies.

As a social goal ... sustainability is fraught with unresolved questions. Sustainable for how long: a generation, one century, a millennium, ten millennia? Sustainable at what level: individual households, local villages, major cities, entire nations, global economies? Sustainable for whom: all humans alive now, all humans who will ever live, all living beings at this time, all living beings that will ever live? Sustainable under what conditions: for contemporary transnational capitalism, for low-impact hunters and gatherers, for some space-faring global empire? Sustainable development for what: personal income, social complexity, gross national product, material frugality, individual consumption, ecological biodiversity?

- Timothy Luke (1995) *Sustainable Development as a Power/Knowledge System*, p.21-2.

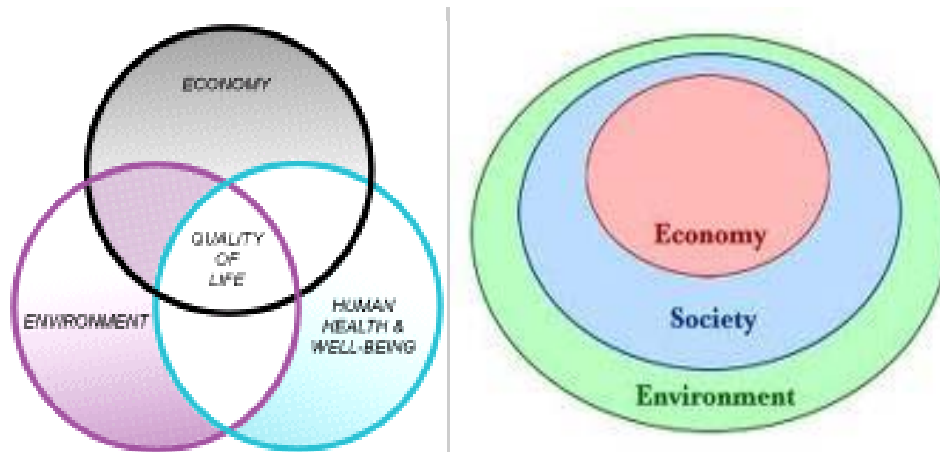
Understanding the meaning and implications of the concept of sustainability is an essential part of active democratic citizenship in the contemporary world, particularly for citizens of a developed and wealthy country such as Canada. The concept of sustainability is intricately woven into an ethos of responsibility: responsibility to future generations, environmental responsibility, economic responsibility, social responsibility, political responsibility, and responsibility to persons and groups who have been excluded from quality of life, well-being, or human rights and dignity.

A history of sustainable development

In 1987, the United Nations published the Brundtland Commission report entitled *Our Common Future*, a study of global concerns about social and economic inequities in the world. While acknowledging the importance of economic development, the report also declared an urgent need to adjust development to fit within the planet's ecological limits. It also introduced into international dialogue the term "sustainable development", which it defined as *development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Global concern about the limits of development became more intense at 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, in Rio de Janeiro, the so-called Earth Summit, which brought together a very large number of world leaders. This summit resulted in two international agreements and a major action agenda on worldwide sustainable development. Since then global interest in sustainability has continued to increase, and the concept has been broadened to include not only economic development as determined by GDP (gross domestic product) and level of industrialization, but also social, political

and cultural elements that have an impact on quality of life, such as life expectancy and education. In other words, sustainability became more concerned about ensuring quality of life for future generations while at the same time more acutely aware of the ecological limits of the planet to sustain this quality of life for all.



Sustainability is a concept which combines post-modern pessimism about the domination of nature with almost Enlightenment optimism about the possibility to reform human institutions.

- Simon Dresner (2002), University of Westminster, London, U.K. *The Principles of Sustainability*.

There are a variety of models and approaches to sustainable development, many of which are linked to political beliefs or ideologies. However, the generally accepted international view of sustainability is based upon the explicit recognition of the global interdependence of three fundamental components: environmental protection, economic well-being and social justice. Education for a sustainable future, then, is education that empowers citizens to make actions and decisions that support continued quality of life for all human beings, now and in the future.

The engaged global citizen who seeks to be in, act in, collaborate in and understand the world therefore needs to develop an enriched ecological literacy, or a way of thinking that considers issues as part of an organic whole or a related set of interdependent systems. In the words of the UNESCO report *Educating for a Sustainable Future: A Transdisciplinary Vision for Concerted Action* (1997), this new ethos is global in nature and in scope, and recognizes the critical issues at stake in today's world:

Perhaps we are beginning to move towards a new global ethic which transcends all other systems of allegiance and belief, which is rooted in a consciousness of the interrelatedness and sanctity of life. Would such a common ethic have the power to motivate us to modify our current dangerous course? There is obviously no ready answer to this question, except to say that without a moral and ethical foundation, sustainability is unlikely to become a reality.

- *Educating for a Sustainable Future: A Transdisciplinary Vision for Concerted Action*. UNESCO, November 1997.

http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/TLSF/theme_a/mod01/uncom01t05s01.htm

The great challenge of our time is to build and nurture sustainable communities – communities that are designed in such a way that their ways of life, businesses, economies, physical structures, and technologies do not interfere with nature's inherent ability to sustain life. The first step in this endeavor is to understand the principles of organization that ecosystems have developed to sustain the web of life. This understanding is what we call ecological literacy.

– Fritjof Capra

What is Ecological Literacy?

Ecological literacy, or eco-literacy, is a term first used by American educator David W. Orr and physicist Fritjof Capra in the 1990s, in order to introduce into educational practice the value and well-being of the Earth and its ecosystems. It is a way of thinking about the world in terms of its interdependent natural and human systems, including a consideration of the consequences of human actions and interactions within the natural context. Ecological literacy equips students with the knowledge and competencies necessary to address complex and urgent environmental issues in an integrated way, and enables them to help shape a sustainable society that does not undermine the ecosystems upon which it depends.

Students understand the natural systems that sustain life on earth and apply the principles guiding ecosystems to help create sustainable human communities.

The following are core aspects of ecological literacy:

1. Principles of Living Systems
2. Design Inspired by Nature
3. Systems Thinking
4. Ecological Paradigm and the Transition to Sustainability
5. Collaboration, Community Building and Citizenship

1. Principles of Living Systems

According to Fritjof Capra, the ecological problems facing society are rooted in a lack of understanding of our place in the web of life. A key part of eco-literacy is reconnecting students to living systems – what educator Linda Booth Sweeney calls developing a ‘connected wisdom’. Living systems are open, self-organizing systems that have the special characteristic of life and that interact with their environment through information and material-energy exchanges. Examples of living systems include the human body, or a forest, or a river, as well as human-created organizations, such as communities, or schools.

Connecting students to natural systems provides them with a deep sense of place and an understanding of their local environment. While students are immersed in experiences of the natural world as part of their classroom learning, they discover and study the principles guiding the functioning of natural systems. Appendix A and Appendix B outline two different approaches to describing the principles of living systems, including their dynamic, complex, cyclical nature and their inherent interconnectedness. These principles come from the study of ecosystems and from a growing understanding of the way they have evolved over time. They

also draw on the approaches of traditional and indigenous societies, many of whom have thrived for centuries by applying these ecological principles.

2. Design inspired by Nature

The guiding principles and characteristics of living systems serve as a basis for envisioning and designing sustainable communities. Beyond understanding natural systems, ecological literacy is about applying this understanding to the redesign of organizations, communities, businesses, and societies to align with ecological principles. The idea of “design inspired by nature” has become popular through concepts such as *biophilia*, *biomimicry* or *biomimetics*, which involve examining and emulating natural models, systems, processes, and elements in order to solve human problems. According to David Orr, the goal of ecological design is to transform how humans act in the world to provide food, shelter, energy, materials, and seek their livelihood. Ecological literacy asks what people know and how should they learn it, given the limits of the Earth and its systems. It demands that human actions and design conform to how the world works as a biophysical system, and that societies be designed with future generations in mind.

3. Systems thinking

Ecological literacy is also guided by an understanding of systems, or systems thinking, sometimes called holistic or relational thinking. Because a system is a set of interdependent, interrelated parts that make up a complex and unified whole, it cannot be fully understood by analyzing its constituent parts. Ecological literacy involves applying a way of thinking that emphasizes relationships, connectedness and context. For example, we can only understand a songbird by exploring both its own characteristics as well as its interactions with the watershed where it lives. Systems operate on multiple scales, with systems nested within systems – a watershed is a vibrant interplay among species from the tree to the bacteria in the soil. Systems thinking is necessary to understand the complex interdependence and often unpredictable dynamics of ecological systems, social systems, economic systems and other systems on all levels. Ecologically literate students find connections in seemingly disjointed problems, perceive patterns instead of pieces, and design communities based on the interrelatedness of all life.

Science lessons about the water cycle or a food web are building blocks of ecological literacy because they reveal to the student how nature works. Likewise, a social studies unit on a human community (e.g., a family, neighbourhood, region or a country) or a geography lesson on resource management contributes to ecological literacy as soon as the dependence and impact of the human system/community/ region on natural systems is acknowledged and explored as a vital part of the story.

- Ecological Literacy Resources for the Classroom Teacher

http://toes.tdsb.on.ca/ecological_literacy_resources.asp

Thinking systemically requires a number of ‘habits of mind’ as outlined in Appendix C and Appendix D. These habits include seeing the whole of a system rather than snapshots of its parts, looking for patterns and connections, and uncovering and testing assumptions. This also involves a shift in perception, from a focus on parts to a focus on the whole, or from discrete objects to relationships within a system. Two versions of these shifts in perception are captured in Appendices E and F and are at the heart of a broader shift in worldview or paradigm.

4. Ecological Paradigm and the Transition to Sustainability

The dialogue about sustainability is about a change in the human trajectory that will require us to rethink old assumptions and engage the large questions of the human condition that some presume to have been solved once and for all. Genuine sustainability, in other words, will come not from superficial changes but from a deeper process akin to humankind growing up to a fuller stature. – David W. Orr

Ecological literacy is partly aimed at triggering large-scale social change in how humans live on the planet. Teaching young people that we are part of the natural world is the basis for the shift to an ecological paradigm – a worldview that places humans as embedded in ecological systems rather than perceived as separate, and that recognizes that there are global constraints to the amount of resources we can use and waste we can produce on a finite Earth. As Fritjof Capra notes, “in the coming decades, the survival of humanity will depend on our ecological literacy – our ability to understand the basic principles of ecology and to live accordingly.” This shift to an ecological paradigm is part of a transition to sustainability – meeting human wellbeing while substantially reducing poverty and conserving the planet's life support systems. Sustainability is not just about basic needs and human survival, sustainability is the process to create a vibrant society. The Center for Ecological Literacy notes:

A truly sustainable community is alive — fresh, vital, evolving, diverse, dynamic. It supports the health and quality of life of present and future generations while living within the limits of its social and natural systems. It recognizes the need for justice, and for physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual sustenance.

This is about the ethics guiding human society, including taking responsibility for the social and environmental consequences of our activities.

Daniel Goleman uses the term ‘ecological intelligence’ to highlight the need for feedback about whether our activities are having a positive or negative impact on people and ecosystems. He makes the point that there is an urgent need for marketplace transparency and for greater human understanding of the ecological impacts of how we live. New information technologies provide a tool for assessing the sustainability of supply chains and the far-flung impacts of our choices. He notes that “we can, together, become more intelligent about the ecological impacts of how we live – and how ecological intelligence, combined with marketplace transparency, can create a mechanism for positive change.” The exchange of information is only one aspect of this ecological intelligence – Goleman notes that we also need to draw on our social intelligence to coordinate and harmonize our efforts because of the complex global web of cause and effect.

Ecological intelligence allows us to comprehend systems in all their complexity, as well as the interplay between the natural and man-made worlds. But that understanding demands a vast store of knowledge, one so huge that no single brain can store it all. Each one of us needs the help of others to navigate the complexities of ecological intelligence. We need to collaborate.
- Daniel Goleman

5. Collaboration, Community Building and Citizenship

Ecological literacy is about emphasizing collaboration and partnership as a hallmark of living systems and life. The ability to associate, create links, draw on collective distributed intelligence of many individuals is part of ecoliteracy. Ultimately, sustainability is a community practice.

Ecologically literate students are also community builders and active citizens. An ecological education occurs both within the natural environment and in the local community where students can build relationships and apply their understanding in a real world setting. Ecoliteracy knowledge empowers students to help create a better society and make a difference. Studies have shown that combining civic engagement and ecological literacy creates positive change leaders willing to participate as citizens and engage in creating solutions.

Ecological Literacy in a Global Issues course

The Center for Ecoliteracy suggests the following principles for the integration of ecological literacy:

- Ecological literacy is not an additional concept or subject to be added to the content of the course. It may be seen rather as a perspective or way of thinking through which any selected topic or Issue may be viewed.
- It is useful to focus on guiding fundamental questions, which may recur and open up conceptual links across disciplines (e.g., science, geography, anthropology, politics, history, the arts, sociology, health).
- The conceptual links that tie subjects together help make learning more effective since they lead to learning that is more readily applicable to the real world.
- Taking a hopeful, proactive approach and designing learning activities that engage students in potential solutions are important when teaching about environmental issues.

Core competencies for Ecoliteracy

The Center for Ecoliteracy <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/discover/competencies> has developed a set of 'core competencies' to help young people develop and live in sustainable communities. These competencies relate to the head (*learning to know*), the heart (*learning to be*), the hands (*learning to do*) and the spirit (*learning to live together*).

Head (Cognitive)

- Approach issues and situations from a systems perspective
- Understand fundamental ecological principles
- Think critically, solve problems creatively, and apply knowledge to new situations
- Assess the impacts and ethical effects of human technologies and actions
- Envision the long-term consequences of decisions

Heart (Emotional)

- Feel concern, empathy, and respect for other people and living things
- See from and appreciate multiple perspectives; work with and value others with different backgrounds, motivations, and intentions
- Commit to equity, justice, inclusivity, and respect for all people

Hands (Active)

- Create and use tools, objects, and procedures required by sustainable communities
- Turn convictions into practical and effective action, and apply ecological knowledge to the practice of ecological design
- Assess and adjust uses of energy and resources

Spirit (Connectional)

- Experience wonder and awe toward nature
- Revere the Earth and all living things
- Feel a strong bond with and deep appreciation of place
- Feel kinship with the natural world and invoke that feeling in others

Teaching ecological literacy often involves the following:

- Weaving ecological and systems approaches into the existing curriculum in a coherent way that builds student knowledge over time. (Note: The focus should be on ecological concepts and their relationships to each other – both the big picture and the details – and to the active preservation of the ecosphere rather than incremental inclusion of ecological concepts.)
- Building teacher capacity in the areas of ecology and systems thinking,
- Learning from nature through immersion in the real world (nature and communities) and a deep knowledge of particular places,
- Acknowledgement of place-based and experiential outdoor learning as essential to the cognitive development, health and wellbeing of children,
- Cultivation of a sense of wonder, creativity and compassion for nature and for community,
- Transformation of the school into a living laboratory of buildings and processes that teach children about their interconnectedness to nature and their communities, and
- Linkages to Higher Education resources and schools that allow students to continue the development of their Ecological Literacy.

A list of resources is included following the Appendices to further support curriculum development. This is a relatively new field. It is a rich area to explore and take leadership in shaping Ecological Literacy and in nurturing the next generation of empowered students and sustainable communities.

Appendix A: 12 Living System Principles

Source: Linda Booth Sweeney - <http://www.lindaboothsweeney.net/thinking/principles>

There are living systems on all scales, from the smallest plankton to the human body to the planet as a whole. When we understand what constitutes a living system, we see that a family, a business, even a country are also living systems. Here is a partial list of principles related to understanding Living Systems:

Interdependence: A relationship in which each partner affects and often needs the other.

System Integrity: What a system has when all the parts and processes essential to its ability to function are present.

Biodiversity: the variety, complexity, and abundance of species that, if adequate, make ecosystems healthy and resilient.

Cooperation and Partnership: The continual process in which species exchange energy and resources.

Rightness of Size: The proportions of living systems—their bigness or smallness and their built-in limitations to growth—that influence a system's stability and sustainability.

Living Cycles: A cycle is a circular process that repeats over and over, frequently returning to where it began. The water, lunar, sleep and other cycles sustain life, circulate resources, and provide opportunities for renewal.

Waste = Food: When waste from one system becomes food for another. All materials in nature are valuable, continuously circulating in closed loops of production, use, and recycling.

Feedback: Circular processes that create growth or decay by amplifying change (reinforcing feedback) or, foster stability by counteracting or lessening change (balancing feedback).

Nonlinearity: a type of behavior in which the effect is disproportionate from the cause.

Emergent Properties: Behavior that arises out of the interactions within a specific set of parts: the health of an ecosystem or a team's performance, for example.

Flux: The continual movement of energy, matter and information that moves through living systems. Flux enables the living or "open" system to remain alive, flexible and ever-changing. The sun, for instance, provides a constant flux or flow of energy and resources that feeds all living organisms.

The Commons: Shared resources – such as air, water, land, highways, fisheries, energy, and minerals – on which we depend and for which we are all responsible.

Other key concepts related to living systems include: autopoiesis, cognition and learning, networks, the first and second law of thermodynamics, stocks and flows, exponential growth, carrying capacity and ecological footprint.

Appendix B: Center for Ecoliteracy – Ecological Principles

<http://www.ecoliteracy.org/nature-our-teacher/ecological-principles>

Creating communities that are compatible with nature's processes for sustaining life requires basic ecological knowledge. We need, says Center for Ecoliteracy cofounder Fritjof Capra, to teach our children — and our political and corporate leaders — fundamental facts of life:

- * *Matter cycles continually through the web of life.*
- * *Most of the energy driving the ecological cycles flows from the sun.*
- * *Diversity assures resilience.*
- * *One species' waste is another species' food.*
- * *Life did not take over the planet by combat but by networking.*

NATURE'S PATTERNS AND PROCESSES

Understanding these facts arises from understanding the patterns and processes by which nature sustains life. In its work with teachers and schools, the Center for Eco-literacy has identified several of the most important of these: networks, nested systems, cycles, flows, development, and dynamic balance.



Networks

All living things in an ecosystem are interconnected through networks of relationships. They depend on this web of life to survive. For example: In a garden, a network of pollinators promotes genetic diversity; plants, in turn, provide nectar and pollen to the pollinators. (Could we have some human systems examples here for each pattern?)



Nested Systems

Nature is made up of systems that are nested within systems. Each individual system is an integrated whole and—at the same time — part of larger systems. Changes within a system can affect the sustainability of the systems that are nested within it as well as the larger systems in which it exists. For example: Cells are nested within organs within organisms within ecosystems.



Cycles

Members of an ecological community depend on the exchange of resources in continual cycles. Cycles within an ecosystem intersect with larger regional and global cycles. For example: Water cycles through a garden and is also part of the global water cycle.



Flows

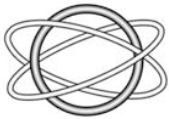
Each organism needs a continual flow of energy to stay alive. The constant flow of energy from the sun to Earth sustains life and drives most ecological cycles. For example: Energy flows through a food web when a plant converts the sun's energy through photosynthesis, a mouse eats the plant, a snake

eats the mouse, and a hawk eats the snake. In each transfer, some energy is lost as heat, requiring an ongoing energy flow into the system.



Development

All life — from individual organisms to species to ecosystems — changes over time. Individuals develop and learn, species adapt and evolve, and organisms in ecosystems coevolve. For example: Hummingbirds and honeysuckle flowers have developed in ways that benefit each other; the hummingbird's color vision and slender bill coincide with the colors and shapes of the flowers.



Dynamic Balance

Ecological communities act as feedback loops, so that the community maintains a relatively steady state that also has continual fluctuations. This dynamic balance provides resiliency in the face of ecosystem change. For example: Ladybugs in a garden eat aphids. When the aphid population falls, some ladybugs die off, which permits the aphid population to rise again, which supports more ladybugs. The populations of the individual species rise and fall, but balance within the system allows them to thrive together.

Appendix C: **Habits of Systems Thinkers**

Source: **Linda Booth Sweeney**: <http://www.lindaboothsweeney.net/thinking/habits>









There is no one pedagogy, book, or computer program that will help us become better systems thinkers. Instead, the complexity of our worlds demand that we develop “habits of mind” (to borrow Art Costa’s term) to intentionally use systems principles to understand the complexity of everyday situations and to design for desired futures.

The 12 Habits of Mind – a systems thinker...

- **Sees the Whole:** sees the world in terms of interrelated “wholes” or systems, rather than as single events, or snapshots;
- **Looks for Connections:** assumes that nothing stands in isolation; and so tends to look for connections among nature, ourselves, people, problems, and events;
- **Pays Attention to Boundaries:** “goes wide” (uses peripheral vision) to check the boundaries drawn around problems, knowing that systems are nested and how you define the system is critical to what you consider and don’t consider;
- **Changes Perspective:** changes perspective to increase understanding, knowing that what we see depends on where we are in the system;
- **Looks for Stocks:** knows that hidden accumulations (of knowledge, carbon dioxide, debt, and so on) can create delays and inertia;
- **Challenges Mental Models:** challenges one’s own assumptions about how the world works (our mental models) — and looks for how they may limit thinking;
- **Anticipates Unintended Consequences:** anticipates unintended consequences by tracing loops of cause and effect and always asking “what happens next?”
- **Looks for Change over Time:** sees today’s events as a result of past trends and a harbinger of future ones;
- **Sees Self as Part of the System:** looks for influences from within the system, focusing less on blame and more on how the structure (or set of interrelationships) may be influencing behaviour;
- **Embraces Ambiguity:** holds the tension of paradox and ambiguity, without trying to resolve it quickly;
- **Finds Leverage:** knows that solutions may be far away from problems and looks for areas of leverage, where a small change can have a large impact on the whole system,
- **Watches for Win/Lose Attitudes:** is wary of “win/lose” mindsets, knowing they usually makes matters worse in situations of high interdependence.

Appendix D: Habits of a Systems Thinker

Source: Water Foundation, Systems Thinking in Schools 2007

<p>Seeks to understand the big picture</p> 	<p>Observes how elements within systems change over time, generating patterns and trends</p> 	<p>Recognizes that a system's structure generates its behavior</p> 
<p>Identifies the circular nature of complex cause and effect relationships</p> 	<p>Habits of a Systems Thinker</p> 	<p>Changes perspectives to increase understanding</p> 
<p>Surfaces and tests assumptions</p> 	<p>Considers an issue fully and resists the urge to come to a quick conclusion</p> 	
<p>Considers how mental models affect current reality and the future</p> 	<p>Uses understanding of system structure to identify possible leverage actions</p> 	<p>Considers both short and long-term consequences of actions</p> 
<p>Finds where unintended consequences emerge</p> 	<p>Recognizes the impact of time delays when exploring cause and effect relationships</p> 	<p>Checks results and changes actions if needed: "successive approximation"</p> 

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Thinking systemically requires several shifts in perception, which lead in turn to different ways to teach, and different ways to organize institutions and society. These shifts are not either/or alternatives, but rather movements along a continuum:

From parts to the whole

With any system, the whole is different from the sum of the individual parts. By shifting focus from the parts to the whole, we can better grasp the connections between the different elements. Instead of asking students to copy pictures of the parts of a honeybee, an art teacher takes her class to the school garden, where they draw bees within the context of their natural setting.

Similarly, the nature and quality of what students learn is strongly affected by the culture of the whole school, not just the individual classroom. This shift can also mean moving from single-subject curricula to integrated curricula.

From objects to relationships

In systems, the relationships between individual parts may be more important than the parts. An ecosystem is not just a collection of species, but includes living things interacting with each other and their nonliving environment.

In the systems view, the "objects" of study are networks of relationships. In the school or classroom, this perspective emphasizes relationship-based processes such as cooperation and consensus.

From objective knowledge to contextual knowledge

Shifting focus from the parts to the whole implies shifting from analytical thinking to contextual thinking. This shift may result in schools focusing on project-based learning instead of prescriptive curricula. It also encourages teachers to be facilitators and fellow learners alongside students, rather than experts dispensing knowledge.

From quantity to quality

Western science has often focused on things that can be measured and quantified. It has sometimes been implied that phenomena that can be measured and quantified are more important—and perhaps even that what cannot be measured and quantified doesn't exist at all. Some aspects of systems, however, like the relationships in a food web, cannot be measured. Rather, they must be mapped. In the classroom, this shift can lead to more comprehensive forms of assessment than standardized tests.

From structure to process

Living systems develop and evolve. Understanding these systems requires a shift in focus from structure to processes such as evolution, renewal, and change.

In the classroom, this shift can mean that how students solve a problem is more important than getting the right answer. It may mean that the ways in which they make decisions are as important as the decisions.

From contents to patterns

Within systems, certain configurations of relationship appear again and again in patterns such as cycles and feedback loops. Understanding how a pattern works in one natural or social system helps us to understand other systems that manifest the same pattern.

For instance, understanding how flows of energy affect a natural ecosystem may illuminate how flows of information affect a social system.



Systems Visuals and Narratives *Guiding Heuristics* (Linda Booth Sweeney)

While working with a variety of organizations, I look to make the following shifts – in language and imagery -- wherever possible:

1. SHIFT: Fragments → Wholes (or systems)

Look to reconnect the parts to the larger whole. Knowing that nothing stands alone, looked to shift from isolated focus on people, environmental influences, markets, countries etc. → interdependence (networks, causal loops).

Key question: How does my ____ fit into the bigger picture?

2. SHIFT: Discrete information → Closed Loops

Look at how seemingly discrete information (in bullet point lists for instance) may be interconnected in closed loops of causality.

Key question: How are the points (or pieces of information) connected?

3. SHIFT: Static/Event-focused → Dynamic/Complex¹

Look for recurring patterns of behavior (archetypes) and ways to harness complex dynamics, for example, by enhancing reinforcing feedback and counteracting balancing feedback.

4. SHIFT: Linear → Non-linear

Look at ways that effects (or consequences) are not always proportionate to actions. (Keep in mind that in living systems, solutions may be far away from problems and leverage may be found in a small change -- or several small changes -- that can have a large impact on the whole system.

5. SHIFT: Own Perspective → Multiple Perspectives

Look at ways to include and represent multiple perspectives to increase understanding.

¹ **SHIFT:**

Short-term → Long-term. This includes awareness of time delays... when we don't understand time delays, we over-steer and over-correct. Imagine a shower stall. Turning hot and cold water on too fast. Over-mixing paint.

6. SHIFT: Mechanical → Living Systems

Wherever possible, look to shift from mechanical metaphors (static & pre-determined) to living systems metaphors (dynamic & changing). For example, we can shift from talking the mechanics of an organization, to the ecology of an organization.

7. SHIFT: Reduction ↔ Synthesis ¹

Look to set analysis within the context of a deeper understanding of systems properties and behaviors.

8. SHIFT: Problem-solving → problem definition

Look to expand emphasis on defining the problem (including opportunities to “make the system visible) by identifying and depicting how multiples causes, effects and unintended impacts interact.

9. SHIFT: Outside Looking In (exogenous) → Inside Looking In (endogenous)

Look for within system influences

10. SHIFT: Either/or → Both/And

Watch for dichotomous thinking that says it has to be “either/or” to shift to “both/and” that allows for multiple influences (and some ambiguity)

¹ For centuries, Western minds have privileged analysis over synthesis. In school, we were taught that the best way to understand a subject was to analyze it or break it up into parts. Here’s how it goes: chop up the big thing into small, understandable parts. Then, put the whole thing back together to understand the behavior of the whole. To write an essay, for example, we were taught to break it down into its component parts: the introduction, the purpose, the body with supporting facts and the conclusion. However, as social scientists and anyone else who is paying attention has observed, analysis-reliant approaches have not measured up when faced with dynamic, complex, sets of relationships that result in a faltering economy, global warming, increasing social inequity and escalating global violence. What needs to happen? Analysis must be contextualized within a deep understanding of systems properties and behaviors. We need to shift to recognize, as many post-Einstein scientists have done, that the universe, and everything in it, is a system whose workings can only be understood in relation to each other and to the whole.

Ecological Literacy Resources

Ecological Literacy

Michael K. Stone and Center for Ecoliteracy, **Smart by Nature: Schooling for Sustainability** (Watershed Media, 2009)

Michael K. Stone and Zenobia Barlow (eds.) (2005) **Ecological Literacy: Educating Our Children for a Sustainable World**, Sierra Club Books.

David W. Orr – <http://www.davidworr.com/>

Ecological Literacy (SUNY Press, 1991) - <http://www.davidworr.com/books.html>

Frijof Capra - <http://www.fritjofcapra.net/>

Books – The Web of Life; The Hidden Connections: A Science for Sustainable Living;

Uncommon Wisdom – <http://www.fritjofcapra.net/bibliography.html>

Videos – Ecological Literacy Part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vohcled-kto>

Ecological Literacy Part 2: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RZ-_C3sIt4

Ecological Literacy Part 3: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RZ-_C3sIt4

Daniel Goleman, Ecological Intelligence (Broadway Books, 2009)

<http://danielgoleman.info/topics/ecological-intelligence/>

Alan R. Berkowitz, Mary E. Ford, and Carol A. Brewer. **A framework for integrating ecological literacy, civics literacy, and environmental citizenship in environmental education** - in, Johnson, E.A. and M.J. Mappin (eds.), Environmental Education or Advocacy: Perspectives of Ecology and Education in Environmental Education. Cambridge University Press. New York. pp 227-266.

Hoelscher, David W. "**Cultivating the Ecological Conscience: Smith, Orr, and Bowers on Ecological Education.**" M.A. thesis, University of North Texas, 2009.

<http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc12133/m1/>

Systems Thinking

Linda Booth Sweeney – www.lindaboothsweeney.com

Peter Senge, , Nelda Cambron-McCabe, Timothy Lucas, Bryan Smith, Janis Dutton, and Art Kleiner, **Schools that Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Parents, Educators and Everyone who Cares about Education** (Doubleday, 2000).

Peter Senge – **Why change is so challenging for schools: An interview with Peter Senge**

<http://www.learningforward.org/news/jsd/senge223.cfm>

Donella Meadows

"**Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System**" (1999) Hartland, VT: The Sustainability Institute.

The Global Citizen (Island Press, 1991)

Thinking in Systems (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008) - edited by Diana Wright

Pegasus Communications - <http://www.pegasuscom.com/>

The Resilience Alliance - <http://www.resalliance.org>

Society for Organizational Learning - <http://www.solonline.org>

Creative Learning Exchange – <http://www.clexchange.org/>

On-Line Courses/Listserv (L. Booth Sweeney: <http://www.lindaboothsweeney.net/resources>)

The Waters Foundation - <http://www.watersfoundation.org/webed/> - offers first-class, web-ed tutorials focused on systems thinking in K-12 education.

Systems Thinking World , offers a Systems Thinking World Discussion Group, free on-line webinars and more -

http://www.systemswiki.org/index.php?title=Systems_Thinking_World_Webinars
The K-12 system dynamics listserv is a useful resource for practitioners who are applying systems thinking in the classroom - <http://sysdyn.clexchange.org/k-12sd-email-list>

Design inspired by Nature

William McDonough and Michael Braungart **Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things** (North Point Press, 2002) - http://www.mcdonough.com/cradle_to_cradle.htm
Janine Benyus, **Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature** (Harper Collins, 1997)
- <http://www.biomimicry.net>

Edward O. Wilson – Biophilia – <http://www.worldchanging.com/archives/000664.html>
David W. Orr. **The Nature of Design: Ecology, Culture, and Human Intention** (Oxford, 2002)
ALGA's **Living Principles for Design** - <http://www.livingprinciples.org/>
Inhabitat – Green Design will Save the World - <http://inhabitat.com/about/>
The Designers Accord – <http://www.designersaccord.org/>
Centre for Child Honouring - <http://childhonouring.org/>

Sense of Place

Wendell Berry – <http://www.wendellberrybooks.com/>
Experiential Education Canada – <http://www.experientialeducation.ca/>
Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education - <http://aeoe.org/>
Global, Environmental, and Outdoor Education Council -Free lesson plans, divided by grade. –
<http://www.geoec.org/lessons/index.html>
Richard Louv – <http://richardlouv.com/>
Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder (2005, Algonquin Books) - <http://richardlouv.com/last-child-woods>
Leave No Child Inside Movement - <http://www.kidsoutside.info/>

Eco-literacy in Higher Education

Second Nature: Education for Sustainability - <http://www.secondnature.org/>
Higher Education Network for Sustainability and the Environment (HENSE) –
http://www.ulsf.org/pub_declaration_othvol33.html
North American Alliance for Green Education – <http://www.naage.org/>

Other resources in Environmental Education

Learning for a Sustainable Future – <http://www.lsf-1st.ca/en>
UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development - <http://www.unesco.org/en/esd/>
Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future Report by UNESCO –
<http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/>
Giraffe Heroes program – <http://www.giraffe.org>
David Suzuki – Environmental Education in the Classroom -
<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/kids/teachers/classroom.html>
Earth Issues: Our Lifestyles and the Environment: An Environmental Education Manual for Children Grades K Through 5 (free PDF). Cowichan Valley Regional District, BC. –
<http://cvrd.bc.ca/documents/Engineering%20Services/Solid%20Waste/Education%20and%20Outreach/Manual%20Feb%202021%20LR.PDF>
Eco-Kids – <http://www.ecokids.ca/pub/index.cfm>
Ecological Footprint Calculators – <http://www.kidsfootprint.org;>
http://www.zerofootprintkids.com/kids_teacher.aspx?cat_id=9

Environment Canada – EC Educator Resources - Provides access to featured lesson plans and links (divided for ages 6-12 and ages 13-18) -
<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/community/youth/ec-educators-e.html>
Includes lesson plans and info about free educational programming that may take place in your area – <http://www.ec.gc.ca/education/default.asp?lang=En&n=D3D10112-1>

Environment Canada – Explore Water with Holly Heron - -Activity booklet provided by Girl Guides Canada, experiments. Suitable for grades 1-3 – <http://www.ec.gc.ca/eau-water/default.asp?lang=En&n=88C2C5AD-1>

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) <http://www.epa.gov/teachers/teachresources.htm>

Green Teacher Magazine – <http://www.greenteacher.com/>

The Groundwater Foundation – Kids Page and Sample Educator Resources –
<http://www.groundwater.org/kc/kc.html>

One Simple Act – Alberta (Grades 1-6) – <http://onesimpleactalberta.com/get-involved/school-toolkit.asp>

Re-Energy.ca – http://www.re-energy.ca/t_teacher.shtml
-Renewable energy project plans to build working models, teacher resources.

Resources for Rethinking – <http://r4r.ca/en/>

The Story of Stuff – Free 20 min video explains the cradle to grave cycle of our “stuff,” from production to disposal – <http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

Other Print Resources:

Worms Eat My Garbage by Mary Appelhof (Kalamazoo, MI: Flower Press, 1997).

Worms Eat Our Garbage: Classroom Activities for a Better Environment by Mary Appelhof, Mary Frances Fenton, and Barbara Loss Harris (Kalamazoo, MI: Flowerfield Enterprises, 1993).

The Worm Café: Mid-Scale Vermicomposting of Lunchroom Wastes by Binet Payne (Kalamazoo, MI: Flower Press, 2003).

Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Harry Bliss (HarperCollins, 2003).

The Down-to-Earth Guide to Global Warming by Laurie David and Cambria Gordon (New York: Orchard Books, a division of Scholastic, 2007).

Greening School Grounds: Creating Habitats for Learning, eds. Tim Grant and Gail Littlejohn (Toronto: Green Teacher, 2001).

Teaching Green: The Elementary Years, eds. Tim Grant and Gail Littlejohn (New Society Publishers, 2005).

Teaching Green: The Middle Years, eds. Tim Grant and Gail Littlejohn (New Society Publishers, 2004).

Teaching Green: The High School Years, eds. Tim Grant and Gail Littlejohn (New Society Publishers, 2009).

Teaching About Climate Change: Cool Schools Tackle Global Warming, eds. Tim Grant and Gail Littlejohn (Toronto: Green Teacher, 2001).

Recycle This Book: 100 Top Children’s Authors Tell You How to Go Green, ed. by Dan Gutman (New York: Yearling, 2009).

Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability

Inquiry Approach

This component is intended to guide student inquiry and may be adapted to respond to student needs, interests, and new or emerging issues of global significance.

Inquiry is a complex process and grows out of constructivist pedagogy. It begins with the selection of a topic and the design of powerful questions that guide students as they select resources, gather and interpret information, build relevant knowledge and understanding, and share their findings and conclusions. Inquiry relies upon critical and divergent thinking. During the inquiry process, the role of a teacher shifts from covering content to becoming a guide and facilitator. Students are given the opportunity to generate their own questions, to set learning goals, to acquire and share enduring understandings, and to develop the decision-making skills that are part of active citizenship.

Inquiry-based learning has its roots in the educational reform movements that began in the early twentieth century and were guided by the work of Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey and other constructivists who regard learning as an active process – a process where students construct understanding through problem solving and reflection.

Areas of Inquiry and Issue Selection

How many issues should be addressed in this course?

If students are to achieve a balance of breadth and depth in their understanding of global issues, they need to focus on a **minimum of three areas of inquiry** over the length of this course. The choice of issues within each area of inquiry is flexible. (Refer to the Backgrounders on each area of inquiry for a broad list of suggestions of specific issues.)

Areas of Inquiry

Media
Consumerism
Environment
Poverty, Wealth, and Power
Indigenous Peoples

Oppression and Genocide
Health and Biotechnology
Gender Politics
Social Justice and Human Rights
Peace and Conflict

At the beginning of the course, teachers may choose to model the inquiry process through the collective study of one issue. Students will then conduct individual or group research in a minimum of three areas of inquiry. All students do not need to study the same issues but should have frequent opportunities to exchange new understandings and insights throughout the process. Each student or group of students will select one issue for their **Take Action** project.

Guidelines for Student Inquiry

- Cultivate an open, democratic learning environment, where students are encouraged to be curious and independent and to take risks.
- Use student-centred learning strategies such as brainstorming, discussion, concept maps and graphic organizers, and observe student progress through classroom-based assessment techniques. These strategies will provide ongoing opportunities for teachers to assess prior knowledge, to deal with student misconceptions and difficulties, and to assess progress.
- Help students develop strong inquiry questions that move beyond the accumulation of facts to the investigation of issues, conceptual understanding, and the exploration of diverse perspectives.
- Encourage students to consult a variety of sources, to consider diverse perspectives, and to use critical-thinking skills in the selection and interpretation of information.
- Strive to address issues that have local, national, and global implications. Whatever the issue, provide opportunities for students to engage in learning at the local community level. Experiential understanding of issues through local engagement will help students understand broader, more abstract systemic global issues.
- Determine whether an inquiry will involve the whole class, small groups or individual students. If the inquiry process is new to students, begin by having all students collaborate on one topic. This approach will allow teachers to model and guide the inquiry process. As well, students will learn from each other as they share their research, discuss their findings and conclusions, and are exposed to healthy dissent and diverse perspectives.
- Encourage students to think critically and engage in reflection throughout the learning process, and to maintain a learning log or journal. This record could include conceptual maps, inquiry questions, information sources, reflections, interview notes, and details of their learning journey.
- Use multiple resources, including primary source material, and encourage academic rigour. Students should be exposed to multiple and contradictory viewpoints, and encouraged to seek their own position based on reliable information. Sources could include community members, specialists and academics, newspapers and journals, web-based sources, government and non-government agencies and organizations, business and industry, environmental and social action groups, and others.
- Encourage creativity and diversity in the methods of presentation.
- Assessment needs to be ongoing and take multiple forms including self and peer assessment. Student progress should be monitored and tracked through the use of ongoing observation and discussion, and with anecdotal records and checklists.

SUGGESTED GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR EXPLORING AN ISSUE

SIGNIFICANCE and SCOPE

- Why does this issue matter? To whom?
- Who/what is affected by the issue? Who benefits? Who is harmed?
- When/where/how did this issue begin?

EVIDENCE

- Have I used a variety of sources, including primary sources?
- How reliable are my sources?
- How do the media treat this issue?

PERSPECTIVE

- How do perspectives differ on this issue? (e.g., environmental, economic, political, social...)
- Which perspectives are most defensible and why? Whose voices are not heard?
- What role do media play creating/perpetuating this issue?

IMPACT- ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC

- What is happening at the local, national, and global level?
- What actions are being taken by citizens, governments, businesses, and other groups?
- What might be some of the short and long term consequences of these actions?

CONNECTIONS

- How has this issue changed over time? What might be future concerns?
- How is this issue connected to other environmental, social or economic concerns?
- Is this issue part of a larger trend or problem?
- How does this issue effect the environment? Economy? Society? Quality of life?
- Why does this issue continue to be a problem and for whom?

REFLECTION

- How do you feel about the issue now that you know more about it?
- How might this issue have been prevented? What could have been done differently?
- What questions do you still have?

ACTION/PRAxis

- Who needs to do what? What can and should we do?
- What are the challenges/ barriers/risks to action?
- What do I have to offer? How can I take action?
- How can I get others involved?

A rigorous inquiry should address questions in each of these areas. Students may select some or all of the suggested guiding questions in each category, or they may generate new questions as appropriate for their topic.

Global Issues: Some suggested topics by area of inquiry

- **Area of Inquiry: Media**

Concentration of ownership and convergence; power and profit; propaganda, social engineering; bias in media; critical analysis of media; selection and omission of news items; marketing and advertising strategies; freedom of the press: regulation, ethics, legislation, and censorship; public control and citizen journalism; alternative media and social justice; stereotypes; psychological influence (objectification, sexualisation, body image, fear); violence; rise of infotainment; power and influence of advertising (pervasiveness, embedded messages, product placement); popular culture and social mores; culture of consumerism and environmental consequences; etc.

- **Area of Inquiry: Consumerism**

Consumer-based economies; capitalism and free market economies; citizen responsibilities and decision-making; corporate responsibilities and decision-making; culture of entitlement; culture of credit; culture of excess; commodification of indigenous cultures; impact of branding, marketing and advertising; mass media manipulation; corporate sponsorship, product placement; perceived/planned obsolescence; lifestyle and health issues (e.g., obesity, chemical intolerances, allergies, illnesses, sedentary living); energy and natural resource depletion; generation of waste; petro-politics; corporate and consumer greed; sweatshops; etc.

- **Area of Inquiry: Environment**

Healthy ecosystems, preservation of biodiversity; water management and quality; limited resources vs unlimited development/growth; responsible resource extraction; energy efficiency and alternative energy sources; environmental and human disasters (prevention, response, individual and collective); environmental degradation and technological solutions; sustainable cities, design, urban planning; alternative transportation; standard of living vs quality of life; carrying capacity; energy consumption, carbon footprint, travel and transportation alternatives, alternative energy sources; stewardship and equitable sharing of natural resources; economic and environmental refugees; population increase, distribution, movement, migration, urbanization; politics and economics of climate change (e.g., impact of industrialization, responsibilities of developed/less developed economies, Kyoto Accord; Arctic sovereignty); Gaia hypothesis, systems thinking, interconnectedness of human and natural systems, living sustainably, etc.

- **Area of Inquiry: Poverty, Wealth and Power**

Globalization: economic globalization, multinational and transnational corporations, (control, regulation, erosion of government authority); global domination, military industrial complex, international arms sales; organized crime; technological advances; forms of inequality/disparity: income, consumption, access to necessities of life (food, water, shelter, education, health,



Note to teachers and students:

This is intended as a list of examples alone and is not an exhaustive list of possible inquiry topics. The selection of issues for inquiry should be flexible, should allow for new or emerging issues, and should be based upon student interests and access to reliable resources. Note that some topics may reappear in more than one area of inquiry, depending upon the entry point or approach to research. Student inquiry throughout this course must focus on issues in at least three of the ten Areas of Inquiry.

employment, safety); causes of inequality: colonialism, debt, unequal trade, economic policies (World Bank, IMF), natural and human causes of inequality/ disparity; bridging the gap between rich and poor countries: development assistance, debt relief, trade over aid, fair trade, rebuild fragile states/promote democracy, labour movements, community-based projects; economic sanctions; measuring poverty: absolute, relative; causes: political, economic, natural; forms of poverty: discrimination, marginalization; effects of poverty: infant mortality, maternal health, child labour, working conditions, social vitality, income, basic needs, safety; solutions/poverty reduction

- **Area of Inquiry: Indigenous Peoples**

Ethno-diversity of world's indigenous peoples; the legacy of colonialism, colonization and decolonization; enculturation, assimilation and cultural loss; disappearance of Aboriginal women in Canada; impact of development and globalization on indigenous peoples, cultural homogenization, disappearance of indigenous peoples and cultures (e.g. population decrease, illnesses); restitution and reconciliation processes; indigenous resurgence and development, circumpolar and other international indigenous organizations; international rights of indigenous peoples; preservation of traditional indigenous cultures and languages; commodification, falsification and marketing of traditional indigenous knowledge, recognition of distinctive indigenous worldviews and values, etc.

- **Area of Inquiry: Peace and Conflict**

Nature and forms of conflict: international terrorism, transnational and intrastate conflict, civil disobedience, terrorism, violent and non-violent revolutions, nuclear proliferation and deterrence; agents of conflict: economic, military policies, military industrial complex, international arms sales and marketing; ideology, religion; sources of conflict (e.g., human security, competition for land or resources, religion, racial or ethnic tensions, self-determination, political goals); ethical issues in war and military alliances; impact of conflict: civilians, children, quality of life, environmental impact, economic impact; intervention and conflict resolution: military, national security, government policies, citizen rights, multilateral intervention (UN), International humanitarian law (Red Cross, Red Crescent), reconstruction, international criminal courts, peace movements, pacifism, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, diplomacy, counterinsurgency, policing, international development; alternatives to war: economic sanctions, diplomacy, aid, etc.

- **Area of Inquiry: Oppression and Genocide**

Forms of oppression: racial, cultural, ethnic and religious; inequitable control of land or resources, xenophobia, perceptions of racial or cultural superiority, systemic racism (e.g. Apartheid, state-based exclusion, oppression or violence); political oppression: state authority, dictatorship, enforcement (role of military, police, secret police), punishment, racial profiling/discrimination, propaganda and dissemination of hatred, bureaucracy, racial laws; abuse of power and genocide (Shoah – Holocaust, Holodomor, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, Armenia, Darfur); compliance, blind obedience, denials of genocide, crimes against humanity, disregard for international conventions, opportunism, ostracism, religion, peer pressure, stereotypes, supremacy, prejudice, ignorance, bystanders, propaganda, fear; atrocities: concentration camps, exclusion, persecution, crimes against humanity, mass murder, deportation, extermination, genocide, Final Solution; peace and reconciliation processes: dissent, state restitution/reparations, international tribunals, Righteous Among Nations (Yad Vashem), survivors, upstanders, etc.

- Area of Inquiry: Health and Biotechnology**
 Science, technology and human health, economic implications of health care, controversial genetic research (embryonic and stem cell research, animal testing, patenting DNA, genetic intervention and modification, preservation of genetic material, genetic information privacy); longevity and life preservation measures; controversial medical interventions (plastic surgery, in vitro fertilization, euthanasia, abortion); epidemic and pandemic prevention and response, disease control (AIDS, virus control, immunization); birth control and maternal and child care, pharmaceutical industry (Big Pharma, marketing, testing, control); food and drug management and testing, alternative health practices, safety, control and marketing, etc.
- Area of Inquiry: Gender and Identity**
 Feminism and views of gender roles; worldwide gender equity issues, education of women, eco-feminism, women and power, women and the economic system, female health, maternal health, access to birth control and abortion, domestic labour, child-rearing, child care, female poverty; cultural relativism vs rejection of oppressive cultural practices (e.g., female genital mutilation, honour killings of women, women's dress restrictions- hijab, burqa, niqab, limitations on female rights and freedoms); hetero-normativity, masculine/feminine gender role stereotypes; same sex marriage, homophobia; sexual marketing, prostitution, human trafficking and slave trade, sex tourism, pornography, sexualisation and abuse of children; body image, female sexual stereotyping, the marketing of sexuality, impact on human relations
- Area of Inquiry: Social Justice and Human Rights**
 Universal human rights (ethnicity, race, culture, class, religion, sexual orientation, gender, abilities); economic disparities, poverty, quality of life; access to food, water, health care, education, employment; child exploitation, human trafficking and slave labour; action for human rights; forms of activism (the power of one, resistance to oppression, civil disobedience, conscientious objectors, boycotts, protests, grass-roots movements, local community groups; citizen action groups, social networking and mobilization for change, popular culture and the arts); labour movement and unions, strikes, non-violent revolution; indigenous rights and self-determination; crime and punishment, penal systems and economic implications, ethical treatment of prisoners; environmentalism and environmental organizations; ethical treatment and human use of animals; eco-activism; NGOs and international collaboration, role of governments in international aid (e.g. CIDA, disaster relief, the economics of aid)

Take Action - *Praxis*

Take Action is the experiential learning, or *praxis* component of this course. The Brazilian educational philosopher Paulo Freire defined praxis as reflective action intended to transform the world. Developed in the political context of 1960's Latin America, Freire's pedagogical theory was based on collective action toward freedom through literacy, dialogue and critical consciousness. In the context of this Global Issues course, praxis engages students in work with their peers in order to apply their learning and contribute to a more equitable and sustainable planet in which quality of life is improved for all.

Moving from critical consciousness to praxis

Take Action shifts learning from the theoretical to the experiential by providing an opportunity for students to engage in practical, community-based projects. The goal is to move students from awareness through questioning, inquiry and dialogue, to critical consciousness and, ultimately, to *praxis* – engagement in informed reflective action for positive change.

Successful **Take Action** projects will make a difference in the lives of students and their communities. In order for this to happen, projects need to be student-initiated, collaborative and goal-oriented. Projects also need to be meaningful to students, and related to issues they believe are important, relevant and personally significant. The focus and scale of projects should be flexible, accommodating student concerns, needs and abilities. Students should be free to plan small or large scale projects, with a local, national or global scope. They may choose to work in a small group to take on personal projects that focus on making sustainable lifestyle choices. Some students may decide to undertake larger scale, long term projects that involve community members. Whatever the nature and scope of **Take Action** projects, students will have opportunities to become mindful, hopeful citizens who appreciate the power of collaboration and who contribute to a more equitable and sustainable world.

Among Grade 12 students, as in the general population, there will be a wide range of approaches to citizen action and engagement. Students should be encouraged to determine their own level of social action, by challenging themselves to explore areas where they can be most effective in making personal, community and societal change.

Westheimer (2008) identifies three approaches to citizenship, which may be seen as a sort of continuum of citizen engagement

- the **personally responsible** citizen
- the **participatory** citizen
- the **social-justice oriented** citizen


Praxis

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), Paulo Freire defined praxis as reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.



The characteristics of each type of citizen are summarized in the table *Kinds of Citizens*.

As students learn about global issues and have opportunities to engage in meaningful action, they develop a critical consciousness of the world and the status quo. They come to see where there is a need for change and to understand that, as citizens, they can make a real difference in their communities and in the world. As they build an understanding of the many ecological, social and ethical links between local issues and planetary issues, they come to build a more holistic or relational way of thinking which is based on the shared concerns and interdependence of human beings. The more opportunities students have to reflect and act upon issues that concern them, the greater the likelihood they will move along the citizenship continuum towards a social justice orientation, and the more likely they will become agents of systemic change.

Kinds of Citizens			
	Personally Responsible Citizen	Participatory Citizen	Social-Justice Oriented Citizen
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts responsibly in the community • Works and pays taxes • Picks up litter, recycles, and gives blood • Helps those in need, lends a hand during times of crisis • Obeys laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active member of community organizations and/or improvement efforts • Organizes community efforts to care for those in need, promote economic development, or to clean up environment • Knows how government agencies work • Knows strategies for accomplishing collective tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically assesses social, political, and economic structures • Explores strategies for change that address root causes of problems • Knows about social movements and how to effect systemic change • Seeks out and addresses areas of injustice
Sample Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes food to a food drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps organize a food drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores why people are hungry and acts to solve root causes
Core Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have good character; they must be honest, responsible, and law-abiding members of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must question and change established systems and structures when they reproduce patterns of injustice over time.

Source: WESTHEIMER, J. et KAHNE, J. (2004). *WHAT KIND OF CITIZEN? THE POLITICS OF EDUCATING FOR DEMOCRACY*. AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL. SUMMER. 41(2), 237-269.

Consumer to citizen



The over-arching goal of this course is to help students grow in their capacities as ecologically literate, social-justice oriented citizens. This growth should naturally include a shift away from a consumerist world view to one of citizenship.

Consumerism is a thriving force in our society, supported by the powerful tools of marketing and advertising. O'Reilly and Tennant (2009) regard advertising as “the most ubiquitous force in modern culture”. Students are exposed to advertising at every turn and, just like many of the adults in their lives, may embrace consumerism both as a way of life, and as a measure of *quality of life*. Only recently have we as a society begun to address the tensions between consumerism and citizenship, and to recognize the disastrous and far-reaching impact of unchecked consumerism on the environment – and it may already be too late to reverse the damage we have inflicted upon the planet.

Every issue explored in this course provides an opportunity for student collaboration and growth – either within the general program of study or within the **Take Action** component. However, this growth will not be automatic; it is critical that students be given time and encouragement to

- reflect deeply upon issues they study
- consider diverse perspectives
- make connections between global issues and personal decisions and actions
- engage in proactive decision-making
- take a stand on important issues
- engage in personal and collective action to effect change and contribute to improved quality of life

The mindful selection of issues for study is an important part of this growth process. Students need to investigate real issues – those that reveal the need for personal and social change – and then apply their learning by making changes in their personal life decisions. This process will help them in two important ways. They will

- develop critical consciousness of the economic, social, cultural, ecological and political factors that influence decision-making
- understand how personal decisions and actions can have far-reaching consequences.

Over time, students increasingly will be able to initiate and carry out desired changes in their own lives. Perhaps most importantly, they will also understand that hopefulness and optimism grow out of the knowledge that working collaboratively with others is the best way to challenge accepted practices and actually effect change. This process of becoming critically aware agents for change may mean a profound shift in values and attitudes for some students – moving from a world view based on consumerism to one that is focused on citizenship.

General characteristics of Take Action projects

Projects *may* be

- ongoing over the term or year, or a culminating activity
- new projects, or build upon existing initiatives in the school or community.

Projects *must*

- reflect student interests, abilities and talents
- be collaborative (working with other students in the course or school, or with community members)
- make links between local and global issues
- involve student inquiry and be supported by research
- allow for diversity – each student determines his or her level of activism and the type of contribution he or she is best able to make
- be anchored in at least two of the components of sustainable development (i.e., a sustainable environment, a just economy, and a healthy society)
- include a dimension of personal lifestyle and decision-making, so as to include more sustainable practices in their daily lives
- include a learning log for reflection and self-evaluation

Projects will vary according to students' interests and particular strengths or abilities. **Where possible**, students should be encouraged to:

- network with local experts and community resource persons for advice and direction
- help raise community awareness through promotional campaigns and/or community meetings
- approach local politicians and community leaders for assistance in their cause and petition them for change
- organize actions and activities that involve other students in the school and community members
- provide regular progress updates to the class
- find alternative and creative means of sharing information with their peers and community members

Time allotment

The suggested time allotment for Take Action projects is a maximum of 25% of the course time. Teachers need to decide how much in-class time will be used to support students as they plan, carry out, and share reflections and progress on their projects. These decisions will be based on the needs, interests, and abilities of students, but it is generally expected that students will spend a significant percentage of the allotted time outside of class.

Existing Projects

Many students who will be interested in taking this course may already be engaged in - and busy with - existing school or community action projects. These existing projects may fulfil the action portion of the Take Action component. However, students would still be expected to fulfill the assessment requirements of this course component as described below.

Communicating results

Throughout the planning, research and implementation phases of the Take Action project, students should have frequent opportunities to learn from each other through dialogue, and by having opportunities to make formal or informal presentations to the class. They should also be encouraged to use various mediums to communicate their learning with others, (e.g., blogs, wikis and online journals; video documentaries; information booths; presentations and updates at school assemblies; student-written plays and other artistic productions; workshops, forums and webcasts; team or community consultations, etc.).

Assessment of *Take Action* Projects

As noted earlier, the time allotted to **Take Action** projects is recommended to be a maximum of 25% of the course time. It is also recommended that this action component comprise **25% of the overall grade** for this course.

Students and teachers should collaborate to determine assessment criteria **prior** to beginning project work. Methods of assessment should fit the needs of the students and nature of the project. The main areas of assessment should include

- project goals and outline
- action plan
- research and inquiry questions
- learning log
- evidence of community involvement or partnerships
- ongoing progress reports
- execution/results of the project
- communication of learning to peers, school, community, as appropriate
- final presentation and/or summative report

Assessment should be ongoing and include opportunities for student reflection, self-assessment and peer assessment, as well as community member input, where appropriate. A classroom-based assessment approach, including assessment *for* learning, *as* learning and *of* learning will help encourage students to reach their potential. Early and frequent performance reviews, including the provision of descriptive feedback, will help students learn and grow, and will greatly improve the outcomes of their projects. Peer and self-assessment will help students cultivate learning strategies and guide them as they take action to achieve their project outcomes. The Learning Logs will provide opportunities for students to engage in reflection and self-assessment of their learning experiences.



Photo: NASA Earth Observatory

Legacy Projects

Some projects may live on long after students have graduated. The student initiators of legacy projects may choose to continue their involvement with the school and project after they graduate.

Alternatively, the project may be picked up and continued by students in successive years. Legacy projects may even become part of wider community initiatives and take a life of their own in making the world a better place.

Life Assignment –This Course is just the Beginning

This course alone cannot solve the ills of the world. Ideally, students who complete the course will regard it as an important beginning point in their lives. If teachers approach this course with the spirit in which it has been designed, they will inspire students to embrace the notion of citizenship for social justice as a way of life, to consciously live their lives as agents of change in order to make a positive contribution to the community, and to help ensure a sustainable future for all.



Take Action - Project Examples

Sustainable Environment



- *Reduce Your Carbon Footprint:* Research the impact of lifestyle and consumer choices in Manitoba and elsewhere in the world, (e.g., drinking bottled water; eating meat; driving gas-powered vehicles; buying non fair-trade coffee/chocolate...). Choose an issue and change personal lifestyle habits. Organize campaigns and actions for more widespread, community change. Convince a local grocery store (or national chain!) to stock local produce in season and more fair trade products; persuade peers and community members to get rid of the car, help make “Walk or Take Your Bike to Work or School” an everyday instead of annual event.
- *Water Conservation: Wetlands or River Bank Study and Cleanup:* monitor and record observations about quality of water and presence of wildlife. Contact and work with experts from universities, colleges, Manitoba Conservation. Research information about water in the local community and in other areas of the world. Learn about other student-led projects such as Ryan’s well and finds ways to contribute to existing projects or create a new project, participate in or initiate and ongoing Adopt-a-river project.

- *Community Garden:* Investigate the implications of bio-engineering, mono-cultures, food-transportation and other issues related to food production and consumption. Visit an organic farm and learn about sustainable practices. Create and maintain a school or community garden, share the produce with peers and food banks, or sell it to raise funds to help maintain the garden. Learn about what's going on in other Canadian and American cities where small and large movements are turning abandoned factories, public property and donated land into gardens. Find ways to extend the garden into and around the community. Enlist local businesses, school boards, private individuals to donate land for more gardens, and convince more people (like senior citizens) to join the project. (This would be an excellent legacy project.)

Just Economy

- *Poverty:* Examine the reality of poverty in the local community and find sustainable ways to help people in the local community. Organize a breakfast program or regular food bank drives in the school, make a commitment to long term assistance at a local food bank, and convince other students to do the same. Offer cooking lessons using nutritious foods in local community centre, organize an excess food delivery service between local restaurants and soup kitchens. Write to or meet with local politicians and others of influence to discuss the issues and to make a case for changes in policies and practices.
- *Workers' Rights:* Start local by conducting a survey to determine how many students in the school division have part time jobs, and the conditions, rights and benefits of those jobs (or lack thereof). Expand that survey to include members of the community; find out what rights workers have in the local area. Going farther afield, research conditions for various jobs in Canada and other places in the world. Learn some history by exploring the history of unions and gains made for workers' rights in Canada and other places in the world. Find out what happened during the Winnipeg 1919 General Strike. Share information with peers and make them aware of their rights.
- *Rights of the Child:* Initiate a project related to the rights of the child. Research children's rights, including laws (e.g., Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, United Nations Rights of the Child), and practices that contravene rights (e.g., child labour, sexual exploitation). Learn about existing projects related to Children's rights such as Ryan Hreljac's *Ryan's Well* and Craig Kielburger's *Free the Children*. Develop a campaign around a theme such as child labour, to teach students throughout the school, and community members about how we all contribute to the problem through our consumerism. Create strategies to convince local businesses to change their practices to become more respectful of children's rights. (e.g. awareness of product origin, refusal to sell products that exploit child labour).



One Big Union

Community and Society

- *Anti-Consumerism:* Use the resources of organizations and social movements such as Ad Busters, The Story of Stuff, the Freegans, Voluntary Simplicity, Buy Nothing Day, No Logo, Slow Food, 100 mile diet, Greenpeace, and other anti-consumer organizations to learn about mass media manipulation and issues related to consumerism. Plan a project to share ideas, take actions and organize activities to raise critical awareness amongst peers and community members (e.g., Turn off Television Week; anti-fashion shows; community café events; recycled art projects; Henry David Thoreau readings or events; local music or art festivals...)
- *Connecting with Seniors:* Improve the lives of isolated seniors. Make regular and sustained visits to senior centres that include purposeful activities and include them in school events (e.g., organize a Seniors' Prom; plan a jazz band tour of senior centres).
- *Be a Mentor or Role Model:* Organize a tutoring or participation program with students in an early or middle years school. Make use of personal talents in sports, writing, music, theatre, visual arts, etc by sharing those talents with young people.



**I Shop,
Therefore I
Am**

Take Action: Outline

Phase 1: Planning phase

- Define topics of interest and determine a focus for inquiry and action
- Develop a plan for inquiry and action, including goals and intended outcomes, required resources, partnerships, team members/tasks (if a collective project), time allotment, feasibility, communication and sharing plan
- Identify inquiry questions to guide research: *what will we need to know and be able to do in order to carry out this project?*

Phase 2: Research phase

- Determine inquiry questions and gather data from a variety of sources
- Maintain Learning Log
- Create materials for sharing with peers and community members as required

Ongoing: Review and adjust planning

- Throughout the inquiry process, engage in ongoing dialogue with teacher and other students in the class for feedback and to share learning and motivate others
- Enlist the support of community mentors or guides as required, meet regularly

Phase 3: Implementation phase

- Execute Action Plan: review and modify as required
- Establish timeline, time allocation, budget and materials requirements and review as needed

Phase 4: Reflection and assessment

- Create summative report or presentation to share with class/school
- Create legacy project: produce a synopsis of the project for next year's class and/or to enlist students in earlier grades to take over project the following year
- Solicit feedback of community members
- Solicit press support or coverage where appropriate
- Communicate results with larger community

Phase 5: Life Assignment

- Be an agent of change; contribute to the community; live sustainably

Student Suggestions

These ideas were gathered from Manitoba students at the *Social Justice: Educating for ACTION* Conference, November 18-19, 2010, in Winnipeg Manitoba.

Getting started on a project

- Take baby steps...start with what's easy, but think big
- Take on things that get you excited
- Involve as many other students as possible; start a school committee
- Find an interested teacher for help
- Learn about what others are doing about the issue, near and far. Connect with them to share ideas.

Communicating with others about your project

- Share what you know with others – paper or electronic newsletter to school, community members, others
- Set up “soap-box speakers” in the hallways, make sure the speakers are passionate
- Use whomever you can for their talents – even if they aren't part of the project. Ask artists to create posters; ask charismatic students, teachers, community members or local celebrities to be spokespersons.
- Make videos and post them on YouTube
- Create bulletin board displays in the school
- Show videos to the school - set up booth at lunch
- Play songs with messages to interest and engage people(during lunch or school activities)
- Share ideas at other schools. Have students from other schools share their ideas.
- Hold creative events in public places (school or community)
- Put up a big sheet of paper in the school or community and have people sign a pledge for the cause
- Use multiple and creative ways to share information...electronically, paper, events,

Project Ideas

- Need to be local and international
- Connect with real people at a distance
- Micro loans
- War-affected children
- AIDS awareness
- World Vision – give a chicken/goat to a village
- Halloween for Hunger – go door to door on Halloween for food donations
- Bring back alumni who've achieved things or are involved in social action
- Use music /entertainment and food
- Interactive information sessions where possible instead of delivering information
- Don't give up – it's ok to try something that doesn't work –then try something different and learn lessons

Fund-Raising

- Bring a dollar for _____ day. (wearing a hat/blue jeans/pyjamas)
- Walk for water / coats for kids / kick balls for kids
- Don't just raise money and send it to needy people far away (that's *slacktivism*, not activism)
- People like 'give and get', so give them something when you ask for \$\$: e.g., root beer floats for Haiti

Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability

Suggested Assessment and Evaluation Model

Assessment in this course should be ongoing and should include opportunities for student reflection, self-assessment and peer assessment. The Take Action component of the course may also include opportunity for community member input. (See **Take Action** for specific details about assessing this component of the course.)

A classroom-based assessment approach, including assessment *for* learning, *as* learning and *of* learning will help students to reach their potential and ensure academic rigour. Early and frequent assessment tasks, including descriptive feedback, will help students learn and grow, reflect on their learning, and make significant links between research and practical lifestyle applications.

Teachers may opt to create a class wiki, blog, or other form of social media as a means of facilitating the ongoing exchange of ideas throughout the course. The following model proposes guidelines for the assessment of learning, and suggests a wide variety of assessment tools and strategies. These tools may range from quizzes or tests to article analyses, electronic portfolios, learning journals, research reports, case studies, role plays, interviews and simulations, debates, audiovisual or multimedia presentations or other performance tasks.

Inquiry / Process	Issue selection and generation of guiding questions, inquiry planning, engagement in dialogue, ongoing learning log, peer and self assessment	25%
Inquiry / Product	Written, oral and multi-media tasks, communication of inquiry results	25%
Critical understanding	Understanding of issues and key concepts; evidence of Enduring Understandings; competencies of citizenship and ecological literacy	25%
Take Action/ Praxis	Planning of research-action project, implementation, communication and evaluation of results	25%

Examples of assessment tasks

Category and value	Descriptor	Suggested tasks
Inquiry / Process 25%	Issue selection and generation of guiding questions, inquiry planning, engagement in dialogue, ongoing learning log, peer and self assessment	Annotated bibliography Reflection or response journal Synthesis or reflection question response Analysis of diverse perspectives Analysis and interpretation of data Discussion, position statement Interviews Selection of sources Pre and post inquiry reflection
Inquiry / Product 25%	Written, oral and multi-media tasks, communication of inquiry results	Oral defence of thesis statement Persuasive speech Case study Visual or multimedia creation/presentation Musical or dramatic production/presentation Simulation, role play News report or editorial writing Political cartoon creation Position paper Debate or deliberation
Critical understanding 25%	Understanding of issues and key concepts; evidence of Enduring Understandings; competencies of citizenship and ecological literacy	Mind map, concept map, graphic organizer or flow chart Issue analysis Media deconstruction Take home exam, prepared question exam Written or oral test, quiz News report or editorial analysis/comparison Audiovisual, photographic, musical, dramatic analysis/ comparison Hypothesis statement Critical thinking tasks (e.g., construct a theory about the main point of an article based on its title; write a two-line response to an article...)
Take Action/ Praxis 25% <i>Teachers may decide to accord 10% to a "legacy project" or ongoing action commitment.</i>	Planning of research-action project, implementation, communication and evaluation of results	Meeting organization; meeting facilitation Project work plan Project proposal Risk analysis Self and peer assessment of project plan and results Community feedback and evaluation of project

Area of Inquiry: Media

The Power of Media

The power of media is unquestionable. Whether the medium is print, audio, visual, or digital, the impact of media is profound and far-reaching. Media's affect may be positive or negative, but it is seldom neutral. At its best, media serves to inform, communicate and entertain. At its worst, it skews perceptions of reality and manipulates emotions. It creates artificial needs through advertising that drive consumerism and result in the depletion of global resources.

As media critic George Gerbner states, "For the first time in human history, most of the stories about people, life and values are told not by parents, schools, or others in the community who have something to tell, but by distant conglomerates that have something to sell." (*The 1998 Screen Actors Guild Report: Casting the American Scene*, 1998, p.2.) Analyzing and evaluating who owns and controls media enables us to critically reflect and think about the content and purpose of the stories told by mass media.

The medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium – that is, of any extension of ourselves – result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology...

We shape our tools and afterwards our tools shape us.

- Marshall McLuhan

Essential Questions

Although there are no definitive answers as to how to solve issues related to the influence and control of media, through critical inquiry, investigation, and discussion, students will enrich their understanding about the role of media in their lives and in today's world. Critical media literacy will enable students to progress from passive, unquestioning recipients of information to active, responsible and informed citizens.

Inquiry questions related to media issues may include the following:

- *How does media influence, affect, and control us?*
- *How has this influence changed through time?*
- *Do media create or reflect our world?*
- *How free is the press?*
- *What is the relationship between media control, power, and profit?*
- *What is the impact of new and alternative media?*
- *How does media literacy help us to become critical thinkers and responsible citizens?*

What do we mean by media?

The media communicate messages to a mass audience using a variety of means.

Traditional media communicates content in a mass-produced format using words, images and/or sound: radio, television, film, print, audio or audio-visual. Traditional media is most often used to refer to newspapers, advertising, magazines, books, and other paper-based publications.

New media refers to access to content on demand using a variety of devices, and includes digital interactivity in the form of user participation and feedback. What distinguishes new media from traditional media is the digitizing of content. *Wikipedia*, an online encyclopaedia, is one of the most well-known examples of new media, combining Internet accessible digital text, images and video with web-links, participation of contributors, interactive feedback, and the formation of a participant community of editors and writers. A significant factor in new media is the so-called "democratization" of the creation, publishing, distribution and consumption of media content.

What is critical media literacy?

Critical media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create all forms of media, to critically understand the power of media and to be aware of our relationship to media. A media literate student is both a critical thinker and a sceptic who understands the need to identify information sources as well as their motives and techniques.

Key principles to keep in mind

1. All media are intentional and carefully crafted constructions. They are not mirror reflections of reality.
2. The media shape our interpretations, attitudes and observations about how the world works.
3. Audiences interpret and negotiate the meaning of media messages.
4. Media have commercial implications. Mass media production has an economic basis that determines content, technique, and distribution.
5. Media contain implicit or explicit beliefs and values.
6. Media have social and political implications.
7. Form and content are closely related in the media.
8. Each medium has a unique aesthetic form.

Source: *Media Literacy Resource Guide*, Ontario Ministry of Education, Toronto, ON. a, 1989.

Questions posed by the media literate person in response to any media message:

1. Who created this message?
2. What techniques does this message use to attract my attention?
3. How might others understand this message?
4. What values and lifestyles are represented and which are absent?
5. Why was this message created?

Some inquiry issues related to media

The principles of media literacy should be incorporated throughout the course as part of each inquiry. However, students may also undertake an in-depth study of key media-related issues, including those related to the control and impact of media. The following are some suggested media issues for inquiry.

Control of Media – Who owns it? Who controls it? To what end?

- convergence and concentration of media ownership
- agenda (profit, power, propaganda, social engineering)
- bias through selection and omission
- marketing and advertising strategies
- freedom of the press: media regulation, ethics, legislation, and censorship
- public control and “citizen journalism”
- alternative media and social justice

Impact of Media – Who is affected? How are they affected?

- creation and perpetuation of stereotypes: race, class, and gender
- psychological influence (objectification, sexualisation, body image, fear)
- violence in media
- the rise of infotainment
- power and influence of advertising (pervasiveness, embedded messages, product placement)
- popular culture and the decline of social mores

Did you know? Some facts about media

The average 1970s city dweller was exposed to between 500 and 2000 advertising messages a day. Today, that number has climbed to between 3000 and 5000.

- J. Walker Smith, CBC News, 2008

Children spend more time watching television than in any other activity except sleep. -

- *Television and the Socialization of Young Children*, Huston and Wright, 1996

In 1983, fifty corporations dominated mass media. In 1987, the fifty companies had shrunk to twenty-nine. In 1990, the twenty-nine had shrunk to twenty three. In 1997, the biggest firms numbered ten.

-Ben H. Bagdikian, *The Media Monopoly*, Sixth Edition, Beacon Press, 2000

As of 2006, there were eight giant media companies in the US. They include: Disney, AOL-Time Warner, Viacom, General Electric, News Corporation, Yahoo!, Microsoft, and Google.

- *Mother Jones Magazine*, 2009

There is a near absence of female characters in top-grossing American motion pictures. After evaluating the 101 top-grossing G-rated films from 1990 to 2004, of the over 4,000 characters in these films, 75% were male, 83% of characters in crowds were male, 83% of narrators were male, and 72% of speaking characters were male. This gross underrepresentation of women or girls in films with family-friendly content reflects a missed opportunity to present a broad spectrum of girls and women in roles that are non sexualized.

- Bazzini, McIntosh, Smith, Cook, & Harris 2010

On average, Canadians watch more than 22 hours of television a week. Canadian children between the ages of 2 and 11 watch approximately 18 hours a week.

- Statistics Canada, 2006

Advertisers spent \$1.3 billion on television advertisements directed at young children in 1997. Children as young as two years of age demonstrate brand loyalty.

www.turnofftv.org, 2008

The average American child sees 200,000 violent acts and 16,000 murders on television by age 18.

www.turnofftv.org, 2008

Sexualization of girls in the media has negative effects in a variety of domains, including physical and mental health. There is ample evidence that it leads to low self esteem, eating disorders, and has a negative effect on healthy sexual development in girls.

- Dr Eileen Zurbriggen, University of California, Santa Cruz, 2007

The media have a lot of power to endorse stereotypes. We go into First Nations communities to talk to youth about gangs. When asked, the kids estimate that about 95% of Aboriginal youth is involved in gangs. The actual number is 21%. Why do they think these numbers are so high? It's because this is what they get from television and newspapers.

- Susan Swan, Lake Manitoba First Nation, 2010

Thought Provoking Quotes

Whoever controls the media, controls the mind. - Jim Morrison, The Doors

Cinema, radio, television, magazines are a school of inattention: people look without seeing, listen in without hearing. - Robert Bresson

I believe in equality for everyone, except reporters and photographers. - Gandhi

An unconscious people, an indoctrinated people, a people fed only partisan information and opinion that confirm their own bias, a people made morbidly obese in mind and spirit by the junk food of propaganda is less inclined to put up a fight, ask questions and be skeptical. And just as a democracy can die of too many lies, that kind of orthodoxy can kill us, too.

-Bill Moyers

The effect of the mass media is not to elicit belief but to maintain the apparatus of addiction. -Christopher Lasch

Advertising, in fact, is the main storyteller of our society. The right question to ask is not whether this or that ad sells what it is advertising, but what are the consistent stories that advertising tells as a whole about what is important in the world, about how to behave, and about what is good and bad?

http://www.mediaed.org/assets/products/101/transcript_101.pdf

The media is too concentrated, too few people own too much. There's really five companies that control 90 percent of what we read, see and hear. It's not healthy.

-Ted Turner

The people will believe what the media tells them they believe. - George Orwell

If the nervous system of any organism is obstructed, important messages cannot get through and its health suffers. So it is with information in the media of the body politic. - Carl Jensen, PhD, Professor of Communications Studies, Sonoma State University

Media service to the corporate sector is reflexive: the media are major corporations. Like others, they sell a product to a market: the product is the audiences and the market is other businesses. - Noam Chomsky, 2001

People Making a Difference

Project Censored Media Freedom Foundation www.projectcensored.org



Carl Jensen

Project Censored was founded by Carl Jensen in 1976, and is a media research program based out of Sonoma State University (SSU) in California. Project Censored researches global news stories that are underreported, ignored, misrepresented, or censored by the US corporate media, and publishes these stories under the title *The Top 25 Censored Stories of the Year*. They also publish a yearbook called *Censored: The News That Didn't Make the News*.

Adbusters <http://www.adbusters.org/>



Adbusters is a non-profit, Vancouver based organization that was founded in 1989 by Kalle Lasn and Bill Schmalz. Their philosophical stance is anti-advertising, anti-consumerist and pro environment, although they support many other political and social causes as well. *Adbusters* is renowned for its social marketing campaigns including Buy Nothing Day and Digital Detox Week.

Other Media Change Makers of Note:

Terry O'Reilly, Neil Postman, George Gerbner, Michael Parenti, Herbert I. Schiller, Erna Smith, Marshall McLuhan

Glossary

Language of media literacy from Center for Media Literacy:
<http://www.medialit.org/media-literacy-definition-and-more>

Access: The ability of media consumers to respond to the dominant media, to produce their own texts and to have those texts acknowledged by the media.

Agenda-setting: The theory that dominant media exert a strong influence on the general public and on government policy regarding what issues are considered to be the most important and are most deserving of attention. Generally the agenda-setting media are journalistic media with a high degree of credibility.

Branding: The process by which a commodity in the marketplace is known primarily for the image it projects rather than any actual quality.

Censorship: The practice of suppressing a text or part of a text that is considered objectionable according to certain standards.

Citizen journalism: Also referred to as grassroots or participatory journalism, this type of journalism refers to when private individuals without formal journalism training collect, report, and publish information. The information can take many forms, from a podcast editorial to a report about a city council meeting on a blog. It can include text, pictures, audio, and video.

Convergence: The merging of previously separate communication industries such as publishing, computers, film, music and broadcasting, made possible by advances in technology.

Critical: A reflective position on the meaning, biases or value messages of a text.

Critical autonomy: The process by which a member of the audience is able to read a media text in a way other than the preferred reading; also used to describe the ability of media literacy students to deconstruct or analyze media texts.

Critical Viewing: The ability to use critical thinking skills to view, question, analyze and understand issues presented overtly and covertly in movies, videos, television and other visual media.

Flak: An organized attempt to influence media content, which can take the form of letters, phone calls, petitions, lawsuits and legislation.

Hegemony/hegemonic: When dominant groups persuade subordinate groups that the dominant ideology is in their own best interests. The media's function in this process is often to encourage maintenance of the status quo.

Marketing: The way in which a product or media text is sold to a target audience.

Mass Media: Mass media refers to those media that are designed to be consumed by large audiences through the agencies of technology.

"Moral Panic": A sudden increase in public perception of the possible threat to societal values and interests because of exposure to media texts.

Oppositional: A critical position that is in opposition to the values and ideology intended by the creators of a media text, usually the dominant reading of a text.

Product Placement: The process by which manufacturers or advertisers pay a fee in order for branded products to be prominently displayed in a movie, TV show or other media production.

Propaganda: Any media text whose primary purpose is to openly persuade an audience of the validity of a particular point of view.

Psychographics: A more sophisticated form of demographics that includes information about the psychological and sociological characteristics of media consumers such as attitudes, values, emotional responses and ideological beliefs.

Representation: The process by which a constructed media text stands for, symbolizes, describes or represents people, places, events or ideas that are real and have an existence outside the text.

Social Media: Media based on user participation and user-generated content that is shared through integrated technology. Social media includes social networking sites like LinkedIn or Face book, social bookmarking sites, and social news sites. Social media information is disseminated through technology based social interaction, sharing and discussion.

Stereotyping: A form of media representation by which instantly recognized characteristics are used to label members of social or cultural groups. While often negative, stereotypes can contain an element of truth and are used by the media to establish an instant rapport with the audience.

Suggested Resources for Teachers

Books

Douglas, Susan J. *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media*. Publisher: Times Books, 1995.

Hedges, Chris. *Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*. Publisher: Vintage Canada, 2010.

Henry, Frances, and Tator, Carol. *Whiteout: Discourses of Domination: Racial Bias in the Canadian English-Language Press*. University of Toronto Press, 2000.

Klein, Naomi. *No Logo: Taking Aim and the Brand Bullies*. Publisher: Random House, 2000.

O'Reilly, Terry and Tennant, Mike. *The Age of Persuasion: How Marketing Ate Our Culture*. Publisher: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009.

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. Publisher: Penguin, 1985.

Schoeffel, Peter and Mitchell, John. *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*. Publisher: New Press, 2001.

Snow, Nancy. *Propaganda, Inc.: Selling America's Culture to the World*, (3rd Edition). Publisher: Seven Stories Press, 2010.

Articles

Kilbourne, Jean. "Jesus is a Brand of Jeans." *New Internationalist*, Issue 398, <http://www.newint.org/features/2006/09/01/culture/>

Jhally, Sut. "Advertising and the End of the World" *Media Education Foundation* http://www.mediaed.org/assets/products/101/transcript_101.pdf

Regulation, Awareness, Empowerment; Young People and Harmful Digital Content in the Media Age. The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, UNESCO, 2006, report available online at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001469/146955e.pdf>

Websites

Center for Media Literacy: <http://www.medialit.org/>

Nancy Snow, Dr. Propaganda, Persuasion with Principle: <http://www.nancysnow.com/snow-tracks>

Media Watch: <http://www.mediawatch.com/>

Project Censored, Media Democracy in Action: <http://www.projectcensored.org>

UNESCO Education website:

<http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/>

Multimedia

Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media. Dir. Achbar and Wintonick, Zeitgeist Video, 1992

Killing Us Softly 4

Advertising's Image of Women, Media Education Foundation, 2010

The Digital Nation: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/digitalnation/view/>

Area of Inquiry: Consumerism

Introduction and key concepts

Consumerism -- the consumption of goods and services in excess of one's basic needs, usually in greater and greater quantities -- is not a new phenomenon, and early examples of consumerism can be traced back to the first human civilizations. A significant consumerist tide hit Europe and North America in the mid-18th Century as a result of the Industrial Revolution and the transformation of Western Europe's and North America's economies. The mechanisation of a number of processes such as farming freed a certain percentage of the workforce from farming, fuelled both the Industrial Revolution and population growth. As industrialization created the conditions for mass production and mass consumption, for the first time in history, immense quantities of manufactured goods were suddenly available at outstandingly low prices, and thus made available to nearly everyone.

The Second World War brought about a strong need to conserve natural resources, as the demands of war led to resource scarcity; the U.S. Government launched a massive campaign urging citizens to be patriotic and conserve resources, reuse and recycle, grow their own food, and to share, and as a result, frugality became the new norm. However, in the 1950s, factories and labour, which were used to produce weapons, planes and ships during the war, became idle, and needed to be employed. The strategy thus became to bring people out of the conservative habits they had gotten into and induce them to consume. One of the architects of the consumer society was the retail analyst Victor Lebow, who remarked in 1955 that "Our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfactions, our ego satisfactions, in consumption. [...] We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced, and discarded at an ever increasing pace." This line of thinking launched the consumer society and the growing conspicuous consumption of the United States (and Canada) that still prevails today.

Suggested issues for inquiry

What is consumerism? How is it described? What drives consumerism?

- History of consumerism
- Production of goods and services
- Variations of consumerism: affluence, conspicuous consumption, overconsumption, profligate consumption
- Quality of life versus acquiring goods
- Relationship between political and economic interests, investment decisions, production, marketing and distribution, and consumption

What are the impacts of consumerism? How does it affect different countries? Canada? How does it affect you?

- Ecosystem degradation and ecological overshoot (when our demands exceed our capacity)
- Increased waste streams
- Planned obsolescence
- Unfulfilling jobs; working longer hours for reduced pay; job insecurity
- Economic inefficiencies
- Uneven resource distribution
- Growing disparities between the rich and poor
- Feelings of frustration, exclusion, of never having enough or being good enough
- “Keeping up with the Jones’s”

What is the role of media in fuelling consumerism? What images does society project about how people should live and what makes them happy?

- The people/corporations that own the media
- Advertising to children and other groups
- Advertising in public spaces
- Consumerism and social status

What is progress? Wealth? Prosperity? Well-being? How are these measured?

- “Needs” versus “wants”
- Maslow’s hierarchy of needs
- Overconsumption and underconsumption
- Alternatives to Gross Domestic Product (GDP): Genuine Progress Indicator; Ecological Footprint; Gross National Happiness; Human Development Index; Satisfaction with Life Index; Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare; Living Planet Index

Solutions and moving forward

- Social movements and initiatives: anti-consumerism; culture jamming/”subvertising”
- Alternative lifestyles: voluntary simplicity; frugality; downshifting; green living; LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability)
- The positive story of moving away from consumerism: time for friends and family; better health; more fulfilling lives; more efficient and resilient economies; better global relations

Inquiry topics

Consumer-based economies; capitalism and free market economies; citizen responsibilities and decisions; corporate responsibilities and decisions; culture of entitlement; culture of credit; culture of excess; commoditization of indigenous cultures; impact of branding, marketing and advertising; mass media manipulation; corporate sponsorship, product placement; perceived/planned obsolescence; lifestyle and health issues (e.g., obesity, chemical intolerances, allergies, illnesses, sedentary lifestyles); energy and natural resource depletion; generation of waste; petro-politics; corporate and consumer greed; sweatshops; etc.

- Better product design and closed-loop systems which promote “clean production”: cradle-to-cradle; biomimicry; industrial ecology; design for sustainability
- Collaborative consumption or “what’s mine is yours” (renting, swapping, sharing)
- Community centres and attractive public spaces; progressive urban design
- Cheap, comfortable and reliable public transportation
- Education for sustainable consumption and citizenship
- Re-localisation of the economy

Suggested Essential Questions

- How are the products and resources we consume actually produced? Where do they come from and who makes them? What happens to products when we’re finished with them?
- What are the impacts of production and consumption in North America on the environment? On society? On people here and around the world? How does our consumption affect poorer people and nations?
- How do the media affect our thoughts and actions? Who/what influences our consumption choices? Whose needs are being met when we consume?
- Why does our society generally think of consumption as a good thing?
- What is a necessity and what is a luxury? How do we differentiate between ‘needs’ and ‘wants’?
- Does consuming make us happy? What are requirements for a “good life”?
- How do consumption habits change as societies change? How do these changes affect our relationships with other people, here and around the world?
- How does consumerism relate to our social status? How do our values around consumerism affect our relationships with others?
- What are the relationships between consumption, wealth, and population growth?
- What does it mean to be a consumer, versus being a citizen?

Did you know? Some facts about the consumer society

Canada's ecological footprint (measure of human demand on the earth's ecosystem) is seventh largest per capita among 130 nations measured in WWF's Living Planet Report. Approximately half of this footprint is the result of carbon emissions from transportation, heating and electricity production from fossil fuels, which contribute significantly to climate change. This is more than twice the average global citizen's consumption rate and would require approximately four Earths to sustain if every human were to live as Canadians do.

- WWF, *Living Planet Report*, 2010.

The US and Canada, with 5.2% of the world's population, are responsible for 31.5% of consumption. South Asia, with 22.4% of the population, is responsible for 2% of consumption.

- Worldwatch Institute, *State of the World 2004: The Consumer Society*.

Globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures — the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%. More specifically, the richest fifth:

- consume 45% of all meat and fish, the poorest fifth 5%
- consume 58% of total energy, the poorest fifth less than 4%
- have 74% of all telephone lines, the poorest fifth 1.5%
- consume 84% of all paper, the poorest fifth 1.1%
- own 87% of the world's vehicle fleet, the poorest fifth less than 1%

- UNDP *Human Development Report*, 1998

Annual expenditures on luxury items compared with funding needed to meet basic needs

Product	Annual expenditure (\$US)	Social or economic goal	Additional annual investment needed to achieve goal
Makeup	\$18 billion	Reproductive health care for all women	\$12 billion
Pet food in Europe and the United States	\$17 billion	Elimination of hunger and malnutrition	\$19 billion
Perfumes	\$15 billion	Universal literacy	\$5 billion
Ocean cruises	\$14 billion	Clean drinking water for all	\$10 billion
Ice cream in Europe	\$11 billion	Immunizing every child	\$1.3 billion

State of the World 2004, Worldwatch Institute

In the past three decades, one-third of the planet's natural resources base has been consumed.

- *Natural Capitalism*, Little Brown and Company, 1999.

75% of the major marine fish stocks are either depleted, overexploited or being fished at their biological limit.

- World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002, *A Framework for Action on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Management*.

The Western world spends more on luxury products than it would cost to achieve the UN's Millennium Development Goals.

- Worldwatch Institute, *State of the World 2004: The Consumer Society*.

A survey of 15,500 consumers in 17 countries revealed that more than a third were boycotting at least one brand.

- GMI Poll, 2005.

Each person in the United States makes 4 1/2 pounds of garbage a day. That is twice what they each made thirty years ago.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2007.

For every one garbage can of waste you put out on the curb, 70 garbage cans of waste were made upstream to make the junk in that one garbage can you put out on the curb.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2001.

Some 4 billion PET recyclable bottles end up in the U.S. waste stream each year, costing cities some \$70 million in cleanup and landfill costs. A plastic water bottle can take up to 1000 years to degrade in a landfill; when plastic is burned in incinerators, it releases dioxins, some of the most harmful manmade chemicals that exist.

- The Story of Bottled Water, www.storyofbottledwater.org

Between 10 and 15 percent of the price of a bottle of water goes to advertising costs. Effective marketing of bottled water has contributed to undermining confidence – and investment – in public tap water and encouraging underfunding of public agencies.

- *The Story of Bottled Water*, www.storyofbottledwater.org

North America has the largest market for organics – \$14.6 billion in 2005, up 17% on the year before. Organic food now represents 2.5% of total US food sales.

- Organic Trade Association, 2006 Manufacturer Survey.

The global market for organic food and drink was worth \$28 billion in 2005 – \$2 billion more than 2004. In 2005, 31 million hectares of land were farmed organically by 623,147 farmers in 120 countries.

- UK Soil Association, Organic Market Report 2006.

In 2006, people around the world spent \$30.5 trillion on goods and services, and in 2008, they purchased 68 million vehicles, 85 million refrigerators, 297 million computers, and 1.2 billion cell phones.

- *State of the World 2010*, Worldwatch Institute

The world extracts the equivalent of 112 Empire State Buildings from the earth every single day.

- *State of the World 2010*, Worldwatch Institute

Thought Provoking Quotes

We are not going to be able to operate our Spaceship Earth successfully nor for much longer unless we see it as a whole spaceship and our fate as common. It has to be everybody or nobody.

- Buckminster Fuller, American engineer (1895-1983)

Growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell.

- Edward Abbey, Author and Environmentalist

Educational and cultural institutions, governmental agencies, financial institutions, and even the family itself changed their meaning and function to promote the consumption of commodities.

-Richard Robbins, Author - *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*

The only reason a great many American families don't own an elephant is that they have never been offered an elephant for a dollar down and easy weekly payments.

- Mad Magazine

There must be more to life than having everything!

- Maurice Sendak, author and illustrator

The world will no longer be divided by the ideologies of 'left' and 'right,' but by those who accept ecological limits and those who don't.

- Wolfgang Sachs, German researcher and teacher (1946 -)

Change is disturbing when it is done to us, exhilarating when it is done by us.

- Rosabeth Moss Kanter, American professor at Harvard Business School (1943 -)

We need new thinking, new leadership, and innovation to create a post-carbon economy. Our goal is not to undo industry, but to remake it into a force for sustainable wealth generation.

- Richard Branson, British entrepreneur, (1950 -)

The most critical task facing humanity today is the creation of a shared vision of a sustainable and desirable society, one that can provide permanent prosperity within the biophysical constraints of the real world in a way that is fair and equitable to all of humanity, to other species, and to future generations.

- Robert Costanza

We are human beings, not human havings.

- Mike Nickerson

Anything you cannot relinquish when it has outlived its usefulness possesses you. And in this materialistic age, a great many of us are possessed by our possessions.

- Mildred Lisette Norman

Making a Difference

Organisations

One Earth Initiative Society

The One Earth Initiative is a non-profit research and advocacy group based in Vancouver, BC, Canada. We seek to transform unsustainable consumption and production patterns locally, nationally and internationally. One Earth is engaged in convening, policy, communication and action initiatives to transform the consumer lifestyle – and the economic, industrial production, financial, political, social and cultural systems that support it.

<http://oneearthweb.org/> (anglais)

The Story of Stuff Project

The Story of Stuff Project was created by Annie Leonard to leverage and extend the impact of the original Story of Stuff Film. The Project aims to amplify public discourse on a series of environmental, social and economic concerns and increase the Story of Stuff community's involvement in efforts to build a more sustainable and just world. The on-line community includes over 150,000 activists and they partner with hundreds of environmental and social justice organizations worldwide to create and distribute films, curricula and other content.

<http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

<http://www.storyofstuff.org/international/index.html> (sous-titré en français)

Center for the New American Dream

The Center for the New American Dream helps Americans consume responsibly to protect the environment, enhance quality of life, and promote social justice. They work with individuals, institutions, communities, and businesses to conserve natural resources, counter the commercialization of our

culture, and promote positive changes in the way goods are produced and consumed. Their focus is on shifting our understanding of well-being away from 'stuff' and back to opportunity and relationships.

<http://www.newdream.org/> (anglais)

Interface

Interface is a sustainable flooring company dedicated to eliminating any negative impact their business has on the environment by 2020. Their mission is to serve as a model to the business community, to show the industrial world what sustainability is in all its dimensions: People, process, product, place and profit. Their business model runs on what they have termed the "7 Fronts of Sustainability"

<http://www.interfaceglobal.com/>

Adbusters

Based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Adbusters is a not-for-profit, reader-supported, 120,000-circulation magazine concerned about the erosion of our physical and cultural environments by commercial forces. Adbusters offers incisive philosophical articles as well as activist commentary from around the world addressing issues ranging from genetically modified foods to media concentration. In addition, their annual social marketing campaigns like Buy Nothing Day and Digital Detox Week have made them an important activist networking group.

<http://www.adbusters.org/>

People

Tim Jackson

Juliet Schor

William Rees

Erik Assadourian

Mike Nickerson

David Orr

Michael Maniates

Helio Mattar

Chris Jordan

Edward Burtynsky

Reverend Billy (and the Church of Life After Shopping)

Glossary

Capitalism: Capitalism is a way of organizing an economy so that the things that are used to make and transport products (such as land, oil, factories, ships, etc.) are privately owned by individual people and companies rather than by the government. Capitalism is the dominant economic structure around the world, particularly in developed countries.

Carbon footprint: A carbon footprint is the total set of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions caused by an organisation, event or product. It is often expressed in terms of the amount of carbon dioxide, or its equivalent of other greenhouse gases, emitted.

Carrying capacity of ecosystems: Capacity of an ecosystem to support healthy organisms while maintaining its productivity, adaptability and capability for renewal. Carrying capacity is a quantitative concept: key factors for human populations include numbers and density, affluence and technology. Concerns focus on depletion rates of renewable and non-renewable resources and the build up of hazardous wastes in the environment.

Choice editing: Choice editing is the term used to describe instances where governments and/or businesses influence the choices made by consumers. For example, a decision by a government to remove all non-energy efficient light bulbs removes the choice for consumers to buy light bulbs that are not energy efficient.

Citizen: A citizen is a person who legally belongs in a country and has the rights and protection of that country and its government.

Consumer information: Consumer information that presents the characteristics of products and transactions, made available to consumers/users to allow them to make informed choices at the time of initial acquisition and afterwards for use of the goods or services concerned. Consumer information makes it easier for consumers to compare goods and services, increases transparency and accountability, and reduces search costs. It can be used not only to inform, but also to influence consumer behaviour.

Consumer preferences: Consumer preferences are a consequence of consumer choice, guiding the acquisition of a good or service on the basis of the information available. This may include the preference not to consume at all.

Consumer: A consumer is an everyday purchaser of a good or service in retail, or the end user in the distribution chain of a good or service.

Conspicuous consumption: Conspicuous consumption is lavish spending on goods and services acquired mainly for the purpose of displaying income or wealth and maintaining social status.

Corporate social (and environmental) responsibility: Corporate social and environmental responsibility is the responsibility of an organisation for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment.

Credit: Credit is a contractual agreement in which a borrower receives something of value now and agrees to repay the lender at some later date. When a consumer purchases something using a credit card, they are buying on credit (receiving the item at that time, and paying back the credit card company month by month). Any time when an individual finances something with a loan (such as an automobile or a house), they are using credit in that situation as well.

Eco-efficiency: Eco-efficiency is a management philosophy that encourages business to search for environmental improvements that also yield economic benefits. It focuses on business opportunities and allows companies to become more environmentally responsible and more profitable. It is a key business contribution to sustainable societies. Eco-efficiency is achieved by the delivery of competitively priced goods and services that satisfy human needs and bring quality of life, while progressively reducing ecological impacts.

Ecodesign: Ecodesign is an approach to designing a product that aims at reducing the environmental impact (and energy consumption) of the product throughout its entire life cycle.

Ecolabels: Ecolabels are labelling systems for food and consumer products, which are often voluntary, but can be mandated by law, like for major appliances and cars in North America. Ecolabels make it easier for consumers to choose more environmentally friendly products.

Education for sustainable consumption: Education for sustainable consumption (ESC) aims to provide knowledge, values and skills to enable individuals and social groups to become actors of change towards more sustainable consumption behaviours. The objective is to ensure that the basic needs of the global community are met, quality of life for all is improved and inefficient use of resources and environmental degradation are avoided. ESC is therefore about providing citizens with appropriate information and knowledge on the environmental and social impacts of their daily choices, as well as providing workable solutions and alternatives. ESC integrates fundamental rights and freedoms including consumers' rights, and aims at protecting and empowering consumers in order to enable them to participate in the public debate and economy in an informed, confident and ethical way.

Entitlement: Entitlement is the conscious or unconscious belief held by individuals or groups that they are deserving of particular benefits not equally enjoyed by other sectors of society.

Fair trade: Fair trade is an organized social movement and market-based approach (voluntary) that aims to help producers in developing countries make better trading conditions and promote sustainability. The movement helps to ensure that producers, including employees, receive a share of the total profit

commensurate with their input, and that social conditions are improved, particularly those of employees in the absence of developed structures for social services and worker representation (trade union representation for instance).

Greenwashing: Greenwashing is the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service. Companies are notably accused of greenwashing when they spend more time and money claiming to be “green” through advertising and marketing than actually implementing business practices that minimise their environmental impact.

Luxury: A luxury is something inessential but conducive to pleasure and comfort, often something expensive or hard to obtain. In western culture, luxuries are often considered ‘necessities’.

Planned obsolescence: Planned Obsolescence is a business practice of deliberately outdating an item (much before the end of its useful life) by stopping its supply or service support and introducing a newer (often incompatible) model or version. Its objective is to prod the consumer or user to abandon the currently owned item in favor of the 'upgrade.' Common in the computer industry for technical reasons, but can also be accomplished by making the old product ‘unfashionable’.

Product placement: Product placement, or embedded marketing, is a form of advertisement, where branded goods or services are placed in a context usually devoid of ads, such as movies, the story line of television shows, or news programs. The product placement is often not disclosed at the time that the good or service is featured. Product placement became common in the 1980s.

Subvertising: the practice of making a parody of corporate and political advertisements in order to make a statement

Sufficiency: The concept of “sufficiency” has emerged over the years as an alternative economic model to consumerism, and a necessary component of sustainable lifestyles. It is a philosophical ideal that offers the possibility of a higher quality of life while simultaneously reducing the human impact on the natural world.

Sustainable consumption and production: Sustainable production and consumption is the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations.

Sustainable lifestyles: A “sustainable lifestyle” is a way of living enabled both by efficient infrastructures (public transportation; green buildings; etc.), goods and services (fair trade and organic products; etc.), and by individual choices and actions (walking instead of driving) that minimise the use of natural resources, and generation of emissions, wastes and pollution, while supporting equitable socio-economic development and progress for all.

3 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle): The 3 R's form the foundation of the waste hierarchy, by order of importance: Reducing means choosing to use things with care to reduce the amount of waste generated. Reusing involves the repeated use of items or parts of items which still have usable aspects. Recycling means the use of waste itself as resources. Some people add other "R's" to the original three: Renewing; Respecting; Refusing (to acquire or purchase certain goods or products).

Voluntary simplicity: Voluntary simplicity encompasses a number of different voluntary practices to simplify one's lifestyle in an effort to make one's personal and social project the pursuit of other, non-materialistic purposes. Simplifiers gain more satisfaction out of life-long learning, public life, volunteering, community participation, sports, cultural activities, and observing or communing with nature.

Definitions mostly taken from the United Nations Environment Programme's booklet *ABC of SCP: Clarifying Concepts on Sustainable Consumption and Production*, Wikipedia, and BusinessDictionary.com with minor edits in some instances -

<http://www.unep.org/scp/marrakech/pdf/ABC%20of%20SCP%20-%20Clarifying%20Concepts%20on%20SCP.pdf>

Suggested Resources

Books

Ajouter titres français simplicité volontaire

Klein, Naomi. *No Logo : Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*. Knopf Canada, 2000.

De Graaf et al. *Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic*. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002.

Quart, Alissa. *Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers*. Perseus Books, 2003.

Assadourian, Erik (Ed.). *State of the World 2010 : Transforming Cultures from Consumerism to Sustainability*. Norton/Worldwatch, 2010.

Starke, Linda (Ed.). *State of the World 2004 -- Special Focus: The Consumer Society*. Norton/Worldwatch, 2004.

Schor, Juliet B. *Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth*. Penguin, 2010.

Schor, Juliet B. *Do Americans Shop Too Much?* Beacon Press, 2000.

Meadows, Donella H. *Thinking in Systems*. Earthscan, 2008.

Jackson, Tim. *Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet*. Earthscan, 2009.

Leonard, Annie. *The Story of Stuff: How Our Obsession with Stuff Is Trashing the Planet, Our Communities, and Our Health--and a Vision for Change*. Free Press, 2010.

Smart, Barry. *Consumer Society: Critical Issues & Environmental Consequences*. Sage Publications, 2010.

Durning, Alan. *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things*. Sightline, 1997.

Robin, Vicki. *Your Money or Your Life: 9 Steps to Transforming Your Relationship with Money and*

Achieving Financial Independence: Revised and Updated for the 21st Century. Penguin, 2008.

Friedman, Thomas L. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded 2.0: Why We Need a Green Revolution--and How It Can Renew America*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008.

Lakoff, George. *Metaphors We Live By*. University of Chicago, 1980.

Lindstrom, Martin. *Buyology: Truth and Lies About Why We Buy*. Broadway Books, 2008.

Robbins, John. *The New Good Life: Living Better Than Ever in an Age of Less*. Ballantine Books, 2010.
Nickerson, Mike. *Life, Money and Illusion: Living on Earth as if We Want to Stay*. New Society, 2009.
Trainer, Ted. *The Conserver Society*. Zed Books, 1995.

Websites

Réseau Inter-Actif: www.in-terre-actif.com

UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production

<http://www.scp-centre.org/home.html>

Youth Xchange

<http://www.youthxchange.net>

Global Footprint Network

<http://www.footprintnetwork.org>

Interview with Richard Heinberg, from the Post Carbon Institute

<http://transitionvoice.com/2011/03/interview-richard-heinberg/>

James Howard Kunstler interview: “The old American dream is a nightmare”

<http://www.grist.org/sprawl/2011-03-09-james-howard-kunstler-we-need-a-new-american-dream>

Buy Nothing Day

<http://www.adbusters.org/campaigns/bnd>

Good Stuff? - a Behind-the-Scenes Guide to the Things We Buy

<http://www.worldwatch.org/bookstore/publication/good-stuff-behind-scenes-guide-things-we-buy>

Affluenza - a one-hour television special that explores the high social and environmental costs of materialism and overconsumption. Here you can learn more about the show, get an Affluenza diagnosis and check out resources for treatment.

<http://www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza/>

Hairy-nosed wombat explains what life on earth should be like

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5i714FbDJw>

The Solutions Journal (print and online)- Solutions for a sustainable and desirable future

<http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/>

Yes! Magazine - Powerful Ideas, Practical Actions (print and online)

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/>

Worldchanging.com - An online magazine covering tools, models, and ideas for building a better future.

<http://www.worldchanging.com/>

Gross Domestic Happiness

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Zqdqa4YNvI>

Curriculum

Facing the Future Curriculum - Buy, Use, Toss? A Closer Look at the Things We Buy (free download)

<http://facingthefuture.org/Curriculum/BuyUseToss/tabid/469/Default.aspx>

Lesson 1: Garbology

Lesson 2: Mapping the Impact – mapping and network our varied impacts on the planet

Lesson 3: Drilling down to Sustainability – exploring what Sustainability really means

Lesson 4: The Cost of Production

Lesson 5: On the Road to Retail – analyzing distribution and a product’s externalities

Lesson 6: Why Buy? – considering values and the effects of advertising

Lesson 7: Defining Happiness – what is the ‘good life’?

Lesson 8: It’s a Dirty Job – designing a waste management plan

Lesson 9: A System Redesign – brainstorming a more sustainable economy

Lesson 10: Analyzing the Message – critically analyzing the Story of Stuff

Understanding Sustainability: Two-Week Unit for Social Studies Grades 9-12 (Downloadable PDF)

<http://www.facingthefuture.org/Curriculum/UnderstandingSustainabilityGrades912/tabid/461/Default.aspx>

Understanding Sustainability is an activity-based curriculum unit that contains eight engaging and inspiring lessons that help students build the connections between economy, history, democracy, and sustainability. Each lesson in the two-week unit is aligned with National Council for the Social Studies curriculum standards for easy classroom integration.

Sightline Institute - Secret Lives of Everyday Things Curriculum Guide (2000)

<http://www.sightline.org/research/books/stuff>

This curriculum package was developed by NEW BC, a nonprofit organization based in Victoria, British Columbia, to accompany a 1997 book by Northwest Environment Watch (now Sightline Institute) called *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things*. An entire web of connections and impacts is revealed behind those everyday items we normally don’t even think about. In learning about their stuff, students will also explore new ways of looking at their world, making links between the environment, their society, and themselves.

The Story of Stuff Curriculum

The Story of Stuff explains how our ‘stuff’ is produced, distributed, disposed of, etc. Films explore cosmetics, electronics, bottled water and cap and trade. Additional information, downloads, activity guides, annotated scripts, FAQ’s, etc.

Discussion Guide: http://www.storyofstuff.com/pdfs/annie_leonard_discussion_guide.pdf

Teaching Tools: <http://www.storyofstuff.com/teach.php>

Resources: <http://www.storyofstuff.com/resources.php>

Downloads: Images, cartoons, etc - <http://storyofstuff.force.com/download>

Multimedia

The Sustainability Project / 7th Generation Initiative - an educational, non-profit organization that exists to collect, study, develop and teach ideas, information, technologies and customs that promote green values and lead toward a sustainable future.

<http://www.sustainwellbeing.net>

The Story of Stuff

<http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

Consumerism! The Musical - a short satire/song on excessive consumption

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGaOQKJik-s>

The Good Consumer - short film on expectations around consumption

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_ut93YYZu8&feature=related

The Rise of Collaborative Consumption

<http://www.thersa.org/events/vision/vision-videos/rachel-botsman>

RSA Animate: Crises of Capitalism

<http://comment.rsablogs.org.uk/2010/06/28/rsa-animate-crisis-capitalism/>

Biello, David. "Environmental Ills? It's Consumerism, Stupid." *Scientific American*, 2010.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/blog/post.cfm?id=environmental-ills-its-consumerism-2010-01-22>

Chris Jordan - his art explores the phenomenon of American consumerism.

<http://www.chrisjordan.com>

Edward Burtynsky - his original photography depicts global industrial landscapes.

<http://www.edwardburtynsky.com/>

Movies:

The Age of Stupid

<http://www.spannerfilms.net/films/ageofstupid>

The Corporation

<http://www.thecorporation.com/>

What Would Jesus Buy?

<http://www.revbilly.com/work/what-would-jesus-buy>

The Greed Game

<http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/super-rich-greed-game/>

The 11th Hour

<http://www.11thhouraction.com/seethefilm>

The Cost of a Coke

<http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/the-cost-of-a-coke/>

Money As Debt: International Bankers Own the World and This Is How

<http://freedocumentaries.org/film.php?id=214>

Online lessons :

Group Activities from the Story of Stuff

http://www.storyofstuff.com/pdfs/annie_leonard_group_activities.pdf

Facing the Future: Engaging Students Through Global Issues – Activity Based Lessons and Action Projects

<http://www.facingthefuture.org/Curriculum/BuyCurriculum/EngagingStudentsThroughGlobalIssues/tabid/456/Default.aspx>

Lesson 4: Making Global Connections – connect issues using everyday materials

Lesson 7: Systems Are Dynamic – explore dynamic systems through movement

Lesson 12: Watch Where You Step! - creating a web diagram of all the resources they use in their everyday lives and the mark or “footprint” this consumption leaves on the environment. .

Lesson 22: Livin’ the Good Life? -develop indicators to measure quality of life and conduct a survey of peers and adults to obtain data for their indicators.

Lesson 38: Metaphors for the Future – explores worldviews and mental models

Inquiry Topic – Environment

1. Introduction

The publication in 1962 of Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, is often cited as helping to launch the environmental movement in North America and around the world. The book was a wake-up call regarding the potentially grave consequences of uncontrolled and widespread pesticide use, not only for animals, but also for humans. A decade later, in 1972, the book *Limits to Growth* is published, which modeled the consequences of a rapidly growing world population and the extraction of finite natural resources, and has had a huge impact on how thought leaders and policy makers think about environmental issues. That same year, the United Nations hosted the Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, to discuss the state of the global environment, and to emphasize the need to protect renewable and non-renewable resources, as well as making the link between resource depletion and poverty. Finally, the widely-famous picture of the Earth from space was taken by the Apollo 17 spacecraft that year, and quickly became a symbol for "spaceship Earth", our fragile and finite home floating in a sea of blackness, making it obvious that what we do to our environment, we ultimately do to ourselves.

As environmental concerns such as air and water pollution and resource depletion grew as a result of increasing economic activity and a growing human population, so did the thinking about the anthropogenic effects on the natural environment in relation to other issues such as health and wellbeing, poverty, and social and economic development. To further explore these relationships, the United Nations convened the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1983, which led to the publication of *Our Common Future*, a seminal report which recognized the global nature of environmental problems and the necessity to achieve sustainable development, defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". At the core of the report is the concept of 'needs', particularly of the poor, for whom development must be a priority in order for them to have their needs met; there is also the concept of limitations imposed by technology and social organization.

Our Common Future laid the groundwork for the 1992 Earth Summit, officially known as the UN Conference on Environment and Development, which led to the adoption of *Agenda 21*, a comprehensive blueprint for action to combat poverty and address the root causes of environmental degradation, including climate change, desertification, the loss of biodiversity, and the sound management of toxic chemicals and hazardous waste. *Agenda 21* acknowledges that poverty and environmental degradation are closely interrelated, and that "while poverty results in certain kinds of environmental stress, the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable pattern of consumption and production, particularly in industrialized countries, which is a matter of grave concern, aggravating poverty and imbalances" (Ch. 4.3). Highlighting these unsustainable patterns of consumption and production was important, because it is a recognition that global climate change, increasing fresh water scarcity, the loss of biodiversity and animal habitat, the

loss of productive agricultural land, the irreversible destruction of ecosystems, and the increasing amounts of waste and toxins emitted are symptoms of humanity's unsustainable economic activity; as such, environmental issues (impacts) can only be addressed successfully over the longer term if the underlying patterns--including the behaviours and mindsets that give shape to these patterns--are addressed. The Earth Summit also led to the recognition of some key principles, including the precautionary principle (Principle 15): acting in such a way to avoid serious or irreversible harm in the face of risks to health or the environment; and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (Principle 7): both rich and poor countries need to implement sustainable development, but the developed countries acknowledge the particular responsibility that they bear in light of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.

Despite follow-up conferences and summits, including the UN Millennium Summit (2000) that led to the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, a global action plan to achieve the eight anti-poverty goals by their 2015 target, and the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) which examined progress since the Rio Conference, ecological trends have gotten worse, not better. Humanity's unsustainable use of the planet's finite renewable and non-renewable resources and destruction of "sinks" has today created a state of ecological overshoot at the global scale, in a context where nearly a third of humanity still lives in poverty and has yet to benefit from the promises of development and economic growth. As the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) concludes, "Human activity is putting such strain on the natural functions of Earth that the ability of the planet's ecosystems to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted." The Ecological Footprint, a metric that was developed in Canada the mid-1990s that allows us to calculate human pressure on the natural world, shows that if the entire world population were to live like the average Canadian, some three additional planets like Earth would be necessary to support these lifestyles.

The political challenge today is to implement the solutions necessary that are commensurate with the scale of the environmental problems humanity is facing, so that meeting the needs of the world's poor can be achieved within the ecological carrying capacity of the Earth. One overarching barrier to meaningful change is overcoming the notion that the environment is "out there", separate from human

Suggested Inquiry Topics

Healthy ecosystems, preservation of biodiversity; water management, quality; limited resources vs. unlimited development/growth; responsible resource extraction; energy efficiency and alternative energy sources; environmental and human disasters (prevention, response, individual and collective); environmental degradation and technological solutions; sustainable cities, design, urban planning; alternative transportation; standard of living vs quality of life; carrying capacity; energy consumption, carbon footprint, travel and transportation alternatives, alternative energy sources; stewardship and equitable sharing of natural resources; economic and environmental refugees; population increase, distribution, movement, migration, urbanization; politics and economics of climate change (e.g., impact of industrialization, responsibilities of developed/less developed economies, Kyoto Accord; Arctic sovereignty); Gaia hypothesis, systems thinking, interconnectedness of human and natural systems, living sustainably, etc.

beings and their economy, and that social and economic systems can exist independently from the environment. The transdisciplinary field of ecological economics addresses the interdependence and coevolution of human economic systems and natural systems, and frames the economy as a subsystem of the planetary ecological system. Such a lens underscores the importance of conserving natural resources, protecting ecosystems and minimizing pollution, as this is the foundation of both human economic activity and of health and wellbeing.

2. The Issues

The Environment: What is it? How does it function? What does it provide humans (and other species?)

- Ecosystem functioning and importance of biodiversity
- The Gaia Hypothesis - the earth as a system
- Services provided by the environment - water, air, food, etc.
- Aesthetic, cultural and spiritual values in nature
- Attitudes toward the environment - anthropocentrism versus “deep ecology” or other belief systems

Our Impact on the environment: How do we affect our environment? In Canada? Globally? What are our assumptions about our relationship with the environment?

- Drivers of resource use
- Impacts of economic growth as well as over consumption and under consumption on the environment
- Carbon footprints and ecological footprints
- Fossil fuel dependence, climate change - economics and politics preventing change
- Resource depletion - reliance and faith in technology, resource use in moderation
- Industrial agriculture
- Unsustainable consumption and production patterns, and waste
- Population growth
- Disconnect between the environment and our daily lives; cultural and social perspectives on the environment and our lifestyles

Environmental solutions and moving forward

- Low-carbon economy, reducing dependence on fossil fuels
- Sustainable cities and urban design
- Innovative, clean transportation
- Changing our production and consumption patterns, reducing waste throughout product lifecycle
- Renewable energies - solar, wind, geothermal, biofuels and other alternatives
- Local food and organic, sustainable agriculture
- Traditional environmental knowledge
- Reconnecting to the environment and what it provides

- Ways of engaging on environmental issues with different actors/stakeholders like government, business and civil society (including individuals, non-profit/non-governmental organizations and aboriginal communities)

3. Essential Questions

The Environment: What is it? How does it function? What does it provide humans?

- How does the environment play a part in our daily lives?
- What does the environment provide us with?
- Where do our resources and energy come from?
- How is our economy linked to the environment?
- How does an ecosystem function? What happens when we disturb a system?
- How do we view our environment? What are attitudes towards it? Does anyone 'own' the environment?
- Does our understanding of the environment affect how we use it?

Our Impact on the Environment: How do we affect our environment? In Canada? Globally? What are our assumptions about our relationship with the environment?

- How do our lifestyles affect our environment? How have our lifestyles and impacts on the environment changed over time?
- How might economic growth affect the environment? How might a growing global population affect the environment? How might technology affect the environment?
- What do we do in Canada that negatively affects our environment? How do our actions here affect the environment in other parts of the world?
- What is the relationship between wealth and environmental degradation? Poverty and environmental degradation?
- What do you feel Canada's responsibilities are to other countries? What are our responsibilities in relation to stopping climate change?
- What environmentally destructive patterns are we 'stuck' in, and why do we have trouble getting out of them? At home? In Canada? Globally?

Environmental solutions and moving forward

- How can we create a stronger understanding of the environment and its systems? How can we integrate knowledge of these systems into the way we live?
- What can we do personally do protect the environment?
- What are some of the solutions we can implement now to prevent further environmental damage?
- Are new technologies a solution to our environmental problems?
- How do we talk about environmental issues? Who are the principal decision makers that can affect change?

- How should government, business and citizens be working together to change the driving forces that create environmental problems?

4. Did you know?

On average, there are 27 oil spills every day somewhere in the waters of the world, and the Exxon Valdez spill doesn't even make the list of the top 30 all-time largest.

- **The National Academy of Sciences, 2009.**

In the past 50 years, humans have consumed more resources than in all previous history.

- **U.S. EPA, 2009. *Sustainable Materials Management: The Road Ahead.***

Half the world's tropical and temperate forests are now gone.

- **U.S. EPA, 2009. *Sustainable Materials Management: The Road Ahead.***

75% of marine fisheries are now overfished or fished to capacity.

- **U.S. EPA, 2009. *Sustainable Materials Management: The Road Ahead.***

Between 1950 and 2005, worldwide metals production grew sixfold, oil consumption eightfold, and natural gas consumption 14-fold. In total, 60 billion tons of resources are now extracted annually—about 50% more than just 30 years ago. Today the average European uses 43 kilograms of resources daily, and the average American uses 88 kilograms.

- **Worldwatch Institute, 2010. *State of the World 2010.***

Of all fresh water not locked up in ice caps or glaciers, some 20% is in areas too remote for humans to access and of the remaining 80% about three-quarters comes at the wrong time and place – in monsoons and floods – and is not always captured for use by people. The remainder is less than 0.08 of 1% of the total water on the planet. Expressed another way, if all the earth's water were stored in a 5-litre container, available fresh water would not quite fill a teaspoon

- **World Water Vision Report, World Water Council, 2000.**

In 2010, it was estimated that the human population used 150% of the resources generated by the Earth in one year.

- **Global Footprint Network, 2010.**

5. Thought Provoking Quotes

Let every individual and institution now think and act as a responsible trustee of Earth, seeking choices in ecology, economics and ethics that will provide a sustainable future, eliminate pollution, poverty and violence, awaken the wonder of life and foster peaceful progress in the human adventure.

- **John McConnell**, founder of International Earth Day

Industrialized, chemical-intensive agriculture and our globalized system of distributing food and fiber are literally destroying the earth, driving two billion farmers off the land, and producing a product which is increasingly contaminated. That's why the wave of the future is organic and sustainable, not GMO.

- **Ronnie Cummins**, [Organic Consumers Association](#)

We find ourselves ethically destitute just when, for the first time, we are faced with ultimacy, the irreversible closing down of the earth's functioning in its major life systems. Our ethical traditions know how to deal with suicide, homicide and even genocide, but these traditions collapse entirely when confronted with biocide, the killing of the life systems of the earth, and geocide, the devastation of the earth itself.

- **Father Thomas Berry, Catholic Priest and "Earth Scholar"**

Only when the last tree has been cut down,
Only when the last river has been poisoned,
Only when the last fish has been caught,
Only then will you find that money cannot be eaten.

- **Cree Indian Prophecy**

Climate change is a result of the greatest market failure the world has seen. The evidence on the seriousness of the risks from inaction or delayed action is now overwhelming. The problem of climate change involves a fundamental failure of markets: those who damage others by emitting greenhouse gases generally do not pay.

- **Nicholas Stern**, [British economist and academic](#)

We're in a giant car heading towards a brick wall and everyone's arguing over where they're going to sit.

- **David Suzuki, Canadian ecologist**

This is where everything begins and ends -- the natural world. You get out here and you see how everything hangs together. And you feel part of it -- you feel in touch with something sacred.

- **David Suzuki, Canadian ecologist, The Sacred Balance Series, 2003**

One reason many world leaders have difficulty responding to the environmental crisis is that the worst of the predicted effects seems decades away [while] millions of people are suffering in poverty right now. These are urgent problems. How do we at the same time acknowledge and confront a problem that seems to lie in our future?

- **Al Gore, Former U.S. Vice President, Earth in the Balance, 1993**

In Indian Agriculture, women use up to 150 different species of plants (which the biotech industry would call weeds) as medicine, food, or fodder. For the poorest, this biodiversity is the most important resource for survival. ... What is a weed for Monsanto is a medicinal plant or food for rural people.

- **Vandana Shiva, Indian philosopher and activist, Stolen Harvest, 2000**

All of humanity now has the option to "make it" successfully and sustainably, by virtue of our having minds, discovering principles and being able to employ these principles to do more with less.

- **Buckminster Fuller**

The most important fact about Spaceship Earth: an instruction manual didn't come with it.

- **Buckminster Fuller**

We are not going to be able to operate our Spaceship Earth successfully nor for much longer unless we see it as a whole spaceship and our fate as common. It has to be everybody or nobody.

- **Buckminster Fuller**

How can we make the world work for 100 percent of humanity in the shortest possible time through spontaneous cooperation without ecological damage or disadvantage to anyone?

- **Buckminster Fuller**

I learned very early and painfully that you have to decide at the outset whether you are trying to make money or to make sense, as they are mutually exclusive.

- **Buckminster Fuller**

The world will no longer be divided by the ideologies of 'left' and 'right,' but by those who accept ecological limits and those who don't.

- **Wolfgang Sachs**

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.

- **Albert Einstein**

Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.

- **Albert Einstein**

Business as usual, government as usual, and perhaps even protest as usual are not giving us the progress needed to achieve sustainable development. Let's see if we can't work together to find better paths forward.

- **Paul Hohnen, Royal Institute of International Affairs**

Change is disturbing when it is done to us, exhilarating when it is done by us.

- **Rosabeth Moss Kanter**

Mother Nature doesn't do bailouts... We have been getting rich by depleting all our natural stocks -- water, hydrocarbons, forests, rivers, fish and arable land -- and not by generating renewable flows...

- **Thomas Friedman, NYT (7 March 09)**

You don't see something until you have the right metaphor to let you perceive it.

- **Thomas Kuhn**

Development is getting better; growth is simply getting bigger.

- **Herman Daly**

We need new thinking, new leadership, and innovation to create a post-carbon economy. Our goal is not to undo industry, but to remake it into a force for sustainable wealth generation.

- **Richard Branson**

The most critical task facing humanity today is the creation of a shared vision of a sustainable and desirable society, one that can provide permanent prosperity within the biophysical constraints of the real world in a way that is fair and equitable to all of humanity, to other species, and to future generations.

- **Robert Costanza**

In the end, enjoying life's experiences is the only rational thing to do. You're sitting on a planet spinning around in the middle of absolutely nowhere. Go ahead, take a look at reality.

- **Michael A. Singer**

The question of reaching sustainability is not about if we will have enough energy, enough food, or other tangible resources...The question is: will there be enough leaders in time?

- **Dr. Karl-Henrik Robert**

The reason the economic language is so important is that if you change the language, you change the conversation and then you have a chance of determining the outcome.

- **David McWilliams**

You have to think of environmental stress as kind of an underlying pressure, an almost tectonic stress within the society that increases the likelihood of violence but doesn't necessarily cause it by itself. It

has to come with other things such as weak governments, availability of weapons, and also deep ethnic cleavages within a society that can make violence more likely. And then all of a sudden, you get a dramatic outbreak of riots in the streets.

- **Thomas Homer-Dixon, Canadian professor**

The big issue on the planet is not just the fact that we're going from 6.7 billion people today to 9.2 billion. It's the number of people living an American lifestyle, eating American-sized Big Macs, living in American-sized houses, driving American-sized cars, on American-sized highways.

- **Thomas Friedman, author of *Hot, Flat and Crowded***

6. Making a Difference

Organisations/campaigns and initiatives

Worldchanging

Worldchanging.com is a nonprofit media organization dedicated to solutions-based journalism about the planetary future. Since 2003, Worldchanging has brought together a global network of independent journalists, designers and thinkers to cover the world's most innovative solutions to the planet's problems, and inspire readers around the world with stories of new tools, models and ideas for building a bright green future. It brings awareness to issues like refugee aid, renewable energy and innovative solutions for improving building, transportation, communication and quality of life. Worldchanging connects readers ready to change the world with the latest ideas on how to do it.

<http://www.worldchanging.com/>

The Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF): For more than 45 years, WWF has been protecting the future of nature. The world's leading conservation organization, WWF works in 100 countries and is supported by close to 5 million members globally. WWF's unique way of working combines global reach with a foundation in science, involves action at every level from local to global, and ensures the delivery of innovative solutions that meet the needs of both people and nature.

<http://www.worldwildlife.org/who/index.htm>

Friends of the Earth International: FOEI is an extensive grassroots environmental network and campaigning on some of today's most urgent environmental and social issues. They work to challenge the current model of economic and corporate globalization, and promote solutions that will help to create environmentally sustainable and socially just societies. Their work covers issues such as climate justice and energies, food security and agriculture, forests and biodiversity, mining and water issues.

<http://www.foei.org/>

Greenpeace

Founded in Vancouver in 1971, Greenpeace today operates in more than 40 countries with headquarters in Amsterdam. They have more than 89,000 supporters in Canada and 2.9 million members worldwide. Greenpeace is an independent, campaigning organisation which uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems, and to force the solutions which are

essential to a green and peaceful future. Greenpeace's goal is to ensure the ability of the earth to nurture life in all its diversity. Therefore Greenpeace seeks to protect biodiversity in all its forms; prevent pollution and abuse of the earth's ocean, land, air and fresh water; end all nuclear threats and promote peace, global disarmament and non-violence.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLBDmhsDY3k>

<http://www.greenpeace.org/canada>

David Suzuki Foundation (and David himself)

A Canadian organization founded by award-winning scientist, environmentalist and broadcaster David Suzuki, the Foundation works with government, business and individuals to conserve our environment by providing science-based education, advocacy and policy work, and acts as a catalyst for necessary social change. The Foundations' vision is that within a generation, Canadians act on the understanding that we are all interconnected and interdependent with nature.

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/>

International Institute for Sustainable Development

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is a Canadian-based, public policy research institute that has a long history of conducting cutting-edge research into sustainable development. IISD's story began in 1988 when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced Canada's plans to establish an international institute dedicated to advancing sustainable development at the United Nations. Through its head office in Winnipeg, Manitoba and its branches in Ottawa, Ontario; New York, NY; and Geneva, Switzerland IISD applies human ingenuity to help improve the well being of the world's environment, economy and society.

<http://www.iisd.org/>

350.org

350.org is an international campaign that's building a movement to unite the world around solutions to the climate crisis, with the help of actors, artists, athletes, businesses and others. Their mission is to inspire the world to rise to the challenge of the climate crisis—to create a new sense of urgency and of possibility for the planet. Their focus is on reaching 350 parts per million CO₂. If we can't get below that, scientists say, the damage we're already seeing from global warming will continue and accelerate. But 350 is more than a number—it's a symbol of where we need to head as a planet.

<http://www.350.org/en>

TckTckTck

The TckTckTck initiative is the face of the Global Campaign for Climate Action (GCCA), an unprecedented global alliance of more than 270 non-profit organizations all over the world. Their shared mission is to mobilize civil society and galvanize public support to ensure a safe climate future for people and nature, to promote the low-carbon transition of our economies, and to accelerate the adaptation efforts in communities already affected by climate change. Their website provides regular updates on climate change news, and activities that citizens can participate in to make a difference.

<http://tcktcktck.org/>

Global Footprint Network

The Global Footprint Network vision is a world where everyone can live well, within the means of one planet. Their programs are designed to influence decision makers at all levels of society and to create a critical mass of powerful institutions using the Ecological Footprint measurement to put an end to our overuse of the environment, and get our economies back into balance. Their Ten-in-Ten campaign is engaging national governments to establish the Ecological Footprint as a prominent, globally accepted metric as widespread as the GDP.

<http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/>

Manitoba Eco-Network

The Manitoba Eco-Network promotes positive environmental action by connecting people and groups in our communities. We educate, we facilitate, we celebrate! Manitoba Eco-Network is an umbrella for environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGO's) throughout the province. We welcome individual, ENGO and associate members to our organization.

We are a registered charitable organization, and a regional affiliate of the Canadian Environmental Network, based in Ottawa.

<http://mbeconetwork.org/>

Manitoba Youth Environmental Network

Welcome to MBecoYouth.org! This website is a space for environmental youth in Manitoba to connect with one another, share ideas and resources, collaborate on projects and stay informed on relevant issues and opportunities. On this site you'll find a snapshot of the many environmental youth groups in Manitoba. Take a look and get inspired. If you belong to a group, make sure to add them to the list so that others in Manitoba can find out what you're up to. Our members are individual young people and supporters in Manitoba who sign up so they can add their group, post notices of events and take part in discussions. The more youth involved, the stronger our network, so once you've signed up, be sure to INVITE your friends to join

<http://www.mbecoyouth.org/>

Earth Day Canada

Earth Day Canada (EDC) is a national environmental communications organization mandated to improve the state of the environment by empowering Canadians to achieve local solutions. Since 1991, EDC has been coordinating Earth Day/Earth Month events, and creating successful community programs and award-winning artistic and media projects. Earth Day's mission is to improve the state of the environment by empowering and helping Canadians to take positive environmental action.

<http://www.earthday.ca/pub/>

World Environment Day

World Environment Day (WED) is an annual event that is aimed at being the biggest and most widely celebrated global day for positive environmental action. WED activities take place all year round but climax on 5 June every year, involving everyone from everywhere. WED celebration began in 1972 and

has grown to become the one of the main vehicles through which the UN stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and encourages political attention and action.

<http://www.unep.org/wed>

Canadian Society for Ecological Economics (CANSEE)

CANSEE is the Canadian chapter of ISEE, the International Society for Ecological Economics. ISEE endeavours to facilitate understanding between economists and ecologists in pursuit of a vision of a sustainable future, through trans-disciplinary research and dialogue. We recognize that economies of communities, regions, and countries are imbedded in and dependent upon nature's capacity to sustain ecological goods and services for present and future generations. The CANSEE mandate is to promote an understanding of this reality through research, education and practice, and to inform policy development and decision-making in government, communities, businesses and other organizations. We believe that a world governed and grounded in sustainability and ecological economic principles and practices will lead to a sustainable future, for the common good.

<http://www.cansee.org/>

Individuals of note

Simon Jackson

Guujaaw (Haida First Nation leader)

Betty Krawzyck

Elizabeth May

Paul Watson

Vandana Shiva

Tzeporah Berman

Waangari Maathai

James Lovelock

John Muir

David Suzuki

William Rees

Donella Meadows

Herman Daly

7. Resources

Print:

BC Ministry of Education: Environmental Learning and Experience:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/environment_ed/welcome.htm

BC Ministry of Education - Sustainability Course Content: Curriculum Framework

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/greenschools/sustcoursecontent.htm>

Worldwatch Institute - State of the World Reports:

- [*State of the World 2011: Innovations that Nourish the Planet*](#)

- *State of the World 2010: Transforming Cultures*
 - *State of the World 2009: Into a Warming World*
 - *State of the World 2007: Our Urban Future*
 - *State of the World 2004: The Consumer Society*
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On-Line:

For More Information

Centre for Ecoliteracy

<http://www.ecoliteracy.org/>

Green Street – A stewardship learning initiative

www.green-street.ca

The Solutions Journal (print and online)- Solutions for a sustainable and desirable future

<http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/>

Yes! Magazine - Powerful Ideas, Practical Actions (print and online)

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/>

Green Teacher Magazine

<http://www.greenteacher.com/>

Worldchanging.com - An online magazine covering tools, models, and ideas for building a better future.

<http://www.worldchanging.com/>

The Indigenous Environmental Network

<http://www.ienearth.org/cits.html>

Sustainable Table: Serving Up Healthy Food Choices

<http://www.sustainabletable.org/home.php>

Global Footprint Network

http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/2010_living_planet_report/

WWF's Living Planet Report

http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/all_publications/living_planet_report/

Millennium Ecosystems Assessment - various resources

<http://www.maweb.org/en/GraphicResources.aspx#>

Rees, William, "Achieving Sustainability: Reform or Transformation?"

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/40561980/Rees-William-Achieving-Sustainability-Reform-or-Transformation>

Individual and group action for the environment

Activity to explore the benefits of individual and collective action for environmental issues

<http://www.citizenshipteacher.co.uk/index.asp?CurrMenu=searchresults&tag=1223>

Time Magazine's The Global Warming Survival Guide - list of actions people can take

<http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/environment/>

Canadian Environmental Network International Year of Biodiversity Information Toolkit

<http://www.cen-rce.org/IYB2010/toolkit.html>

Curriculum

Learning for a Sustainable Future – <http://www.lsf-1st.ca/en>

UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development - <http://www.unesco.org/en/esd/>

Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future Report by UNESCO

<http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/>

The Curriculum Hub - Providing Sustainable Education for the next generation - Learning Modules on transportation alternatives and renewable energies

<http://curriculumhub.com/twiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome>

GreenLearning Canada - Lesson plans and activities to be integrated into secondary curriculums - applicable across Canada

www.greenlearning.ca

Teachers' Guide to High Quality Educational Materials on Climate Change and Global Warming

<http://hdgc.epp.cmu.edu/teachersguide/teachersguide.htm>

The Environment and Resource Management (CGR4M), Grade 12, University/College Preparation, The Ontario Curriculum

<http://www.curriculum.org/csc/library/profiles/12/html/CGR4MP.htm>

Ontario Ministry of Environment - Teacher Zone - Recommended Reading and Activities

http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/ezone/teachers/STDPROD_078071.html

Toward a Sustainable Agriculture – High School Curriculum

<http://www.cias.wisc.edu/curriculum/index.htm>

Citizenship Teacher UK: Sustainability and Environment Lesson Plans and Activities

<http://www.citizenshipteacher.co.uk/index.asp?CurrMenu=searchresults&tag=1246>

US Environmental Protection Agency: Teacher resources on sustainability

<http://www.epa.gov/greenkit/student.htm>

Greening Schools - Curriculum and Activities

http://www.greeningschools.org/resources/view_cat_teacher.cfm?id=113

North American Association for Environmental Education – Lesson Plans

<http://eelink.net/pages/Lesson+Plans+-+Grades+9-12>

YouThink – World Bank Learning Modules – Meet Severn Suzuki

<http://youthink.worldbank.org/4teachers/learning-module/meet-severn-suzuki>

Oxfam UK – Learning Modules and Activities on Water, Climate Change, Environment and Sustainability

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/>

Environment Canada – EC Educator Resources - Provides access to featured lesson plans and links

(divided for ages 6-12 and ages 13-18) - <http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/community/youth/ec-educators-e.html>

Includes lesson plans and info about free educational programming that may take place in your area –

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/education/default.asp?lang=En&n=D3D10112-1>

Online Video:

How can we make sustainability mainstream? A short film with Julia Butterfly Hill

<http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3221>

What is ecoliteracy? A short film with David Orr

<http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3262>

Free documentary films

<http://www.freedocumentaries.org/>

Big Picture TV - Short Films on Society, Business, Environment

<http://www.bigpicture.tv>

Post Carbon Institute's "The Ultimate Roller Coaster Ride: A Brief History of Fossil Fuels"

<http://www.postcarbon.org/blog-post/176080-the-ultimate-roller-coaster-ride-a>

Films:

Flow - For the Love of Water

<http://www.flowthefilm.com/>

Hoot

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0453494/>

Home

<http://www.homethemovie.org/>

An Inconvenient Truth

<http://www.climatecrisis.net/>

Darwin's Nightmare

<http://www.darwinsnightmare.com/>

The 11th Hour (w/Leonardo DiCaprio)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0492931/>

Food, Inc.

<http://www.foodincmovie.com/>

Fuel

<http://thefueelfilm.com/>

A Farm for the Future <http://www.grinningplanet.com/embed/sustainable-farming-video/a-farm-for-the-future.htm>

Ah...the Money, the Money, the Money. Video: logging vs. wilderness preservation
National Film Board - 2001.

Champions of the Land. Video: Development of conservationist movement
www.discoveryschool.com

Natural Connections. Four videos from Bullfrog Films:

- Introduction to Biodiversity. 1999. ISBN: 1-56029-842-1
- Forests, Biodiversity and You. 1999. ISBN: 1-56029-845-6
- Keystone Species. 1999. ISBN: 1-56029-844-8
- Biodiversity vs. Extinction. 1999. ISBN: 1-56029-846-4

Sustainable Development and the Ecosystem Approach.

2 video set. 1993. Produced by Environment Canada and distributed by the National Film Board.

Race to Save the Planet.

10-part video series 2002. Annenberg/CPB Channel. PBS Television

8. Terminology

Anthropogenic: Something caused by humans. E.g. anthropogenic climate change is a change in climate induced by human actions.

Anthropocentrism: making decisions or examining situations solely on the basis of their effect on human beings, to the exclusion of consideration of other living things. (BC Ministry of Education)

Biodiversity: A large number and wide range of species of animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms. Ecologically, wide biodiversity makes ecosystems stronger and more resilient to change.

Biofuel: A fuel produced from dry organic matter or combustible oils produced by plants. Examples of biofuel include alcohol (from fermented sugar), bio diesel from vegetable oil and wood.

Carbon Footprint: A representation of the effect human activities have on the climate in terms of the total amount of greenhouse gases they produce (measured in units of carbon dioxide).

Carbon Sequestration: The process of removing carbon from the atmosphere and depositing it in a reservoir.

Carrying Capacity: The total population an area is able to support given the quality of the natural environment and the prevailing technology available.

Climate Change: a regional change in temperature and weather patterns. Current science indicates a discernible link between climate change over the last century and human activity, specifically the burning of fossil fuels (NRDC)

Composting: A process of biologically degrading organic materials in the presence of oxygen, yielding carbon dioxide, heat and stabilised organic residues that may be used as a soil additive.

Deforestation: the conversion of forested land to other non-forested uses by the removal and destruction of trees and habitat. Deforestation is cited as one of the major contributors to global warming.

Ecosystem: An interconnected and symbiotic grouping of animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms.

Fossil Fuel: A fuel, such as coal, oil, and natural gas, produced by the decomposition of ancient (fossilized) plants and animals (NRDC)

Greenhouse Gases: Gases present in the atmosphere that trap heat from the sun and warm the earth. Such gases include carbon dioxide, methane, water vapour, nitrous oxide, ozone and halocarbons.

Ecological Footprint: The area of land, water, resources, required to support a defined economy or human population at a specified standard of living indefinitely, using prevailing technology.

Food miles: The number of miles food produce travels from 'plough to plate', that is from the place of production to consumption.

Industrial agriculture: A type of modern farming that refers to the industrialized production of livestock, poultry, fish and crops.

Life Cycle Assessment: A way of measuring a product's full environmental costs, from raw material to final disposal.

Natural Capital: Natural capital can be defined as all of the raw materials and natural cycles on Earth.

Non-Renewable Resource: A resource that is not replaced or only replaced very slowly by natural processes. Examples are precious metals.

Recycling: The series of activities, including collection, separation, and processing, by which materials are recovered from the waste stream for use as raw materials in the manufacture of new products.

Renewable Energy: Energy resources such as windpower and solar energy that can keep producing indefinitely without being depleted.

Renewable Resource: A resource that can be replenished at a rate equal to or greater than its rate of depletion. Examples of renewable resources include solar energy, trees, and soy-based products.

Sustainable Development: Has been defined as 'Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. ("Our Common Future," Report of World Commission on Environment and Development, commonly called the The Brundtland Report). It is a type of development that must account for not only economic benefits, but also environmental and social ones.

Monocropping: The practice of growing the same crop on the same land year after year.

Tar Sands: A type of unconventional petroleum deposit found in large quantities in Canada and Venezuela consisting of a mixture of sand, water, clay and an extremely viscous form of petroleum.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK): TEK is place-based knowledge of a particular ecosystem, developed by the people who have been living in it - this includes knowledge of plant uses, system resilience, etc.

Definitions from: NRDC, Education for Sustainable Development (<http://www.esd.rgs.org/>), Sustainability Victoria, The Global Footprint Network, Wikipedia

9. Other suggestions

Sustainable Development Timeline:

<http://www.iisd.org/rio+5/timeline/sdtimeline.htm>

Water Footprint Calculator:

<http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/freshwater/water-footprint-calculator/>

Ecological Footprint Calculator:

<http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/>

Canon Envirothon is an annual competition held for high school students throughout North America. Designed as a way to teach teens about environmental education, the best teams from over 47 states compete in five subjects: Wildlife, Forestry, Soil, Aquatics, and Current Environmental Issues. Winners receive college scholarships.

<http://www.envirothon.org/>

The International Education and Resource Network (IERN) enables young people to undertake projects designed to make a meaningful contribution to the health and welfare of the planet and its people.

<http://www.learn.org/>

Earth Force is young people changing their communities and caring for our environment now, while developing life-long habits of active citizenship and environmental stewardship.

<http://www.earthforce.org/>

The Sierra Youth Coalition is an organization run by youth for youth, serving as the youth arm of the Sierra Club of Canada. Their mission is to empower young people to become active community leaders who contribute to making Canada a better society

<http://www.syc-cjs.org/>

Area of Inquiry – Poverty, Wealth and Power

Introduction and key concepts

Wealth, power: these are two things most people aspire to. They are also the hallmarks of prosperous nations and successful corporate entities. **Wealth is – simply put – an accumulation of resources.** A wealthy (or rich) individual, community, or nation has more resources than a poor one. **Power is the ability to exert control over one’s environment** or other entities, which both constrains and enables. Both are intimately tied to societal structures.

In Canada, most people have wealth unimaginable to the rest of the world. Canada's net worth per capita came in at \$70,916 US in 2006, the same year the United Nations Millennium Development Goals were put in place to support basic needs for the poorest individuals in the world. In contrast, Ethiopia had per-capita wealth of \$193 and Congo had \$180. **1% of adults are estimated to hold 40% of world wealth.** The bulk of the wealthiest adults (almost 90 per cent) are concentrated in North America, Europe and Japan.

Almost 90% of the wealthiest adults are in North America, Europe and Japan.

The richest 10 per cent of adults in the world had \$61,000 US in assets. In contrast, globally, 50 per cent of adults owned barely one per cent of the household wealth. Having assets worth just above \$2,200 US would be enough to put an adult into the top half of the world's wealth distribution.¹

There is a widening gap between rich and poor; however this is not a simple question of extreme wealth in developed countries and extreme poverty in developing countries. Using data, European researcher Hans Rosling shows how **wealth and poverty have been shifting over time.** Countries defy our expectations, e.g. Botswana in Africa is richer than Albania. Also, now the countries with very unequally distributed incomes are mostly found in Latin America and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Incomes are often more evenly distributed in “the West,” Asia and the Middle East.² Further, the overall trend is positive. The UN estimates that between 1990 and 2002, the number of people living in extreme poverty fell by 130 million; **the average overall incomes around the world increased by 21 per cent.** And this translates into better quality of life, including healthier populations. For example, child mortality rates fell from 103 deaths per 1,000 live births to 88.

This last statistic shares something more about wealth (and its opposite, poverty). **Often defined in purely economic terms, wealth relates to one’s capacity to engage easily and productively in society.** This means having enough money to fulfill basic needs: food, adequate shelter, basic healthcare and education. Economic security is connected to employment. Having access to adequate paying and stable work makes for security. With this security come many privileges that people in developed countries sometimes take for granted, such as access to credit and loans. Without secure work, most banks and credit companies will not provide services.³

This same access to credit and loans can lead to the opposite of wealth: debt. The debt load at an individual and country level can be paralyzing and it impacts on decision-making, limiting choices. At an individual level, there is an interesting paradox around wealth for the North. If – as it often is - wealth is

¹ Excerpted from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/story/2006/12/05/globalwealth.html>

² Gapminder.org

³ Excerpted from <http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/poverty2000/work.asp>

defined as the value of physical and financial assets minus debts, then paradoxically, high income countries have some of the poorest people in the world in terms of household wealth because of their large debts, often for mortgages. In a report for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Steve Kerstetter finds that only those with above-average wealth have assets beyond housing that can be used in the event of a financial crisis.⁴

At a macro-level, debts and deficits are common. Many countries have crippling debts which impact on their ability to deliver, for example, social services. Even in Canada, cuts in social spending have been noted including to reduce the deficit. And these hit women and children the hardest. Globally, women comprise 70% of the world's poor (UNDP). In Canada, the poverty rate for women in general is 20%, for women of colour is 37% and for aboriginal women 43%. 41% of people using food banks are children, and there are over 1.2 million Canadian children living in poverty.⁵

The impact of debt is more pronounced in developing countries, where the sums borrowed from wealthier countries and international banks are staggering and often come with terms attached (e.g., structural adjustment). In Africa an estimated 500,000 more children died from the imposed restructuring of their countries' economies to ensure increased flows of money to external banks, while spending on health care declined by 50 per cent and on education by 25 per cent since structural adjustment programs began.⁶ **Challenges associated with debt and deficit spending are compounded by military spending.** The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute notes the increasing concentration of military expenditure, i.e. that a small number of countries spend the largest sums. This trend carries on into 2009 spending. For example, the 15 countries with the highest spending account for over 82% of the total. The USA is responsible for 46.5 per cent of the world total, distantly followed by the China (6.6% of world share), France (4.2%), UK (3.8%), and Russia (3.5%).

Debt relief is starting to come for the most heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC). In July 2005, Governments agreed to 100% cancellation of multilateral debts owed by HIPC countries to the World Bank, IMF and African Development Bank. Debt relief must be tied to increased aid. However, despite the fact that donor nations' wealth increased from the 1990s to 2009, the level of aid (tied to that growth) did not increase. In the 1990s, it actually fell. Aid for the poorest countries remained at a steady dollar amount in this period. Government donations are complemented by private aid or donations through the charity of individual people and organizations. Americans privately give at least \$34 billion overseas — more than twice the US official foreign aid of \$15 billion at that time - although this includes about half that amount in remittances (OECD 2010; Globalissues.org; Aid and Comfort).

What makes some people poor and others rich? It is common sense that wealth comes from hard work, from acquiring certain skill sets. Although there is truth to this, there are structural reasons why some people get richer and others do not. At a social level, there are insiders, boys' clubs, Ivy League, "elite." And it is also true that success breeds success. Although one learns more to be about the structure wherein one is operating, which can lead to a better or more nuanced strategy – paired with hard work. As Albert Einstein says, "You have to learn the rules of the game. And then you have to play better than anyone else." In terms of the link between wealth and success, it is important to note that as one accrues wealth, it becomes easier to access credit to invest in start up costs. This means that one is able

⁴ Steve Kerstetter, *Rags and Riches: Wealth Inequality in Canada*, 2002, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, http://www.policy.ca/policy-directory/Detailed/Rags-and-Riches_-Wealth-Inequality-in-Canada-1233.html

⁵ Centre for Social Justice.

⁶ John McMurtry, *Unequal Freedoms; The Global Market as an Ethical System* (Kumarian Press, 1998)

to leverage more highly for higher (potential) success. Business loans, micro-credit and angel investors are antidotes to this liquidity challenge but they will not replace the ability for those with significant assets to make their own decisions. At a higher scale, this can apply to provinces, parts of a population (e.g., aboriginal peoples), countries or regions. Ready access to resources (including an educated and healthy population) strengthens the ability of these actors to be free in their decision-making.

A framework that is useful in understanding how resources (wealth) can lead to enhanced autonomy and increased well-being is the capability approach. Through it, Nobel prize winner Amartya Sen argues for **five components in assessing capability**:

1. The importance of real freedoms in the assessment of a person's advantage
2. Individual differences in the ability to transform resources into valuable activities
3. The multi-variate nature of activities giving rise to happiness
4. A balance of materialistic and non-materialistic factors in evaluating human welfare
5. Concern for the distribution of opportunities within society⁷

His fifth point about a balance of materialistic and non-materialistic factors is a critical one. Being wealthy is not the same as well-being, unless wealth is defined in terms beyond the purely economic. Indeed, "one of the most significant observations is that in industrialised nations, average happiness has remained virtually static since the second world war, despite a considerable rise in average income...These days even hard-headed economists tend to agree that the key to making people happier is to shift from pure economic growth - which fuels a consumerist culture that is antithetical to happiness - to personal growth."⁸

What structures set the parameters for wealth accrual and resource flow? At its heart, it is the modern system of free trade, free enterprise and market-based economies which emerged around 200 years ago, as one of the main engines of development for the Industrial Revolution.⁹ The economies of less-developed countries rely mostly on agriculture and related subsistence activities – people need food if nothing else. **As incomes increase, economies becomes industrialized, followed by growth in the service sector, where industry and agriculture shrink.** This economic development pathway has traditionally led to better living conditions and a healthier population – this was the case for many Asian countries in the 50s and 60s. A recent World Bank report confirms, "Most countries...start out with a relatively high dependence on natural capital and those that progress most successfully manage their assets for the long term and reinvest in human and social capital as well as in building strong institutions and systems of governance."¹⁰ However, development is not guaranteed – many nations have faced setbacks to development, such as economic recessions, famines, and medical epidemics like HIV/AIDS. Some countries have leapfrogged over this development path and became wealthy by exporting their oil resources: oil continues to be a major source of wealth and power in today's economy.

The global trade and financial system affects every one of us, even if we don't see it functioning on a daily basis. The goods we consume, the state of our corporations, our national security and our wealth as a country are all tied up in global wealth structures and our relationships with other countries. International trade decisions are often made in favour of countries that can do things cheaply and

⁷ Amartya K. Sen (1985). *Commodities and Capabilities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁸ Michael Bond, The Pursuit of Happiness, New Scientist vol 180 issue 2415 - 04 October 2003, page 40, http://matus1976.com/eudaemonists/articles%20essays/persuiofhappiness_1.htm

⁹ Globalissues.org

¹⁰ <http://data.worldbank.org/news/the-changing-wealth-of-nations>

quickly, which increase the profits of corporate shareholders but not necessarily the producers of the raw materials. Governments set up trade rules, but they are strongly influenced by corporations. This is in great part due to the increasing economic power of corporations. **Of the 100 largest economies in the world, 51 are corporations**; only 49 are countries (based on a comparison of corporate sales and country GDPs).¹¹

International trade and globalization can bring great benefits to many people, but the financial and power systems that currently exist can also perpetuate poverty and harm our environment. For example, under the current free market system, farmers get barely 5 percent of the profit from chocolate, whereas trading organizations and the chocolate industry receive about 70 percent. This means that **producers get only 5 cents from every dollar spent on chocolate**, while the companies get 70 cents - 14 times more!¹² Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen says the problem is not free trade, but the inequality of global power. He strongly welcomes the rise of the non-governmental movement, which combines with media coverage to produce the beginning of some "countervailing power" to the larger corporations and the traditional policies of "first world" governments.

The rise of non-governmental organizations and the increasing democratization of communication streams through new media are two trends that seek to redress power imbalances. What are some of the other ways in which we can have an impact, as individual citizens and within broader society? For this, we need to look at sources of power (see box, section 2) which include knowledge and moral persuasion. The fair trade movement and eco-labelling help redress some of the transparency issues around how goods are produced and bring wealth into local communities. We can increase nonmaterial wealth in our societies. Happiness research suggests, "a government's priorities should be to reduce unemployment and job insecurity, improve mental healthcare, encourage direct democracy (studies in Switzerland, where referendums are common, suggest people are happier the more they feel in control of their lives), and - perhaps most controversially - discourage the pursuit of status."¹³

Corporations can become engines for good. Economist Paul Hawken argues that "if they [companies] believe they are in business to serve people, to help solve problems, to use and employ the ingenuity of their workers to improve the lives of people around them by learning from the nature that gives us life, we have a chance." How can they do this? First, their products can fuel wealth acquisition, e.g., the use of cell phones to better track current market prices in developing countries. They can also redress power imbalances, e.g., the internet has made it easier for individuals to seek and apply for jobs in their area of interest. **Corporations are the most likely source of new design ideas as we transform towards a sustainable society:** we will need new ways of doing so many things and the engineers, software technicians, bankers of the future will help us discover what these might be. These ideas need to go beyond the end of the pipe, argues *Cradle-to-Cradle* author and architect William McDonough: "You don't filter smokestacks or water. Instead, you put the filter in your head and design the problem out of existence." Corporations will also fuel innovation in the non-profit and research sector through their philanthropy and partnership.

Redressing structural imbalances in terms of access to capital, we can start to look at strengthening the social system. Micro-lending has been a powerful way to increase wealth in otherwise asset-poor

¹¹ Top 200; The Rise of Global Corporate Power.

¹² European Fair Trade Association

¹³ Michael Bond, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, New Scientist vol. 180 issue 2415 - 04 October 2003, page 40, http://matus1976.com/eudaemonists/articles%20essays/persuiofhappiness_1.htm

populations. This is true in Canada as well as other parts of the world. Kiva.org and the Grameen Bank are two notable examples. As individuals, we can explore our own assets and how these are invested. Ethical investment has increased in the past decade, including through momentum from the Principles for Responsible Investment. We can also decide to be active shareholders in companies we have stocks in. As Canadians, we can be conscious consumers, using our wealth to support products and practices we believe in through fair trade and buying durable goods.

At a values level, there is a deeper challenge. **The question of wealth and power is tied to rethinking what it means to build an economy on a planet with very real ecological limits.** In terms of wealth, this next generation is going to be tasked with redefining wealth in broader than economic terms, which rely on other measures of well-being and strengthen our human capabilities.

Exploring the issues

The topic of poverty, wealth and power has many dimensions which will be of interest to students. The systemic nature of this area of inquiry is reflected in the following suggested issues.

Poverty and Wealth:

Concentration of wealth

Widening gap between rich/poor

Debt

Ethical investment

Micro-lending

Underground economies

Farmers' markets

Non-material wealth (e.g., happiness indicators, wellbeing)

Ethical investment

Economic disparities within and between countries

Power:

Labour movement

Military industrial complex

Organized crime

Economic sanctions

Status

International arms sales and marketing

Global domination (G8, G20, World Bank, OECD)

[Refer to *Sources of Power* table]

Corporations:

Multinational and transnational corporations

Regulation

Erosion of government authority

Corporate Social Responsibility

Transformative technologies

Cooperatives

Social enterprises

Globalization and Trade:

Fair trade

Aid levels

What are different sources of power and how do they play out?

Power may be held through:

- *Delegated authority (for example in the democratic process)*
- *Social class (material wealth can equal power)*
- *Personal or group charisma*
- *Ascribed power (acting on perceived or assumed abilities, whether these bear testing or not)*
- *Expertise or ability (e.g., the power of medicine to bring about health; "in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king" – Erasmus)*
- *Persuasion (direct, indirect, or subliminal)*
- *Knowledge (granted or withheld, shared or kept secret)*
- *Celebrity*
- *Force (violence, military might, coercion)*
- *Moral persuasion (including religion)*
- *Operation of group dynamics (such as public relations)*
- *Social influence of tradition (compare ascribed power)*
- *In relationships; domination/submissiveness¹*

Essential Questions

The questions that underpin this topic are diverse. They bring students to a place of inquiry around their lives and the structures (rules, norms, power relations) that influence their world. By exploring these questions and the resources outlined in this paper, teachers will help spark awareness and creativity in their students. Students will pose additional questions and start looking at alternatives to the status quo at levels from the individual to the global.

Wealth and Poverty:

What measurable inequalities remain in Canada? Are these avoidable?

Are there structural conditions that limit access to resources or limit capabilities?

How does the social safety net (e.g., health care) protect Canadians from the worst impacts of structural inequities?

How have debts affected the quality of life for people in less-developed countries?

How has modern technology increased education and wealth gaps? How has it narrowed them?

How has life changed in Canada over the last century?

How much resource use per capita is sufficient for a good life? How do we ensure that everyone gets that amount? How large a population can be supported at that standard of consumption without sacrificing carrying capacity and future life?¹⁴

Why is life expectancy generally higher in “wealthier” countries?

Why are some countries very wealthy and others so poor? Are all the poor countries concentrated in the same part of the world? Is “West” always “rich”, or “South” always poor?

Power:

What kind of inequities are there between provinces in Canada? How are they managed?

Who benefits most from ‘free trade’? Who benefits least?

Who makes decisions related to our lives? What structures exist that keep things the way they are?

What structures hold the potential for change?

How do partnerships help open up new possibilities?

Corporations:

How have ‘corporations’ changed over the last century? How has this affected the way people do business in Canada? Globally? e.g. how has the business of agriculture changed?

How is it that corporations can own part of the natural world, e.g., patenting of seeds?

In what ways do individuals help create a “race to the bottom” for corporations, related to labour and environmental standards? In what ways do individuals support stronger standards related to the environment or social issues? Nationally? Globally?

Globalization and Trade:

How are we connected to other places on the planet?

How can globalization increase people’s well being? How might it affect people negatively? Why is there this backlash against globalization, which is supposed to generate peace and prosperity?

What are the impacts of globalization on the environment?

What are some alternatives to the current models of globalization and ‘free markets’? How might ‘fair trade’ be better than ‘free trade’?

¹⁴ Herman Daly, economist.

Did you know? Some facts about poverty, wealth and power

The Top 200 corporations' combined sales are 18 times the size of the combined annual income of the 1.2 billion people (24 percent of the total world population) living in "severe" poverty. (Top 200; The Rise of Global Corporate Power)

The Business Council on National Issues is the senior voice in the business community - composed of 150 chief executive officers (CEO's) from the major, transnational corporations with over \$1.6 trillion in assets, \$500 billion in revenues, and 1 1/2 million employees. The leading business association in Canada, it orchestrates a consensus among other business organizations. They have advised on e.g., the Canada-US free trade agreement, and NAFTA, and the adoption of the Goods and Services tax. (www.socialjustice.org)

While the sales of the Top 200 [corporations] are the equivalent of 27.5 percent of world economic activity, they employ only 0.78 percent of the world's workforce. (Top 200; The Rise of Global Corporate Power)

Of the U.S. corporations on the list, 44 did not pay the full standard 35 percent federal corporate tax rate during the period 1996-1998. Seven of the firms actually paid less than zero in federal income taxes in 1998 (because of rebates). These include: Texaco, Chevron, PepsiCo, Enron, Worldcom, McKesson and the world's biggest corporation - General Motors. (Top 200; The Rise of Global Corporate Power)

Global research revealed that organizations with high engagement generated total shareholder returns that were 29% above average. Those with moderate engagement produced returns that were only 1% above average. Organizations with low engagement had total shareholder returns that were 60% below average. The 2010 Best Employers in Canada study indicated that perceptions of corporate social responsibility appear as one of the top five threats to employee engagement more than a third of the time. At a minimum, organizations need to sustain their current CSR commitments or risk a decline in employee engagement. (Hewitt Associates; www.cbsr.ca)

Close to one third of the wealth of low-income countries comes from their "natural capital" which includes forests, protected areas, agricultural lands, energy and minerals, according to a new World Bank book launched on January 20, 2011. Countries that manage these natural assets carefully are able to move up the development ladder – investing more and more in manufactured capital, infrastructure and "intangible capital" like human skills and education, strong institutions, innovation and new technologies. (The Changing Wealth of Nations: Measuring Sustainable Development for the New Millennium released, January 24, 2011, The World Bank)

In 2005, the wealthiest 20% of the world accounted for 76.6% of total private consumption. The poorest fifth just 1.5%: Women comprise 70% of the world's poor. (Information Kit, Decade for the Eradication of Poverty 1997-2006, UNDP)

Although fair trade coffee constitutes only 2 percent of the world's coffee supply, consumer demand for fair trade coffee has grown in the United States -- from 1.9 million pounds imported in 1999 to 6.7 million pounds imported in 2001. (PBS Frontline World)

Each year, around \$45-60 billion worth of arms sales are agreed. Most of these sales (something like

75%) are to developing countries. (Global Issues)

The United Nations was set up to be preserve peace through international cooperation and collective security. Yet, the UN's entire budget is just a tiny fraction of the world's military expenditure, approximately 1.8%. (Global Issues)

Aided by the drivers of globalisation, cheap transport and new communications technologies, world trade has grown at almost 10% per year, pausing only during the depth of recession in 2009. However, the share of this trade enjoyed by the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in 2008 was less than 1%, of which half was oil. There are 49 countries in this category, comprising 12% of the world's population. (Global Issues)

Aboriginal peoples in urban areas are more than twice as likely to live in poverty as non-Aboriginal people. (Urban Poverty in Canada: A Statistical Profile, CCSD, 2000)

In Manitoba, Aboriginal people have much lower incomes than the population as a whole. Among those aged 15 and older, the median annual income in 2005 was \$15,246 among Aboriginals, but \$24,194 for the overall provincial population. (CCSD, 2009)

Some Thought Provoking Quotes

"Debt is an efficient tool. It ensures access to other peoples' raw materials and infrastructure on the cheapest possible terms. Dozens of countries must compete for shrinking export markets and can export only a limited range of products because of Northern protectionism and their lack of cash to invest in diversification. Market saturation ensues, reducing exporters' income to a bare minimum while the North enjoys huge savings. The International Monetary Fund cannot seem to understand that investing in ... [a] healthy, well-fed, literate population ... is the most intelligent economic choice a country can make."

— Susan George, *A Fate Worse Than Debt*, New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990, pp. 143, 187, 235

"The big issue on the planet is not just the fact that we're going from 6.7 billion people today to 9.2 billion. It's the number of people living an American lifestyle, eating American-sized Big Macs, living in American-sized houses, driving American-sized cars, on American-sized highways."

— Thomas Friedman, author of *Hot, Flat and Crowded*

"The future belongs to those who understand that doing more with less is compassionate, prosperous, and enduring, and thus more intelligent, even competitive."

— Paul Hawken

"Business is the economic engine of our Western culture, and if it could be transformed to truly serve nature as well as ourselves, it could become essential to our rescue."

— Karl-Henrik Robert, Founder of *The Natural Step*

"Competition between companies involved in manufacturing in developing countries is often ruthless. We are seeing what Korten described as "a race to the bottom. With each passing day it becomes more difficult to obtain contracts from one of the mega-retailers without hiring child labor, cheating workers on overtime pay, imposing merciless quotas, and operating unsafe practices."

— John Madeley, *Big Business Poor Peoples; The Impact of Transnational Corporations on the World's Poor* (Zed Books, 1999), p. 103

“Few propositions command as much consensus among professional economists as that open world trade increases economic growth and raises living standards.”

— Professor N. Gregory Mankiw, Harvard Economics, *Outsourcing Redux*, 2006-05-07.

“This neoclassical trade theory focuses on one dimension, i.e., the price at which a commodity can be delivered and is extremely narrow in cutting off a large number of other considerations about impacts on employment in different parts of the world, about environmental impacts and on culture.”

— Professor Peter Soderbaum, Malardalen University, Sweden, *Post-Autistic Economics Review*, Sept 2007

“When individuals join in a cooperative venture, the power generated far exceeds what they could have accomplished acting individually.”

— R. Buckminster Fuller

“Starvation is the characteristic of some people not having enough food to eat. It is not the characteristic of there being not enough food to eat.”

— Amartya Sen, Nobel Prize winner

“Poverty has traditionally been measured as a lack of income but this is far too narrow a definition. Human poverty is a concept that captures the many dimensions of poverty that exist in both poor and rich countries—it is the denial of choices and opportunities for living a life one has reason to value. The HPI-1—human poverty index for developing countries—measures human deprivations in the same three aspects of human development as the HDI (longevity, knowledge and a decent standard of living).”

— United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals: A Compact among Nations to End Human Poverty* (New York: UNDP, 2003), <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2003>.

“It has been suggested that economic growth solves many problems, but what we’ve found is that if you just make everyone wealthier, especially among the wealthy countries and wealthy people, people are going to have higher standards of living but not necessarily feel better about life. Everyone’s deriving their happiness in part relative to material standards set by others. Measuring progress solely by growth in GDP is an outmoded idea because we have better ways to measure our social objectives...We know that people in Maritime provinces are happier than people in bigger provinces with bigger cities. Policy-wise, it doesn’t mean we should all move to small towns or to the Maritimes, it means there are all sorts of policy interventions we can think about.”

— Chris Barrington-Leigh, *Canada Leads in Happiness Research*, *The National Post* (Nov 28, 2010)

“Whiteness forms an unmarked category not commonly visible to the powerful, as they often fall within this category. The unmarked category becomes the norm, with the other categories relegated to deviant status. Social groups can apply this view of power to race, gender, and disability without modification: the able body is the neutral body; the man is the normal status.”

— Wikipedia, discussion of “unmarked categories”

The types of power are "Coercive" (based on force), "Compensatory" (through the use of various resources) or "Conditioned" (the result of persuasion). Their sources are "Personality" (individuals),

"Property" (their material resources) and "Organizational" (whoever sits at the top of an organisational power structure).

— JK Galbraith, *An Anatomy of Power*

“Even though...[United Nations] targets and agendas have been set, year after year almost all rich nations have constantly failed to reach their agreed obligations of the 0.7% target [of aid to developing countries]. Instead of 0.7%, the amount of aid has been around 0.2 to 0.4%, some \$100 billion short.”

— Globalissues.org

"The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."

— Mahatma Gandhi

“Mother Nature doesn't do bailouts... We have been getting rich by depleting all our natural stocks -- water, hydrocarbons, forests, rivers, fish and arable land -- and not by generating renewable flows...”

— Thomas Friedman, *New York Times* (7 March 09)

“Alvin Toffler’s *Powershift* argues that the three main kinds of power are violence, wealth, and knowledge with other kinds of power being variations of these three (typically knowledge). Toffler argues that the very nature of power is currently shifting. Throughout history, power has often shifted from one group to another; however, at this time, the dominant form of power is changing. During the Industrial Revolution, power shifted from a nobility acting primarily through violence to industrialists and financiers acting through wealth. Of course, the nobility used wealth just as the industrial elite used violence, but the dominant form of power shifted from violence to wealth. Today, a Third Wave of shifting power is taking place with wealth being overtaken by knowledge.”

— Summary of Alvin Toffler’s *Powershift* (Wikipedia)

Making a Difference

The Fairtrade Foundation is the independent non-profit organisation that licenses use of the FAIRTRADE Mark on products in the UK in accordance with internationally agreed Fairtrade standards. Fairtrade seeks to transform trading structures and practices in favour of the poor and disadvantaged. By facilitating trading partnerships based on equity and transparency, Fairtrade contributes to sustainable development for marginalised producers, workers and their communities. Through demonstration of alternatives to conventional trade and other forms of advocacy, the Fairtrade movement empowers citizens to campaign for an international trade system based on justice and fairness.

<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

The Yes Men are “two guys who just can’t take no for an answer”. They pose as top executives of corporations they hate. Armed with nothing but thrift-store suits, the Yes Men lie their way into business conferences and parody their corporate targets in ever more extreme ways - basically doing everything that they can to wake up their audiences to the danger of letting greed run our world. Their targets are leaders and big corporations who put profits ahead of everything else. They have made films and written books about their exploits, which can be found at: <http://theyesmen.org/>

Joseph Stiglitz is a professor of economics at Columbia University, and a former World Bank Chief Economist and Senior Vice-President (1997-2000). Since leaving the World Bank, he has written numerous books on the failings of globalization. His work has helped explain the circumstances in which

markets do not work well, and how selective government intervention can improve their performance.
<http://www2.gsb.columbia.edu/faculty/jstiglitz/bio.cfm>

Jubilee Debt Campaign demands an end to poor countries paying money to the rich world. They ask for 100% cancellation of “unpayable and unjust” poor country debts.
<http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/?lid=6319>

Bhutan: “In 1972, concerned about the problems afflicting other developing countries that focused only on economic growth, Bhutan's newly crowned leader, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, decided to make his nation's priority not its G.D.P. but its G.N.H., or gross national happiness. Bhutan, the king said, needed to ensure that prosperity was shared across society and that it was balanced against preserving cultural traditions, protecting the environment and maintaining a responsive government. The king, now 49, has been instituting policies aimed at accomplishing these goals. Now Bhutan's example, while still a work in progress, is serving as a catalyst for far broader discussions of national well-being.”
http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/04/science/04happ.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all
http://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2009/10/09/growth_and_happiness_in_bhutan_97248.html

Kiva is a non-profit organization with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. Leveraging the internet and a worldwide network of microfinance institutions, Kiva lets individuals lend as little as \$25 to help create opportunity around the world. 100% of every dollar you lend on Kiva goes directly towards funding loans; Kiva does not take a cut. Providing safe, affordable access to capital to those in need helps people create better lives for themselves and their families.
<http://www.kiva.org/>

Ashoka strives to shape a global, entrepreneurial, competitive ‘citizen sector’, one that allows social entrepreneurs to thrive and enables the world’s citizens to think and act as changemakers. They work to support social entrepreneurs as individuals and in collaboration .
<http://www.ashoka.org/>

Amartya Sen, Nobel Prize Winner for Economics

Originally from India, Sen has been instrumental in the fields of economics and social justice. Arguing that simple measures of GNP were not enough to assess the standard of living, he helped to create the United Nations' Human Development Index, which has become the most authoritative international source of welfare comparisons between countries.

Muhammed Yunus, "Banker to the Poor"

Professor Muhammad Yunus established the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh in 1983, fueled by the belief that credit is a fundamental human right. His objective was to help poor people escape from poverty by providing loans on terms suitable to them and by teaching them a few sound financial principles so they could help themselves. Replicas of the Grameen Bank model operate in more than 100 countries worldwide. http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2006/yunus-bio.html

Hans Rosling started Gapminder, a non-profit based in Stockholm. Their goal is to replace “devastating myths with a fact-based world view.” Their method is to make data easy to understand. Their website is at <http://www.gapminder.org/> and they have a special teacher’s segment at: <http://www.gapminder.org/for-teachers/>

Glossary

Absolute poverty - When we say that someone lives in “absolute poverty” we mean that she cannot afford the basic necessities of life, such as food. A person living on less than \$1.25 per day is usually assumed to live in absolute poverty. Hence, \$1.25 is referred to as the “(absolute) poverty line”: it is the minimum income you must have in order to not be considered poor. “Absolute” refers to the fact that the definition, in principle, should be the same in all countries and at all times: it is a person who cannot afford to buy sufficient food (to simplify it a bit). Absolute poverty is, in principle, non-existent in the richest countries.¹⁵

Capitalism: a way of organizing an economy so that the things that are used to make and transport products (such as land, oil, factories, ships, etc.) are privately owned by individual people and companies rather than by the government. Capitalism is the dominant economic structure around the world, particularly in developed countries.

Co-op: a business or organization that is owned and operated by the people who work there or the people who use its services (e.g. a farmers co-op).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is defined as the way companies integrate social, environmental, and economic concerns into their values and operations in a transparent and accountable manner.

Debt, in this context, is the money that less-developed countries owe to developed countries and international lending agencies. The money borrowed is intended to help the developing countries get out of poverty, but this doesn’t always happen - countries remain poor, and cannot pay back their loans.

Economic Imperialism: Also known as neocolonialism, the economic dominance of one country or group (e.g., a corporation) over another country or region, resulting in the dominant power having increased control over natural resources, labour forces, and the marketplace.

Economic Liberalization: Refers to a policy of reduced government regulations and restrictions in the economy, resulting in increased participation of private commercial enterprises. Examples of economic liberalization policies and practices include free trade, privatization, outsourcing, and the establishment of economic protection zones.

Ethical investment (Socially Responsible Investing): investment in companies with socially desirable characteristics such as fair employment practices or environmentally sound operational policies

Foreign Aid: Money that is given to developing countries (usually by developed countries or charities) to help them overcome poverty, feed their people, prevent illness, etc

Free Trade: system of trade policy for goods and services across national borders without duties or other restrictions like tariffs and quotas from the respective governments. It includes the free movement of capital and labour within and between countries.

Fair Trade: a movement advocating for trade that contributes to environmental protection, fair wages,

¹⁵ Gapminder.org

and good working conditions. Fair trade coffee is widely available across Canada and other fairly-traded products are becoming more available.

Globalization: the name given to a process in which trade, money, people, and information travel across international borders with increasing frequency and ease. The word is used most often in reference to economic globalization, the process of the merging of world markets.

International Monetary Fund - established after World War II and made up of 182 member countries. The IMF makes loans to very poor countries and often demands significant changes be made to their economy and government before the loan is given.

Millennium Development Goals: The UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals concluded with the adoption of a global action plan to achieve the eight anti-poverty goals by their 2015 target date and the announcement of major new commitments for women's and children's health and other initiatives against poverty, hunger and disease.

Multinational/Transnational Corporation (TNC): huge multinational businesses whose annual sales are greater than the yearly gross domestic product (GDP) of most countries. A rough estimate suggests that the 300 largest TNCs own or control at least one-quarter of the entire world's productive assets.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): an elite group of highly industrialized, wealthy nations.

Outsourcing: to send away part of a company's work to be done by people outside the company - work is usually outsourced to developing countries where labour costs and materials are cheaper

Patent: a legal document which gives all the rights of using a particular product to one legal entity (a person or corporation). If a product has been patented, e.g. a seed or a drug, only the company with the patent can legally reproduce and sell it.

Relative poverty is when a person cannot afford a living standard that is reasonable, relative to what is considered normal in the country. Accordingly, the defining minimum income for relative poverty varies between countries. If the average income is higher in the country, then the relative poverty line is higher. Often the relative poverty line is set to half the median income in a country.¹⁶

World Bank Group is comprised of five agencies that make loans or guarantee credit to 177 member countries. Its stated aim is to help countries reduce poverty by making long-term loans to governments for large-scale projects such as dams or pipelines, or to back economic reform programmes. However, World Bank loans have often had very negative effects on countries putting them in situations of precarious debt and setting conditions on which countries can receive loans, conditions which often have a devastating impact on the lives of citizens.

World Trade Organization: an institution to govern international trade and a body of law which administers legal agreements on how countries should conduct international trade. The WTO mandate includes services, investment, and intellectual property as well as sustainable development.

¹⁶ Gapminder.org

Sources: Miriam Webster, the WTO, Encarta, Women and the Economy (UNPAC), Wikipedia, Gapminder

9. Other suggestions

Activity - **The Hidden Costs of Banana Production and Trade**: a Global Education Curriculum Developed for the Ontario Grade 12 Canadian and World Issues Course - Growing bananas, occurring as it does in Southern countries with unstable or dictatorial political situations, may have devastating effects on the land and workers.

<http://www.global-ed.org/bananas-unpeeled.pdf>

Activity - **Teacher's guide: Quiz about Global Development**: A teacher's guide to a quiz about global development. The quiz uses Gapminder World. All you'll need is the Internet, a computer and a projector. Gapminder.org

Activity - **Gapminder's card game**: This card sorting game challenges students' perceptions about the contemporary world. Gapminder.org

Activity - **Looking behind the logo**: An assembly plan, introducing the life of a sweatshop worker in a sportswear factory. For ages 13-17.

Activity - **The Coffee Chain Game**: Profits from the coffee industry and unfairly distributed – explore why with these materials for students ages 13+

Activity - **The Chocolate Trade Game**: Trace the journey of a cocoa bean from tree to chocolate bar.

Activity - **I was hungry**: Questions based on a poem by an anonymous inhabitant of a poor country; contrasts are drawn between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' of the world, and what some people are doing without so that others can live in luxury.

Activity - **Debt Diamond** - Suggested age range: 13 - 16 years. A discussion activity helping pupils to define and question their own and each other's views on debts in principle and in practice, in relation to the third world debt crisis.

Activity - **Debt Busters** - Suggested age range: 12 - 16 years. A game dealing with realistic scenarios involving poor country debt and the World Bank.

Activity - **Forgive us our Debts** - Suggested age range: 12 - 16 years. A group discussion activity leading pupils to debate the moral and practical answers to the debt crisis from different perspectives from within both debtor and creditor countries.

Activity - **The Trading Game**: Explores how international trade maintains the gap between rich and poor countries, Youth group (11-18).

http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/TeachersResources/secondary/trading_game.aspx

Activity - **Is What's Good for the GDP Good for Me?**

Increases understanding of what the GDP measures, and critically evaluates whether it contributes to a

healthy sustainable society

[http://humaneeducation.org/sections/view/cultural issues activities](http://humaneeducation.org/sections/view/cultural_issues_activities)

Suggested Resources

Print

Bowes, J. (Ed.) *The Fair Trade Revolution* (Pluto Press, 2011)
Dube, E. *Globalization: Who Is In Charge of Our Future?* Instructional Resource
<http://www.bctf.bc.ca/lessonaid>
Friedman, Thomas. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Farar, Straus, Giroux, 1999).
Helliwell, John: *Globalization and Well-being* (UBC Press, 2002)
Klein, Naomi: *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (2007) and *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (2000).
Litvinoff, M., and Madeley, J. *50 Reasons to Buy Fair Trade* (Pluto Press, 2007).
Perkins, John: *Confessions of an Economic Hitman* (Berrett-Koehler Publishers 2004).
Rivoli, Pietra: *The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade* (Wiley, 2009)
Sforza, Michelle, and Wallach, Lori. *Whose Trade Organization: Corporate Globalization and the Erosion of Democracy*. (Washington, DC: Public Citizen, 1999).
Stiglitz, Joseph: *Globalization and it's Discontents* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2003)

On-Line

For more information:

Article - The Hidden Shame of the Global Industrial Economy, Worldwatch Institute:
<http://www.worldwatch.org/node/543>

Article - Fair Trade: CIDA Youth Zone: <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/FRA-821143027-PQ4>

Article - 21st Century Aid: Stats and Report - Oxfam Canada
<http://www.oxfam.ca/node/1987>

Article - Trade and Investment - ONE International
<http://www.one.org/c/international/issue/953/>

Resource - [Fairtrade Activities Secondary](#): Lots of ideas for introducing Fairtrade to your secondary school.

Curriculum:

Lesson - A National Geographic Lesson Plan on **Globalization**. Is globalization positive, negative, or both? How does it affect indigenous cultures?
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/10/g912/globalization.html>

Lesson - Inside the Global Economy - 13 one hour videos and accompanying books/lesson plans providing a multinational perspective on how the global economy and market affect individuals, businesses, and industry. The series features 26 case studies, with follow-up analysis, from more than 20

countries.

<http://www.learner.org/resources/series86.html>

Lesson - **Trade My Way**: A Resource Tool Kit for understanding the global trade market, by VIDEA:

<http://www.vidya.ca/flash/index.htm>

Lesson - Money in the Pocket: A Look at **Global Trade and Aid** - VIDEA

<http://www.vidya.ca/global/money/>

Lesson - Make Poverty History - Explore **World Trade, Aid, Debt**, and how individual and collective action can make a difference

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/make_poverty_history/?23

Lesson - **Why are some countries very wealthy and others so poor?** In this lesson you will learn about the factors that contribute to a nation's standard of living

<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lid=113&type=student>

Lesson - The Effects of Globalization (Lesson Plan): **How does the entry of the WTO affect countries** economies and well-being? PBS Education

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/lessons/the-effects-of-globalization/introduction/190/>

Lesson - **Why is globalization so controversial?** Included in this interactive are two videos on globalization, which are based on one of the lessons from the *Focus: Globalization* publication. This provides an overview of the major issues that have been raised in the debate over globalization. The introduction video is of an educator describing how she teaches the lesson in her classroom. The classroom video is a demonstration of the lesson being taught to students.

<http://www.econedlink.org/interactives/index.php?iid=120&type=student>

Lesson - [Milking It - Small Farmers and International Trade](#) - Suitable for pupils aged 13-16, this free resource explores the work of two dairy farmers, one in Jamaica and one in Wales. It shows how world trade practices, rules and institutions impact on their lives. Milking It features on-line and off-line activities illustrating the economic, political and moral issues involved, attractive photos and illustrations.

Lesson - [Stop the Traffik Secondary School Lessons](#): Lessons exploring the issues of trafficking.

Lesson - [Where does all our chocolate come from?](#) Exploring the issues of trafficking in the chocolate industry.

Lesson - [Poverty](#): A lesson plan exploring concepts of freedom and opportunity as well as economic poverty.

Lesson - [Fairtrade in Pakistan](#): Lesson on Fairtrade.

Lesson - [Child Labour in India](#): Lesson plan.

Resource - [Trade Classroom Pack](#)

Lesson - **Fairtrade and Ethical Spending**: Introduces fair trade by looking at specific consumer choices close to home! Cases of economic exploitation around the world point up the ethical dimensions of consumer spending.

Multimedia

Swap Your Choc - A video about **Fairtrade Chocolate**

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qV4ywE_gPSU&feature=player_embedded

Luckiest Nut in the World

<http://www.globalissues.org/video/778/luckiest-nut-in-the-world>

Supported by a mixture of animation and music, an animated American peanut takes the viewer through the stories of the cashew, brazil and ground nuts — all of whom suffer as world trade is liberalized. But it is a different story in America — where the peanut is protected by tariffs and heavily subsidized, and worth over four billion dollars a year to the American economy. The film helps people to understand how the pressure to embrace “free market” economics, with its promise of a wealthy, abundant market place has actually driven many countries further into poverty.

The difference between **Free Trade and Fair trade**. A short film with Paul Rice

<http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3308>

Life and Debt - A film about the effects of **foreign aid in Jamaica**

<http://www.lifeanddebt.org/>

The Corporation - A Canadian film about the rise in power and global domination of the corporate institution, and how this affects society

http://www.thecorporation.com/index.cfm?page_id=2

Iraq for Sale: The **War Profiteers** - A film about the American war machine

www.bravenewfilms.org

What does economic globalization entail? A short film with Helen Norberg-Hodge

<http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3133>

Together TV: Video stories from people in the **developing world in their own words**.

Why should we worry about **poor countries' debts**? A short film with Susan George

<http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3371>

Lesson - **Human Development Trends**: A thematic package of animations for your lecture. Click and choose which of the 9 sections you will use. (Available in many languages.) Gapminder.org

What does an **'economic hit-man'** do? A short film with John Perkins

<http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3291>

Are **corporations too powerful**? A short film with John Cavanagh

<http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3237>

Joseph Stiglitz - Liberalization & **Subsidized Agriculture** vs. Poor Farmers (The End of Poverty - Film)
<http://www.globalissues.org/video/782/stiglitz-agriculture>

Area of Inquiry – Social Justice and Human Rights

Introduction and key concepts

Social justice is a virtue or societal value which guides human interaction and, in particular, the fair distribution of society's benefits, advantages and assets, not just by law and in the courts but in all aspects of society. Social justice is about securing rights but also about our responsibilities and their consequences. It focuses our attention on the relative position of different members of our society and on examining the disparities that might exist, the root causes of these disparities, and opportunities for eliminating them. Understanding disparities requires us to adopt a systemic analysis of our social context – the institutions (e.g., legal, education, media), infrastructures, and belief systems that shape this distribution. Social justice is linked to the concept of *equity* and the just treatment of individuals in their own social context to meet their needs and reach their potential. It is also linked to the notion of *equality* as a socially just society is a 'society for all' which provides an equal basis of opportunity. Fundamentally, it asks us to pose the question, is society just?

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.
- Martin Luther King Jr.

The BC Ministry of Education defines social justice as “the full participation and inclusion of all people in society, together with the promotion and protection of their legal, civil and human rights. The aim of social justice – to achieve a just and equitable society where all share in the prosperity of that just society – is pursued by individuals and groups through collaborative social action.” Categories of historically marginalized or disenfranchised populations include:

- Men without property
- Women
- Indigenous peoples
- Youth and children
- Homosexuals, Transsexuals, Transgenders, Bisexuals
- Racial groups
- Ethnic and cultural groups
- People with disabilities
- Peoples with 'lower' social status / class
- Religious groups
- Other species / ecosystems
- Future generations

Social justice is a broadly held value and is seen as an important goal of social progress. Canada as a society has adopted national and global commitments to social justice, including ratifying the *United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Canadians have accepted a vision of social justice that supports the principle that all peoples, without discrimination, have the right to live in

dignity and freedom and to enjoy the fruits of social progress and should, on their part, contribute to it (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1969).

Social justice is linked to *social action* because the advancement of social justice is a political issue. Social action includes all actions taken by individuals or groups to achieve a political or social change, or to support a cause. The concept of social justice is a contested terrain because different individuals and social groups hold different perceptions of what is considered a 'just society' and who should be allocated or distributed which societal benefits. For example, definitions of a 'just' and 'fair' differ across political ideologies, as does the level of appropriate legislation and policies. The political Left places emphasis on securing certain basic needs for all through a social welfare state, and this can extend to income redistribution through taxation and government programs including equal opportunity programs, anti-discrimination laws and equitable access to food, clean water, education, and medical care. The Right political stance embraces a just society but often contends that government programs cannot be the solution and, in fact, can aggravate injustice. Although there are common religious tenets about the dignity of individuals and ethics of responsibility and obligation to others, the interpretation and application of these principles and values can differ widely. The question remains, who is responsible for ensuring social justice?

Historically, social justice has been hard fought and won. These struggles have been focused on supporting a marginalized community to achieve a level of access and recognition of their fundamental rights. Activists can adopt a wide range of tactics in achieving their goals, ranging from lobbying, press declarations, and referenda to demonstrations, petitions, occupations, rallies, marches, hunger strikes, blockades, boycotts, and sit-ins. Social action among some activists can extend to violent actions such as property damage, murder, arson or theft, or can remain relatively peaceful and legal, such as adopting a commitment to nonviolence. Social justice has been extended to an ever growing part of the population, often as a result of activism

Suggested issues:

Universal human rights (ethnicity, race, culture, class, religion, sexual orientation, gender, abilities); economic disparities, poverty, quality of life; access to food, water, health care, education, employment; child exploitation, human trafficking and slave labour; action for human rights; forms of activism (the power of one, resistance to oppression, civil disobedience, conscientious objectors, boycotts, protests, grass-roots movements, local community groups; citizen action groups, social networking and mobilization for change, popular culture and the arts); labour movement and unions, strikes, non-violent revolution; indigenous rights and self-determination; crime and punishment, penal systems and economic implications, ethical treatment of prisoners; environmentalism and environmental organizations; ethical treatment and human use of animals; eco-activism; NGOs and international collaboration, role of governments in international aid (e.g. CIDA, disaster relief, the economics of aid)

of various forms. However, the call for social justice continues today, because there is an ongoing need to build on past achievements and to extend rights and freedoms to yet other marginalized groups and communities.

Social justice and human rights : exploring the issues

Social Justice : meaning and implications

- Universal human rights (ethnicity, race, culture, class, religion, sexual orientation, gender, abilities)
- Status of women and children internationally : exploitation and trafficking
- Poverty and the perpetuation of global economic inequality
- Access to basic needs/quality of life - food, water, education, health care/sanitation
- Environmental justice - how the disadvantaged are affected by environmental degradation
- Human Rights in Canada - immigration, racism, stereotyping, discrimination

Indigenous Rights

- legacy of oppression and colonialism
- the treaty process and Aboriginal self-government
- access to services, access and recognition in education
- poverty and employment rates
- The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

Social Action, activism and change

- Forms of social action - non-violence, grassroots movements, new media and technologies
- Historical progress - civil rights movement, international recognition of human rights
- International aid for development - NGOs and international collaboration, government cooperation, Canadian International Development Agency, International financial institutions

Essential Questions

Social justice is an evolving concept that has real world implications as to who has advantages, assets and benefits in society. By asking questions about social justice, students are exercising their rights as citizens to be part of this discussion, and they can choose to take action as citizens so as to ensure fairness to those whom they deem to be marginalized or disadvantaged. As Plato writes, “justice in the life and conduct of the State is possible only as first it resides in the hearts and souls of the citizens.”

Essential questions related to social justice and human rights issues include:

- *How should we define social justice?*
- *What gains have we made for social justice? What social injustice exists?*
- *What are some of the causes of social injustice? In our communities? In Manitoba? In Canada? Globally?*
- *What are the relationships between poverty and injustice?*

- *What are the consequences of social injustice?*
- *How do you think we could work towards creating social justice? Individually? As a community, here and globally?*
- *What is the role of the international community in creating and maintaining social justice?*
- *How are indigenous peoples represented in contemporary society?*
- *How do historical relations, including colonialism, affect current indigenous relationships? In Canada? Globally?*
- *Which government and social structures discriminate against and which empower indigenous peoples? In Canada? Globally?*
- *What is social action? What is activism? Who is an 'activist'?*
- *What tactics, frames are activists using both here and internationally?*
- *How has social action changed over time?*
- *What kind of tactics would you use to create positive change for an issue you care about?*

Did You Know...? Some facts about social justice and human rights

UN World Day of Social Justice is on February 20th each year, and it is aimed at contributing to the efforts of the international community in poverty eradication, the promotion of full employment and decent work, gender equity and access to social well-being and justice for all. Participating governments have made a commitment to the creation of a framework for action to promote social justice at national, regional and international levels. They recognize that economic growth should promote equity and social justice and that “a society for all” must be based on social justice and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/intldays/IntlJustice/>

Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names.

- The State of the World's Children, 1999, UNICEF

In more than 70 countries, same-sex relationships are illegal. In nine countries, the penalty is death. -

Jessica Williams, *50 Facts That Should Change the World*

In Canada and Manitoba

A recent Statistics Canada report projects that about one-third of the population will be members of a visible minority by 2031, with whites becoming the minority in Toronto and Vancouver over the next few decades.

In 2001 only 8% of the 25-34 age group of Aboriginal peoples had a completed university degree, while 28% of all Canadians did.

In 1996, 68% of Aboriginal youth were in school compared to 83% of non-Aboriginal youth.

Only 24% of Aboriginal peoples under 25 were able to converse in an Aboriginal language (www.ccsd.ca/pr/2003/aboriginal.htm).

There were 55,755 Aboriginal people in Winnipeg in 2001, up from 45,750 in 1996, and comprising 8% of Winnipeg's total population - Winnipeg has the highest aboriginal population of any Canadian city. (Aboriginal Children in Poverty in Urban Communities: Social exclusion and the growing racialization of poverty in Canada, CCSD 2003)

Some Thought Provoking Quotes

"In the absence of justice, what is sovereignty but organized robbery?" - St. Augustine

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people..." - *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948

"The (60th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights) campaign reminds us that in a world still reeling from the horrors of the Second World War, the Declaration was the first global statement of what we now take for granted -- the inherent dignity and equality of all human beings." - United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 2008

"Concerned that indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests; Recognizing the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous peoples which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources" - *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2007

"We are not myths of the past, ruins in the jungle, or zoos. We are people and we want to be respected, not to be victims of intolerance and racism." - Rigoberta Menchu, Guatemala Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 1992

“The mobilization which is urgently needed to effect the transition within two or three years from a culture of war to a culture of peace demands co-operation from everyone. In order to change, the world needs everyone.” - Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO

“When I gave food to the poor, they called me a saint. When I asked why the poor were hungry, they called me a Communist.” -Dom Helder Camara, Brazilian Roman Catholic archbishop, author, and Nobel Peace Prize nominee.

“Charity depends on the vicissitudes of whim and personal wealth; justice depends on commitment instead of circumstance. Faith-based charity provides crumbs from the table; faith-based justice offers a place at the table.” - Bill Moyers

“If we were to wake up some morning and find that everyone was the same race, creed and color, we would find some other cause for prejudice by noon.” -George Aiken

“Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison...the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honor.” – *Civil Disobedience*, Henry David Thoreau

Further justice quotes:

<http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/language/quotes.html>

<http://www.betterworld.net/quotes/justice-quotes.htm>

Making a Difference

Amnesty International

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 3 million supporters, members and activists in more than 150 countries and territories who campaign to end grave abuses of human rights. Their vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. They are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

<http://www.amnesty.org/>

Amnesty International est un mouvement mondial regroupant plus de 3 millions de sympathisants, de membres et de militants qui défendent les droits humains et luttent contre les atteintes à ces droits dans plus de 150 pays et territoires. La vision d'Amnesty International est celle d'un monde où tout être humain peut se prévaloir de tous les droits énoncés dans la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme et dans d'autres textes internationaux.

<http://www.amnesty.org/fr>

<http://www.amnesty.ca/>

Amnesty's work on Business and Human Rights:

http://www.amnesty.ca/themes/business_engagement.php

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/business/shareholder.html>

Oxfam

Oxfam Canada works with over 100 partner organizations in developing countries; tackling the root causes of poverty and inequity and helping people to create self-reliant and sustainable communities.

<http://www.oxfam.ca>

The Centre for Social Justice

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) conducts research, education and advocacy on issues of equality and democracy.

<http://www.socialjustice.org/>

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives is an independent, non-partisan research institute concerned with issues of social, economic and environmental justice. Founded in 1980, the CCPA is one of Canada's leading progressive voices in public policy debates.

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca>

Avaaz.org

Avaaz is a global web movement to bring people-powered politics to decision-making everywhere.

<http://www.avaaz.org>

<http://www.avaaz.org/fr/>

Canadian Museum for Human Rights

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights is envisioned to be a national and international destination, a centre of learning where Canadians and people from around the world can engage in discussion and commit to taking action against hate and oppression.

<http://www.humanrightsmuseum.ca/home>

<http://museedesdroitsdelapersonne.ca/accueil>

Gladys Redak - Walk4Justice – Champion for Change

<http://walk4justice.piczo.com/?g=51080137&cr=6&linkvar=000044>

<http://www.cbc.ca/change/2010/10/gladys-radek.html>

Craig and Marc Kielburger - Free the Children, Me to We

<http://www.freethechildren.com/>

Through leadership training at home and community development projects abroad, Free The Children empowers youth everywhere to make a difference.

Me to We is a social enterprise with a mission. Me to We transforms consumers into world changers, one transaction at a time. Me to We sells socially conscious and environmentally friendly clothes, books and music – as well as life-changing experiences. We also provide inspiring speakers, leadership training and transformative travel experiences.

Other Champions of Justice:

Nelson Mandela

Dalai Llama

June Jordan

Majora Carter

Mohammed Yunus

Glossary

Aboriginal: refers to all indigenous peoples in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

Advocacy: seeking to influence public policy to redress social injustice for those who are marginalized or otherwise oppressed.

Civil Disobedience – an active, open, deliberate, and frequently nonviolent refusal to obey a certain law or demand of government or power holders, often in light of the perceived lack of validity of the law / demand because it was not created in a democratic way.

Colonialism: attitudes, policies, and practices that result in the exploitation or subjugation of a nation or group by a larger or more powerful group. Often leaves a legacy and is reflected in current policies and practices.

Diversity: the ways in which people within a society differ from each other. Some of these differences may be visible (e.g., race, ethnicity, sex, age, ability), while others are less visible (e.g., culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background).

Discrimination: occurs when a person—on the basis of characteristics such as her or his sex, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, or physical or mental ability—suffers disadvantages or is denied opportunities available to other members of society.

Empowerment: addressing or eliminating legal and institutional injustices that have excluded individuals or groups from full participation in society.

Entitlement: the conscious or unconscious belief held by individuals or groups that they are deserving of particular benefits not equally enjoyed by other sectors of society.

Equality: a social justice value, achieved when all groups and individuals receive the same treatment, have the same opportunities, and are able to attain the same achievements, and where any differences are not based on prejudice or forms of oppression.

Equity: equality while accommodating individual and group differences. An example of equality would be basketball team tryouts where boys and girls compete against each other; a parallel example of equity would be separate teams for girls and boys basketball, each receiving equal financial and time resources.

Globalization: refers to the increasing connectivity among countries and regions, including the integration and interdependence within economic, social, technological, cultural, political, and environmental spheres. Globalization is the outcome of many factors such as advanced technology, communication, and economic structures

Grassroots: a political movement that is driven, often in spontaneous and natural ways, by people at a local or community level as distinguished from the centers of political activity.

Human rights: the provision for every individual to be able to live, work, and learn in an environment free from fear, discrimination, and harassment. Human rights emphasize the rights of the individual, the responsibilities of employers and service providers, and the need for preventive action. Human rights policy goals generally focus on prevention, remedial action, and correction, and are guided by the principle that human rights violations are harmful to an entire organization and community, and not simply to those who are oppressed.

Oppression: the injustices and disadvantages some individuals or groups suffer as a consequence of intentional or unintentional practices within a society.

Stereotype: preconceived notions about a person or group of people based on their characteristics such as their sex, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, or physical or mental ability

Suggested Resources

Print

Kuklin, Susan: **Irrepressible Spirit: Conversations with Human Rights Activists** (Putnam, 1996)
Kielburger, Craig and Mark: **Me to We; Finding Meaning in a Material World** (Fireside, 2008)
Filipovic, Zlata: **A Child's Life in Wartime Sarejevo** (Penguin, 2006)
The Freedom Writers and Erin Gruwell: **The Freedom Writer's Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them** (Broadway, 1999)
McCormick, Patricia: **Sold** (Hyperion Book, 2008)
Murray, Anne Firth: **From Outrage to Courage: Women Taking Action for Health and Justice** (Common Courage Press, 2008)

Online

[The Manitoba Human Rights Commission](#)

[Canada's International Human Rights Policy](#)

[TakingITGlobal](#): A platform for resources and discussion on global issues, including human rights

BC Teacher's Federation Resources and Links for Social Justice:

<http://bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=6270>

United Nations Cyber School Bus - Human Rights Curriculum

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/index.asp>

CIDA's Teacher Zone: Classroom Activities for secondary school students, focused on global citizenship and the Millennium Development Goals

<http://w3.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/JUD-12815027-RGC>

The Diversity Toolkit: online resources, selected readings, and other tools to challenge racism and promote the acceptance of differences within schools and communities:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/dtoolkit/resources>

Youth for Human Rights: Videos, music, and free curriculum:

<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/>

United Nations Association in Canada - Action Guide: A Human Rights Resource Manual for Secondary Schools (English and French available):

[http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=104&language_id=1&erc_doc_id=5582&category_id=6
&category_type=3&group=](http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=104&language_id=1&erc_doc_id=5582&category_id=6&category_type=3&group=)

Oxfam Water Week - UK-based resources on exploring water issues in a context of poverty and social justice: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/Waterweek/TeachersResources/Learn>

Aboriginal Canada Portal; Resources for Teachers -

<http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/eng/ao31045.html>

Aboriginal Elders - A Grade 12 Unit Lesson Plan (UBC)

Teaching Social Justice:

Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, Pat Griffin (Eds). (1997) **Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice** (Routledge, 1997)

Catherine Marshall, Maricela Oliva: **Leadership for Social Justice: Making Revolutions in Education (2nd Edition)**, (Prentice Hall, 2009)

Maurianne Adams, [Warren J. Blumenfeld](#), Carmelita (Rosie) Castañeda and Heather W. Hackman: **Readings for Diversity and Social Justice: An Anthology on Racism, Antisemitism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Ableism, and Classism**, (Routledge, 2000)

William Ayers, Therese Quinn, David Stovall (Eds). **Handbook of Social Justice in Education**

(Routledge, 2008)

Jessica Singer, **Stirring Up Justice: Writing and Reading to Change the World.** (Pearson Education, 2006)
Teaching for Social Justice (The Office of Professional Continuing Education, University of British Columbia and The Program for Quality Teaching, British Columbia Teachers' Federation, Vancouver, Canada, 2004)

http://psas.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Professional_Development/Teacher_Research/Social_Justice/index.html

Social Justice 12 Curriculum for British Columbia-<http://bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=17508>

Other suggestions:

Trading Trainers

A game exploring labour and wage inequality, particularly focused on poor working conditions in Latin America

<http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/TeachersResources/secondary/trainers.aspx>

Impact of collective actions

Students plan collective action campaigns on issues they care about

<http://www.citizenshipteacher.co.uk/index.asp?CurrMenu=searchresults&tag=1227>

Active Citizenship: Pressure Groups

Exploring the power of pressure groups and discussing positive changes that could be made to society

<http://www.citizenshipteacher.co.uk/index.asp?CurrMenu=searchresults&tag=1227>

Social Movements

A summary of what works.

<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook/movements.pdf>

A history of rights in Canada

<http://www.historyofrights.com/ngo.html>

The Change Agency

The Change Agency is a collective of activist educators and researchers. They work with community organizers to help people clarify their purpose and develop plans that will enable them to be heard, focus their energies and achieve social and environmental justice outcomes.

http://www.thechangeagency.org/01_cms/details.asp?ID=4

We Left Because We Had To

Helps students understand what the experience of a refugee might be like, and asks them to dispel some of the myths surrounding refugees

<http://www.citizenshipteacher.co.uk/index.asp?CurrMenu=searchresults&tag=1226>

The Facebook Generation

Students explore the meanings of 'identity, cohesion and community', and how modern technologies affect these definitions and community relationships

<http://www.citizenshipteacher.co.uk/index.asp?CurrMenu=searchresults&tag=1226>

Living Experiment – Day of Social Justice – Social Psychology Network

Students spend a day focused on addressing injustice

<http://www.socialpsychology.org/teach/daysj.htm>

Social Justice 12 Curriculum, BC Ministry of Education:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/program_delivery/ss.htm

Multimedia:

Majora Carter: Greening the Ghetto TEDTalk:

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/majora_carter_s_tale_of_urban_renewal.html

Modern Slavery Backgrounder¹

Introduction

“Slavery” is a word often associated with the past, evoking unimaginable injustices we would rather forget. However, there remain a staggering 27 million slaves in the world today, a number equivalent to the entire population of Canada in the early 1990s. While slavery in the traditional sense has been based on the ownership of one individual over another, modern slavery takes this form and many others. Modern slavery includes human trafficking, debt bondage, forced labour, hereditary slavery, child soldiery, servile forced marriage, and forced prostitution. Modern slavery is not limited to any single race, gender or age group. It affects men, women and children in Canada, and around the world.

“None of us is truly free while others remain enslaved.”

Archbishop
Desmond Tutu

During the four centuries of trans-Atlantic slavery, the slave trade was in fact legal. Today slavery has been officially abolished globally. In theory, every state is responsible for ensuring that slavery is not occurring within its borders. In reality, however, it is one of the most severe abuses of human rights today. Slavery, although an illegal activity, remains an ever-present, albeit concealed, aspect of contemporary life. There are reported cases of slavery in every country in the world today with (at the time of writing) two exceptions: Iceland and Greenland.

Slavery is a global criminal industry, netting about \$32 billion annually. This amount is approaching and set to surpass illegal drug trafficking and illicit arms sales. While most nations have anti-human trafficking laws, enforcement is erratic, or non-existent. Public awareness of modern slavery is low, enabling traffickers to lure thousands of victims into forced labour situations. Canada, for instance, is a source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking.

Slavery is increasingly present worldwide, in both large urban areas and smaller cities and towns, including within North America. According to the United Nations, an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked internationally each year, with as many as 17,500 people trafficked into the United States alone. Most modern-day slaves are women and children.

Modern slavery differs from chattel slavery of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in three important respects:

- The cost of slaves has fallen to a historical low. Slaves can now be acquired in some parts of the world for as little as five dollars.

¹ Manitoba Education gratefully acknowledges the *Alliance Against Modern Slavery* for creating this Backgrounder for use in the Manitoba Grade 12 Global Issues course. See the final page of this Backgrounder for details about this organization.

- Slaves are now held for a shorter length of time, and are more likely to be seen as disposable.
- Slavery is now globalized. Modern slavery is part of the process of globalization itself. This “dark underbelly of globalization” as Hilary Clinton put it, is manifestly different than traditional, more publicized, forms of slavery, yet retains many of its characteristics: slaves today are forced to work without pay under the threat or use of violence every day. The millions of “wage slaves” who make as little as \$1 or \$2 a day are not modern slaves under this definition from which the 27 million estimate has been derived, but rather another category of individuals who live in destitution.

Trickery and Poverty

Slavery continues to thrive, and in many instances relies upon trickery and poverty. Individuals are very often vulnerable to slavery because of a lack of job opportunities. This leads many people to accept work elsewhere – often in distant countries– placing them in danger as they migrate to unknown destinations. There have been hundreds of documented cases in which women from locations such as Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe have signed contracts in which they thought they would become domestic workers in upper class households. Upon arrival, however, they were forced to work as prostitutes. Other all too common scenarios include cases in which parents sell their children. Poverty can be attributed as the underlying structural reason for such human transactions. Victims of slavery very often do not speak the language of the receiving country, and are unable to communicate or seek help. Their passports are generally confiscated by the perpetrators, and victims live with little or no money, and under the constant threat of violence and even death. Men, women and children who believed they were seeking a new life find themselves trapped as slaves.

Confronting Slavery in Canada

How do we confront and put an end to modern slavery? There are several challenges in this regard, including the need for us to change how we view the issue of slavery.

Modern slavery and the modern slave trade do not only involve the sexual exploitation of women. Labour exploitation is surprisingly common world-wide, and each one of us needs to be aware of the source of our product purchases (e.g., coffee, chocolate, rugs...) and who produces them. In many cases, slavery is involved.

Another challenge is getting non-profit, private, public and government organizations collectively on board and working together more effectively. Historically speaking, a variety of key players played an important role in efforts to abolish the slave trade and slavery across classes, including former slaves, the general public, Members of Parliament, the media, farmers, religious leaders, academics and writers. The trans-Atlantic slave trade was legally abolished for the first time in history in Britain in 1807, in large part because of the efforts of citizens who participated in boycotts and signed national anti-slave trade petitions presented before the British parliament. This social activism on behalf of the oppressed who could not speak for themselves ultimately led to the creation of *Anti-Slavery International*, the world’s first human rights organization, proving that everyday people have the power to create change.

Modern slavery may very well be the world's most under-publicized human rights crisis. In the developing world it is intimately related to the struggle for gender equality and other important issues, including access to potable water, adequate food, health care, and education. Creating awareness and compelling the public to take a stance on behalf of the those without voices begins with each one of us.

Modern Slavery Issues

A student who has a solid understanding of modern slavery issues is a critical thinker who seeks to apply their knowledge in practical ways. They have a solid grasp on what makes exploitation slavery, why making slavery illegal in the past did not make it disappear, and what each person can do to help end slavery. Inquiry into modern slavery issues will take students in multiple directions, including the causes which allow slavery to continue, and the forms slavery takes in Canada.

What are the causes?

- Poverty, vulnerability, war and conflict zones, and lack of basic rights being protected.
- Inequality, lack of access to land and education, lack of law enforcement.
- Commodities and consumerism.
- Corruption, apathy and desperation.
- Lack of awareness and action.

What forms of slavery exist in Canada?

- Human trafficking for forced prostitution, forced labour and forced marriage.
- Victims are local and global.
- There are also cases of “sex tourism” involving Canadians abroad.

Essential Questions

Although there are no definitive answers as to how to solve issues related to modern slavery, through critical inquiry, investigation, and discussion, students will grow and evolve. They will progress from passive, unquestioning recipients of information, to active and responsible, informed citizens.

Essential questions related to modern slavery include:

- **What is contemporary slavery?**
- **Where is slavery occurring?**
- **What forms has slavery taken in the past? What are these forms today? What are they in Canada?**
- **What is the link between slavery and poverty?**
- **Why was the transatlantic slave trade abolished? Did slavery end after this?**
- **What are the legacies of the transatlantic slave trade for us in a globalised world?**
- **What is the link between slavery and what we buy?**
- **What did being an activist mean during the fight against slavery in the past? What does it mean today?**

- **Can people change society by speaking out?**
- **How can young people act to end modern day slavery?**

Did You Know...?

Slavery is illegal everywhere in the world, but there are still 27 million slaves in the world today.

The average age of entry for girls and boys into forced child prostitution ranges from 11 to 14.

Slaves can be found working in a variety of places, including farms, brothels, homes, mines, even restaurants.

The average cost of a human slave around the world today is \$90.

The RCMP estimates that 800 to 1200 people are human trafficked in Canada every year. The vast majority of them are women and girls. Non-governmental organizations peg the number in the thousands with a significant number of Aboriginal children and women.

On January 17, 2010, Canada passed MP Joy Smith's Bill C-268 to amend Canada's Criminal Code to introduce a new human trafficking offence specifically addressing child traffickers. This law provides a minimum sentence of five years imprisonment for anyone convicted of trafficking a minor in Canada and a minimum of six years imprisonment for cases with aggravating factors.

Globally speaking, human trafficking constitutes under 20% of modern slavery, but generates \$32 billion annually. It is the fastest growing criminal enterprise on the globe.

Traffickers are often of the same ethnicity as the victims they control. In Canada, Asian and Eastern European Organized Crime groups have been most involved in the trafficking of women from, for example: China, South Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, The Philippines, Russia and Latin America

The travel and tourism industry plays a vital role in facilitating child sex trafficking. Many hotels become havens for "child sex tourism," in which traffickers and sex offenders utilize hotel facilities to carry out their illegal activities. There are no set human rights policies at many hotels or programs to train employees in how to identify and handle these illegal activities when discovered.

The internet has become the new marketplace for certain forms of slavery, including trafficking in children and adults for sexual purposes. This is because of the anonymity, relative safety, ability to easily lie about age, and the low cost of using the internet to set up appointments and transactions.

Over 1 million children enter the global sex trade every year.

Local news publications allow postings for unlicensed “massage parlours” and “escort services” in their classified sections. Some of these establishments have proven links to sex trafficking.

The abolition movement in the 18th and 19th centuries was the first time that hundreds of thousands of different people joined together for a common cause. This was achieved by developing many of the campaign styles that are familiar to us today: petitions, boycotts, posters, local and national committees, newsletters and much more. Even though modern technology has changed the ways we campaign (such as sending emails instead of writing letters) the ideas behind these methods come from this time in history.

The campaigning tactics women anti-slavery activists used for abolition in the 18th and 19th centuries and the skills they learned helped to create the women’s movement. Women began to fight for their right to vote and to stop being treated like second-class citizens.

Worldwide, at least 12.3 million children and adults work in forced labour. This is modern slavery, and is linked to the products you buy. Investigations show that more than 122 types of products are made using forced or child labour in at least 58 different countries. See these products and countries on this map: <http://www.productsofslavery.org/>

In 2002 a survey estimated that over 200,000 children were working in hazardous conditions on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire. Reports confirm that children are still being trafficked into cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

Experts suggest it will cost 10.8 billion dollars to end slavery in 25 years. This is equivalent to what Americans spend on Valentine’s Day. We can end slavery in our lifetime. Everyone has a role to play - government, business, international organizations, consumers, YOU.

Thought Provoking Quotes

Men, women and children are not property but human beings. The international community should declare, loudly and more strongly than ever, that we are all members of the human family. Slavery has no place in a world of human rights. -Kofi Annan

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has. -Margaret Mead

If I look at the mess, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will. -Mother Teresa

Not to transmit an experience is to betray it. -Elie Wiesel

We are too young to realize that certain things are not possible, so we will do them anyway. -William Pitt the Younger

All that is necessary for evil to succeed is that good men do nothing. -Edmund Burke

You must be the change you wish to see in the world. -Mahatma Gandhi

Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. -Viktor Frankl

If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. -Abraham Lincoln

Slavery is the dark underbelly of globalization. -Hillary Clinton

“The grand object of my parliamentary existence is the abolition of the slave trade. I shall never sacrifice this cause to motives of political convenience or personal feeling. -William Wilberforce

221 years ago, 12 people -they weren't rich, they weren't powerful and they weren't politicians – sat around a table in a bookshop in London, and they founded an organization, an organization that would in time be known as Anti-Slavery International in Great Britain. It took those 12 people and all the people who joined them just 20 years, 20 years to achieve the end of the slave trade across the entire British Empire, smashing a vast industry and setting the stage for the abolition of legal slavery around the planet. What they began is ours to finish. -Kevin Bales

Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage: anger at the way things are, and courage to change things to the way they ought to be. -St. Augustine

Slavery can only be abolished by raising the character of the people who compose the nation; and that can be done only by showing them a higher one. -Maria Weston Chapman

It's easier to be ignorant and say I don't know about the problem. But once you know, once you've seen it in their eyes, then you have a responsibility to do something. There is strength in numbers, and if we all work together as a team, we can be unstoppable. -Craig Keilburger

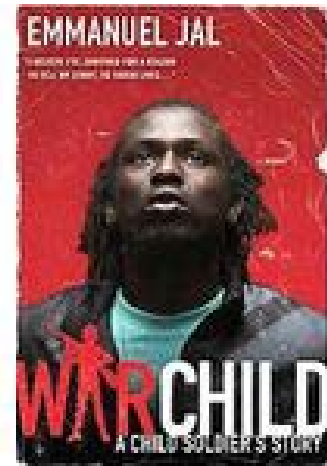
People Making a Difference





Emmanuel Jal

Emmanuel Jal was born in Southern Sudan, and spent the early years of his childhood in the midst of civil war. At the age of 7, after the death of his mother, he was recruited and forced to be a child soldier for the Rebel army (SPLA). Amazingly, he survived front line action and eventually managed to escape with 300 other “lost boys”, enduring a 3 month trek on foot without any supplies to reach safety. One of only a handful to survive the journey, Emmanuel was rescued by Emma McCune, a British Aid Worker, who smuggled him to freedom in Kenya and enrolled him in school for the first time. In spite of so much sadness and trauma in his life, Emmanuel found the courage to write *War Child: A Child Soldier's Story*, a book about his experiences.



He is now a world famous rap artist with a Number 1 record. Emmanuel’s song Baai was featured in the film Blood Diamond and he performed at the 90th birthday concert for Nelson Mandela. His overriding passion is his work with GUA Africa, an organization he founded whose mission is to help individuals, families and communities overcome the effects of war and poverty. GUA Africa provides an education to children and young adults who would otherwise be denied such opportunity. Emmanuel has worked tirelessly with the United Nations, Amnesty International and Oxfam to campaign against the employment of child soldiers and the illegal trade of arms.

<http://www.gua-africa.org/>

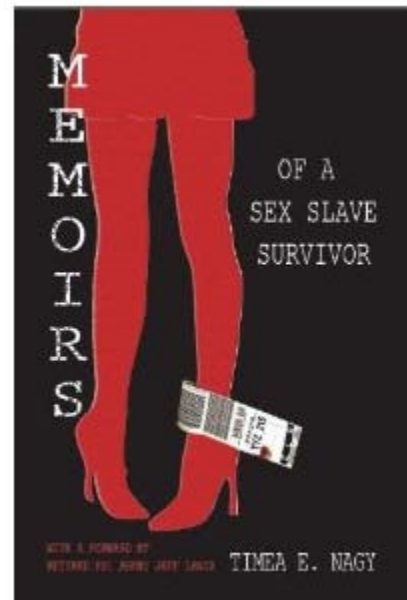
Walk With Me



Timea E. Nagy

Born of a police woman and painter in Budapest, Hungary, Timea wrote, produced and hosted her own live-to-air shows. She interviewed well-known musicians such as the Backstreet Boys. In 1998 Timea answered an advertisement to work as a housekeeper or nanny in Canada, which sounded like a good opportunity to explore another culture and save some money for her future. On April 18, 1998, she arrived at Terminal 3 in the Pearson International Airport in Toronto. She was whisked away by her employers, stripped of her identification, and forced to work as a sex slave in Toronto, Canada for the following 3 months. On August 18, 1998, she miraculously escaped her captors.

Years later, Timea wrote her memoirs about her difficult journey into the underbelly of the sex slavery trade to inspire others to rise above victimization and lead joyful and purposeful lives in spite of difficult circumstances. Timea is now an educator, trainer and advocate. She is the founder of Walk With Me, an Ontario based organization helping human trafficking victims across Canada. Timea educate and trains many police agencies. Walk With Me also undertakes to speak regularly with government officials, and the media. As a result of her bravery, Timea has been given awards by Crime Stoppers York Region, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Human Trafficking Coordination Centre, and recently accepted a National Heroes award in Winnipeg for her outstanding advocacy and work around Human Trafficking.



<http://www.wix.com/timea77/walk-with-me#!>

Other Modern Slavery Change Makers of Note:

Somaly Mam, Benjamin Perrin, Craig Kielburger, James Kofi Annan, Kevin Bales, Sina Vann.

Resources for Teachers

Books

- Bales, Kevin. *Ending Slavery: How We Free Today's Slaves*. University of California Press, 2008.
- Bales, Kevin. *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*. University of California Press, 2004.
- Bales, Kevin and Becky Cornell. *Groundwork Guide: Slavery Today*. Groundwood Books, 2008. [ISBN- 13:978-0-88899-773-9(pbk)]
- Blackman, Malorie. *Unheard Voices*. Corgi Books, 2007.
- Blair, Cherie. *Stop the Traffik: People Shouldn't be Bought & Sold*. Lion, UK, 2009.
- Gann, Marjorie and Janet Willen. *Five Thousand Years of Slavery*. Tundra Books, 2011.
- Hochschild, Adam. *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves*. Mariner Books, 2006.
- Jal, Emmanuel. *War Child: A Child Soldier's Story*. St. Martin's Press, 2009.
- Jesse, Sage, Liora Kasten and Gloria Steinem. *Enslaved: True Stories of Modern Day Slavery*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Mam, Somaly, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Nicholas D. Kristof. *The Road of Lost Innocence: The True Story of a Cambodian Heroine*. Spiegel & Grau, 2009.
- McGill, Craig. *Human Trafficking: Sex, Slaves & Immigration*. Vision, 2004.
- Nagy, Timea E. *Memoirs of a Sex Slave Survivor*. Communication Dynamics: 2010.
- Perrin, Benjamin. *Invisible Chains. Canada's Underground World of Human Trafficking*. Viking Canada, 2010.
- Quirk, Joel. *Unfinished Business: A Comparative Survey of Historical and Contemporary Slavery*. UNESCO, 2009.

- Skinner, Benjamin E. *A Crime So Monstrous: Face-to-Face with Modern-Day Slavery*. Free Press, 2009.
- WuDunn, Sheryl and Nicholas D. Kristof. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women World Wide*. Vintage, 2010.

Articles

- Kaye, Mike. "1807-2007: Over 200 years of campaigning against slavery." 2005. http://www.antislavery.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2009/1/18072007.pdf
- Weissbrodt, David. "Abolishing Slavery and its Contemporary Forms." 2002. http://www.antislavery.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2009/w/weissbrodt_report_final_edition_2003.pdf

Online

- Alliance Against Modern Slavery: <http://www.allianceagainstmodernslavery.org>
- Anti-Slavery International: <http://www.antislavery.org/english/>
- Canada Fights Human Trafficking: <http://www.canadafightshumantrafficking.com/>
- End Modern-Day Slavery: <http://www.endmoderndayslavery.ca>
- Free the Slaves: <http://www.freetheslaves.net>
- Free the Children: <http://www.freethechildren.com>
- Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org>
- International Justice Mission: <http://www.ijm.ca/>
- International Labor Organization: <http://www.ilo.org>
- RCMP: <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/qc/pub/traite-trafficking/traite-trafficking-eng.htm>
- Save the Children: <http://www.savethechildren.ca>
- Slavery Today: http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/main/09/teacher_activities.shtml
- The Forced Marriage Project: <http://www.forcedmarriages.ca>
- Understanding Slavery: <http://www.understandingslavery.com/>
- UNESCO Slave Route Project: www.unesco.org/culture/slaveroute/
- Voyages: The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database (highly recommended data set with information on 35,000 slaving voyages,): <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces>
- 1807 Commemorated: <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/>
- 2010 Trafficking in Persons Report: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/142979.pdf>

Multimedia

- Amazing Grace Movie: <http://www.amazinggracemovie.com/>
- Modern Slavery 101 Video: <http://www.freetheslaves.net/101>
- Slavery Past and Present – Mini-Documentary: <http://allianceagainstmodernslavery.org/tedvideo>
- The Dark Side of Chocolate Documentary: <http://www.thedarksideofchocolate.org/>

- The Silent Revolution: <http://www.freetheslaves.net/Page.aspx?pid=319>
- Coolies: How Britain Reinvented Slavery: <http://documentarystorm.com/coolies-how-britain-reinvented-slavery/>
- Sex Slaves: <http://documentarystorm.com/sex-slaves/>
- Child Slavery: <http://documentarystorm.com/child-slavery/>
- Lindsay Lohan's Indian Journey (full documentary as shown by the BBC) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qC6f6BEIeHM&feature=related>

Terminology

Terms from Anti-Slavery International (www.antislavery.org), Free the Slaves (www.freetheslaves.net), and Understanding Slavery - An Online Teaching Resource (<http://www.understandingslavery.com/>)

Abolition: the campaign to bring the slave trade and slavery to an end. The first act of abolition was passed in Britain in 1807.

Abolitionist: a person who supports the movement to end the slave trade and slavery

Bonded labour: (or debt bondage) is the most common form of slavery in the world today. It affects millions of people around the world. People become bonded labourers by taking or being tricked into taking a loan for as little as the cost of medicine for a sick child. To repay the debt, many are forced to work long hours, seven days a week, up to 365 days a year. They receive basic food and shelter as 'payment' for their work, but may never pay off the loan, which can be passed down for generations.

Boycott: a campaign where people join together and refuse to deal with a person, organization or country, usually to express disapproval or force an acceptance of terms.

Chattel Slavery: when one person assumes complete legal ownership over another. Chattel slavery is the only type where the slave is considered the legal property of the slaveholder, and it exists today primarily in Mauritania and other parts of Northern Africa. Slavery is technically illegal in these countries, but law enforcement there often returns escaped slaves to their slave holders based on the asserted ownership just as if the practice was legal.

Child domestic worker: persons under 18 years of age who work in other people's households (and sometimes their own families') doing domestic chores, caring for children, running errands and helping their employers run small businesses. Child domestic workers include those who 'live in' and those who live separately from their employers. A child domestic worker may be paid, unpaid, or receive 'in-kind' remuneration such as food and shelter. Domestic work is widely perceived as a less dangerous type of employment than others, hence making it more suitable for girls. However, child domestic workers suffer from widespread abuse and exploitation.

Child labour: The employment of children under an age determined by law or custom. According to the International Labour Organization, child labour affects an estimated 126 million children around the world in work that is harmful to their health and welfare. Child labour is slavery when a child is forced to perform full-time work at a very early age, often in dangerous work places; when they are forced to excessive working hours and subjected to psychological, verbal, physical and sexual abuse; are obliged to work by circumstances or individuals; receive limited or no pay; and have no access to education, meaning that the child labourer is also unable to escape from the poverty cycle.

Cocoa Protocol: Formally known as the Harkin-Engel Protocol, it is an agreement to eliminate slavery and the worst forms of child labour from cocoa production, with particular emphasis on West Africa. The Protocol marked the first time in the 250-year history of the anti-slavery movement that a global industry took responsibility for the slavery in its supply chain. It brought together chocolate companies, several non-governmental organizations, organized labour, the International Labor Organization, Senator Harkin and Representative Engel, and the governments of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana.

Contract Slavery: Form of slavery whereby a worker is deceived into slavery through the use of a false employment contract. Slave holders create contracts to lure individuals with promises of employment, yet once they arrive at the workplace they are forced to work for no pay and cannot escape. The false contracts are used to avoid criminal charges or to prove that a "debt" is owed to the slaveholder.

Dalit: Term used to describe people who do not belong to one of the four major Hindu castes in South Asian societies, primarily in India. Also known as "untouchables," Scheduled Castes and Harijans, the Dalits are the poorest people on the subcontinent and heavily discriminated against, making them exceptionally vulnerable to slavery.

Debt bondage (or bonded labour) slavery: The most common method of enslavement in the world today, accounting for nearly 20 million of the world's slaves. It begins when a person accepts a loan from a moneylender, often in order to purchase basic necessities such as food or medicine. The person (and often his or her family as well) are held as collateral against the loan. Because they are collateral, their work does not repay the debt but 'belongs' to the moneylender. Unable to earn money independently, the family is unable to repay the illegal debt and it is passed down from generation to generation, creating hereditary enslavement. This system is well-entrenched in South Asia, and can trap entire families in slavery for illegal debts as small as \$40.

Diaspora: The spreading out of any group of people, forcibly or voluntarily, away from their homeland across a large area or around the world (it was originally used to describe the Jewish dispersal); also refers to the expatriate population as a distinct group.

Early and forced marriage: Affects women and girls (and sometimes men and boys) who are married without choice and are forced into lives of servitude often accompanied by physical violence.

Emancipation: Being set free, or granted rights equal to others who already enjoy them; the freeing of slaves from slavery

Enslavement: To make a slave of a person; being held in captivity, servitude.

Equity: Fairness or justness in dealing between people.

Fair-trade: A system whereby communities join together to produce goods for sale that make the community richer and stronger as a whole, ensuring fair prices and that workers' human rights and the environment are protected over time.

Feminist: A person of either gender who supports political, economic and social equality between men and women.

Forced labour: Affects people who are illegally recruited by individuals, governments or political parties and forced to work - usually under threat of violence or other penalties.

Global citizens: Citizens of earth who share in a collective responsibility for taking care of each other and our common environment.

Human Trafficking: when individuals or an individual recruits, transports, transfers, harbours or receives people; by means of deception, fraud, coercion, abuse of power, payment to others in control of the victim, threats of force, use of force or abduction; for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced labour/services, removal of organs, servitude, slavery or practices similar to slavery. It is a modern-day slave trade. The term 'human trafficking' often has a specific legal definition based on the laws of countries or states or the conventions of international organizations, and those official definitions differ slightly from place to place.

Migrant labour: Work done by people who travel from place to place for employment. Migrant labourers today are commonly immigrants, sometimes illegal, and often exploited by their employer. Most migrant labour is in agriculture, and the workers move around the country to harvest crops during different growing seasons. They are usually paid little for work, sometimes crossing the line into slavery when they are paid nothing and unable to leave.

Non-governmental organization (NGO): Non for profit organization which is not part of any state or interstate agency.

Restavecs: These are children in Haiti who are given or sold by their parents into domestic work for another family. The children are promised an education, training and care, but many become slaves for the family they live with, are abused and forced to work.

Sex industry: Sector of the economy in which sexual acts, performances or images are exchanged for money.

Slave: A slave is forced to work - through mental or physical threat; owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or threatened abuse; dehumanized, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'; physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement.

Slavers: People who earn a living from capturing, trading and transporting slaves.

Slavery by descent: Where people are either born into a slave class or are from a 'group' that society views as suited to being used as slave labour.

Transatlantic Slave Trade: The selling of African people as slaves across the Atlantic Ocean between Europe and the Americas.

Treaty: Legally binding agreement between two or more states.

Triangle Trade: The name often given to the transatlantic slave trade; describes the three sides to the route the slave ships took from Europe to West Africa, then to the Caribbean and the Americas and finally back to Europe; the routes are known as the Outward Passage, the Middle Passage, and the Return or Homeward Passage.

Women's movement: A political movement where women sought/seek to gain political, economic and social rights equal to men in society.

Worst forms of child labour: Term used in the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention, which refers to child labour involving slavery, trafficking, forced labour, child soldiery, commercial sexual exploitation of children, children used for illegal activities, or other work that harms children's health and morals.

Other Suggestions

Maps

- Atlantic Slave Trade, 1500-1900: <http://www.zonu.com/fullsize-en/2010-01-05-11626/Atlantic-slave-trade-1500-1900.html>
- Interactive Modern Slavery Map: <http://www.freetheslaves.net/Page.aspx?pid=375>
- Products of Slavery: http://www.antislavery.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2009/p/1_products_of_slavery.pdf

Lesson Plans

- Slavery Today – Ready to Use Lesson Plans and Activities:
http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/main/09/teacher_activities.shtml
- Five Thousand Years of Slavery Teaching Guide:
<http://www.fivethousandyearsofslavery.com/teachholder.html>
- Understanding Slavery (An Online Teaching Resource):
<http://www.understandingslavery.com/>
- Free the Slaves Education Packs:
<http://www.freetheslaves.net/Document.Doc?id=1>
<http://www.freetheslaves.net/Document.Doc?id=2>
<http://www.freetheslaves.net/Document.Doc?id=3>
<http://www.freetheslaves.net/Document.Doc?id=4>
<http://www.freetheslaves.net/Document.Doc?id=5>



ALLIANCE AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY

Our Vision: To combat modern slavery by collecting resources, building programs, and creating alliances among a network of local and global partners so that every person has the opportunity for sustainable freedom.

Our Mission: To research, educate and aid in partnership with public, private, non-profit, and governmental organizations to end slavery in local and global communities.

What Makes Us Unique: We are a diverse, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual organization. Together, our co-founders and executive speak fourteen languages, and have spent time on all seven continents. We are non-partisan and non-denominational. Although we come to the issue of contemporary slavery from a variety of backgrounds, many of us are educators seeking to raise awareness among all levels of society about modern slavery, one of the most urgent human rights issues of the twenty-first century.

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