Citizens in Action
More Than Just Voters
A teaching resource for Grade 6 Social Studies in Alberta

Aspen Foundation for Labour Education
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Overview

_Citizens in Action: More Than Just Voters_ asks the question, “So, what is citizen action in a democracy if it is, in fact, more than just voting?” Periodic elections in democracies are important and informed voting is the preferred mechanism for expressing the will of the majority. But, can voting itself be the only action a citizen can take to sustain, maintain and strengthen a vibrant democracy? John Dewey, American philosopher, recognized the importance of ongoing participatory citizenship and believed it was best realized when citizens continuously engage in social democratic activity through public discourse and political action. Democracy is much more than just casting a ballot every few years. There are many ways to strengthen our democratic institutions. The activities in this resource model a participatory, experiential approach designed to both model the functions of democracy and better understand ways to address issues.

Too often students are exposed to issues that seem hopeless or discouraging, leaving them feeling less empowered and even depressed. Hope is fostered when people are able to see that they have influence in a democracy. This unit encourages students to participate in their communities as thoughtful, engaged and well-informed members—ones who address issues that are important and relevant to them. This requires them to understand the root causes of issues important to them in the context of their own communities. They will explore the habits and dispositions of a democratic citizenry by observing other students who have affected change and consider various ways to affect change themselves, and with others. This resource encourages them to undertake actions to influence practice, policy, or programs on issues of importance to them.

Essential Questions and Curriculum Connections

The true goals of the curriculum are addressed more fully when students go beyond just learning about the mechanics of how government works to realizing that they have power to affect decisions and influence policies.

Alberta’s Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum titled, “Democracy: Action and Participation” asks that students broaden their understanding of democracy in the Canadian experience and develop an awareness of the active role that engaged citizens can play within the democratic process.

This resource focuses on four questions designed to help translate the curriculum’s theme “Democracy: Action and Participation,” into meaningful activities.
These questions are:
1. What does it mean to be an active and engaged citizen?
2. How can students better understand root causes of issues?
3. How can students be more prepared to make informed choices?
4. How can citizens take action to “make a difference?”

The Aspen Foundation for Labour Education has developed this resource based on the visions of citizenship identified by Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne and draws from the work of Shira Eve Epstein who worked with students in civic engagement. They all believe that the most effective approach to building capacity for civic engagement is to involve students in choosing issues of importance to them, providing ways to give them voice, understanding root causes of issues, and taking collective action to affect change in the short and long term. Approaches to citizen engagement are based on social justice principles consistent with Alberta’s Grade 6 Social Studies Program of Studies (2007) that highlight the “importance of active and responsible participation as the foundation of a democratic society (p. 11).”

Grade 6 students are developmentally and cognitively ready to begin to engage as citizens by taking action that reflect principled beliefs and values. This resource offers ideas for challenging students to understand the critical role of citizens in ensuring that democracy functions, based on its key premise—government by the people. Effective social engagement requires that students learn skills that enable them to develop effective relationships with others, work in cooperative ways toward common goals, and collaborate with others for the well-being of their communities.

Lessons in this resource reflect the principles and skills needed to have a functional democracy. That is why we employ experiential, participatory pedagogies—ones that model democratic principles of cooperation, dialogue, and action. Such strategies help students consider others’ perspectives, think critically about issues and promote responsible decision-making. With this in mind we urge teachers to utilize this resource in ways that suit their own classrooms’, schools’, and communities’ contexts.
Citizens in Action: More Than Just Voters – A Teaching Resource for Grade 6

Social Studies in Alberta goes beyond “learning about government” and challenges teachers to help students "learn to be citizens." This means it will develop an understanding of how individuals, working with others in a variety of ways, can act to make an impact on issues that affect them. To this end, the resource will reflect the following principles and elements:

- Fosters the growth of democratic capabilities and dispositions essential to democratic citizenship, as well as a strong sense of the importance of active engagement to strengthen democracy
- Draws mainly on the Alberta’s Social Studies curriculum’s focus on inquiry, multiple perspectives, critical thinking, and student engagement
- Models democratic processes by using a variety of interactive pedagogies that are cooperative, participatory, and experiential
- Provides age-appropriate materials and activities for Grade 6 students
- Connects with a broad range of citizens and civil society organizations in Alberta that promote citizen engagement
- Identifies print and media sources to enhance student-centred learning

Our approach reflects Westheimer and Kahne’s social justice vision of citizenship— one that follows a research process that allows for critical thinking, problem solving and meaningful action (see Appendix A: Teacher Backgrounder for more information).

Section A – Getting Started: What does it mean to be a socially just citizen?

These opener activities begin to help students make personal connections to social issues in general and help students begin to reflect about their own thoughts, behaviours, and present actions. Here we explore the concept of citizenship using Westheimer and Kahne’s three visions; personal, participatory and social justice. Their model will help students consider the approaches to action that are appropriate to an issue they will identify in the next section.
A recent Alberta Teachers’ Association Social Studies Council survey of Alberta’s social studies teachers indicated strong support for the central focus of the social studies curriculum – developing active and engaged citizens in a strong democracy. To this end, our goal is to help teachers consider the benefits of involving students in activities that focus on encouraging them to be engaged citizens as opposed to simply knowing about how government works and implying that citizenship is limited to casting a ballot periodically and hoping for the best.

Consultation Process

Section B – Awareness: What issues and questions concern me most?

This section draws attention to issues related to child labour, refugees/immigrants, and poverty. Learning activities are designed to stimulate interest in these topics and begin to generate potential questions for inquiry.

Section C – Understanding: How can I learn more about the root causes that underlie my issue?

Having identified their own inquiry question, students undertake comprehensive research to explore their questions and understand the root causes of their issue.

Section D – Action and Reflection: How can I engage in meaningful and effective actions? How important are these actions in maintaining democracy?

This final section provides inspiring role models, young people who witnessed injustice and did something about it (Lessons 12 and 13). Lessons 14 through 17 work through the processes of planning and goal setting, exploring and taking action, and finally reflecting on the action taken.
Citizens in Action: More than Just Voters was developed in consultation with Grade 6 teachers who are dedicated to ensuring that students understand the various ways that everyone can participate in Canadian democracy. The resource is designed to:

- Ensure flexibility so that teachers can make use of part or all of it based on their own classroom context and professional judgement
- Build assessment for learning strategies
- Provide ongoing opportunities for Grade 6 teachers to suggest ways to update and improve the resource
- Be freely available online to teachers in digital format

This resource offers many options for use with your class. Consider your goals, time, and class composition when selecting activities and topics. Below are suggestions for various approaches.

Section A — Getting Started

These three lessons are designed to initially engage your students in finding personal connections to issues and stimulating interest in the main topic of the unit.

It is strongly advised that you select Lessons 1 or 2 and follow-up with Lesson 3.

- **Lesson 1 – Bookend Activity: Can Students Make the World a better Place?**

OR

- **Lesson 2: Find a Person Who...** as opener activities to the unit.

- **Lesson 3 – Visions of Democratic Citizenship** is important because it introduces approaches to action as conceived by Westheimer and Kahne. These are foundational to follow-up lessons; their theories are used throughout the resource.
Option 1
Kids Inspiring Action for Democracy

Lesson 12 – Hey, That’s Not Fair! Kids Inspire Action for Justice

Kids have a strong sense of when things are unfair or when an injustice occurs. They will not hesitate to voice their concerns but may not know what to do beyond that. Strong democracies require citizens who are active, engaged, and work in solidarity to address injustices and to stand up for the principles of equality and justice. Use Lesson 12 to highlight stories of young people who stepped up to take meaningful action to address injustices. Their stories will inspire your students, knowing that there are kids, who like them, have taken actions to address an important concern in their communities. Use the lesson at the outset or as an introduction to Section D. Action/Reflection.

Option 2
Awareness, Understanding, and Action/Reflection

This option illustrates a way to select just one issue and use some lessons from each section to explore an issue in depth.

- **Section B. Awareness** – helps students notice and become cognizant of a variety of issues
- **Section C. Understanding** – engages students in the research process
- **Section D. Action/Reflection** – focuses on identifying actions, carrying them out, and asking the “so what?” questions.

Select appropriate lessons from Sections B, C and D based on student interest or local contexts.
Option 3
Select a Topic

While any issue relating to fairness and justice is worthy of exploration, see the chart below to focus on just one of the topics in this resource.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTORS FOR TOPICS</th>
<th>AWARENESS LESSONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Labour</td>
<td>Examines issues and problems associated with child labour both at home and abroad.</td>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees and Immigrants</td>
<td>Explores the ways citizens have helped to address the need to welcome and support refugees and immigrants in becoming full and contributing citizens.</td>
<td>Lessons 6 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality and Issues Related to Poverty</td>
<td>Covers a wide range of issues related to access to basic needs and issues related to poverty. We have developed lessons that focus on three basic needs; food, water and shelter.</td>
<td>Lessons 8, 9, and 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow up the topic you selected by undertaking research suggestions in Section C. Understanding and carrying out student-led actions/reflections in Section D (Lessons 15 and 16). This approach can serve as an exemplar for students to explore their own issues.
Option 4
Connecting with other Subject Areas

Some of the lessons in this resource draw on learning outcomes from subject areas other than social studies. If you like to teach thematically across subject areas, here are some suggestions for connecting with other subject areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSON #</th>
<th>LESSON TITLE</th>
<th>GRADE 6 LEARNING OUTCOMES – OTHER SUBJECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Stories of Child Labour: Iqbal the Carpet Boy – A Graphic Novel</td>
<td>English Language Arts (Grade 6) Art (Grade 6) Drama (Grade 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Stories of Refugee Children Grade 6’s Peer Teach Grade 4’s</td>
<td>English Language Arts (Grade 4 and 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees – Cooperative Jigsaw</td>
<td>English Language Arts (Grade 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lunchroom Leftovers: FOOD – A Basic Human Right?</td>
<td>Science (Grade 6) Math (Grade 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bottle This! WATER – A Basic Human Right?</td>
<td>Music (Grade 6) English Language Arts (Grade 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>People Without Homes: SHELTER – A Basic Human Right?</td>
<td>Math (Grade 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Hey, That’s Not Fair! Kids Inspire Action for Justice</td>
<td>Technology (Grade 6) English Language Arts (Grade 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Man Who Planted Trees L’homme qui plantait des arbres</td>
<td>English Language Arts (Grade 6) French (Grade 6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Few would argue against involving or motivating students to take actions to address injustices. In fact, many believe that such involvement is critical in helping students become caring, engaged and responsible democratic citizens – ones who understand and value living the principles of social justice every day. It is critical to move students toward initiating their own activities or projects based on information, consultation, and shared decision-making. The ways teachers establish conditions for students to initiate, implement, and take action can vary considerably and must be undertaken with careful thought and planning.

Consistent with the Alberta Social Studies Program of Studies, teachers need to ensure that they engage students in meaningful social action while being mindful of:

- Ensuring a multiple perspectives approach
- Using materials from a variety of sources
- Being aware of community standards and contexts
- Using age-appropriate resources
- Being aware of Alberta Education’s Social Studies Program of Studies guidelines when teaching controversial issues (see below).

**Cautions**

One of the critical aspects of teaching controversial issues is ensuring that students engage in meaningful social action. This involves creating conditions for students to initiate, implement, and take action based on information, consultation, and shared decision-making. Teachers need to ensure that they engage students in meaningful social action while being mindful of:

- Ensuring a multiple perspectives approach
- Using materials from a variety of sources
- Being aware of community standards and contexts
- Using age-appropriate resources
- Being aware of Alberta Education’s Social Studies Program of Studies guidelines when teaching controversial issues (see below).

**Controversial issues are those topics that are publicly sensitive and upon which there is no consensus of values or beliefs. They include topics on which reasonable people may sincerely disagree. Opportunities to deal with these issues are an integral part of student learning in Alberta. Studying controversial issues is important in preparing students to participate responsibly in a democratic and pluralistic society. Such study provides opportunities to develop the ability to think clearly, to reason logically, to open-mindedly and respectfully examine different points of view and to make sound judgements. Teachers, students and others participating in studies or discussions of controversial issues need to exercise sensitivity to ensure that students and others are not ridiculed, embarrassed or intimidated for positions that they hold on controversial issues (p. 79).**

Section A. Getting Started
What does it mean to be a socially just citizen?

Section Overview
Opener activities in this section will help students make personal connections to social issues in general and encourage them to think about their own attitudes, feelings, and actions. Here we explore three approaches to citizen action using Westheimer and Kahne’s visions of citizenship: personal, participatory and social justice. Students will engage in activities to assess and analyze actions that reflect each vision. The social justice vision – one that brings meaningful change based on a thorough examination of root causes is the ideal.

This section includes these lessons:

**Lesson 1:** Bookend Activity: Can Students Make the World a Better Place?

**Lesson 2:** Find a Person Who . . .

**Lesson 3:** Visions of Democratic Citizenship: Card Sort . . .
Overview

When addressing social issues, it is always challenging for teachers to ensure that students understand that caring citizens of any age can make a difference to their own and others’ lives.

This lesson asks if students think they can make the world a better place? This discussion-based lesson helps students identify their own feelings of optimism or pessimism in regard to how they see their futures.

We believe that by engaging with meaningful issues, providing examples of inspiration, and working with others to affect change greater optimism can be achieved. We start by assuming students can be agents of positive change given the motivation, direction, and opportunity to do so. By setting this stage, we can demonstrate that by initiating and participating in meaningful and effective social action, students can lead in the goal to preserve and maintain democratic principles and institutions.

The activity also provides the teacher with insights regarding students’ readiness to engage on issues relating to fairness, justice, equality and human rights. Keep the students’ answer sheets until the end of the unit to enable a comparison of their initial answers to those expressed at the end of the unit. The hope is that optimism for action will be evident.

“Building Civic Engagement with Youth: The Park Project”

We follow-up this opening activity by offering thoughts on a case study based on the work of Shira Eve Epstein who studied grade seven students who undertook an action-based initiative to save their local park from being closed due to budget cutbacks. Epstein’s observation was that, depending on the success or failure of their efforts, students fell into one of two categories: defeatism or naïve optimism. She offers suggestions to mitigate these two outcomes by taking proactive steps to prepare students for various outcomes. Bottom line, she believes that instilling hope is essential (see Appendix B for her full article). Shira Eve Epstein provides ideas that will help teachers engage their students in designing and supporting action projects in their communities.
Inquiry Question

Can students make the world a better place?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
  - value citizens’ participation in a democratic society
6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

Knowledge and Understanding
6.1.2 demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles of democracy by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
  - What are the rights and responsibilities of citizens living in a representative democracy?
6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
  - value citizens’ participation in a democratic society

Skills and Processes
DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.5.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
  - critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
  - re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue

COMMUNICATION
6.5.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:
  - express reasons for their ideas and opinions, in oral or written form
  - respond appropriately to comments and questions, using language respectful of human diversity
  - listen to others to understand their perspectives
Learning Competencies

- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Problem Solving
- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Communication
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking

Time

- One class period

Materials

- Student Learning Guide A-1 – Can students make the world a better place? (print one per student)
- Large chart paper and markers
- Appendix B – Case Study – Asking Questions and Building Hope: A Proposal for Youth Civic Engagement Projects (for teacher reference)
Key Concepts

- **Optimism** – a feeling that something positive will happen
- **Pessimism** – a feeling that something negative will happen
- **Citizen Empowerment** – the belief that everyone has the power and the will to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others.

Learning Activity

**STEP 1:** Draw a continuum (see below) on the whiteboard. Write this question over it:

“Can students make the world a better place?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Really</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absolutely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STEP 2:** Pass out *Student Learning Guide A-1*. Ask students to individually (without sharing with others) circle the number that best reflects their initial thoughts and feelings about this question. Alternatively, you could ask them to create a line up in the classroom with the continuum laid out (similar to the one on the board) and ask them to place themselves on the spot that best represents their point of view.

Still using *Student Learning Guide A-1*, ask students to individually record their reasoning behind their number choice in each category under Facts and Feelings. You may want to prompt them by saying, “What are the facts or evidence that support your choice?” and “What makes you feel the way you do about students making a difference?” Provide a few examples verbally to ensure that they understand what is being asked (see below).
### External

**Reasons that I THINK make sense**

**FACTS**

Example responses:
- I picked #4 because I saw the news showing kids in the USA, protesting gun violence and I think that this might change some laws down there.
- I picked #2 because I am depressed by what I hear in the news about more and more plastics filling up oceans and even fresh water supplies.

### Internal

**Reasons that I FEEL make sense**

**FEELINGS**

Example responses:
- For some reason, I just think that life is getting harder and I feel a little blue about it. I am seeing my parents struggle to make enough money for us to live. I just don’t see my future as being any better, so I picked #1.
- Everywhere I look I see people being kind to each other and helping out when they can. It makes me feel grateful to live here, so I picked #4.

---

**STEP 3:** Organize students in small table groups. Ask them to reproduce the chart (above) on a large sheet of paper. They can share their reasons in small groups or simply discuss their answers. Ask them to underline those reasons that support the idea of making a positive difference.

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**SHARE BOX**

This activity is designed to get a sense of how your students view the future with optimism or pessimism. There will likely be a broad range of responses. Try to use these terms during the debriefing.

- Share and highlight the reasons that seem to be positive (optimistic).
- Share reasons that are negative (pessimistic).
- Do the facts match your feelings or are they in conflict? Are the facts supported by evidence? How do you know?
- Engage students in a discussion about these differences and ask them to think about the value of overcoming or addressing the barriers or negatives that were mentioned.
- Ask, how can we maintain and promote optimism even when things seem hopeless?
Review key terms: pessimism and optimism. What are the underlying thoughts and feelings that move toward one orientation rather than the other? What feelings are necessary for a democracy to work?

**Assessment**

Finish by introducing the term **empowerment**, the belief that everyone has the power and the will to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others. The feeling of citizen empowerment is an important driver in a healthy democracy. Create a mind map with the word empowerment in the middle. Encourage students to suggest examples and make connections to expand their understanding of this term. Deliberately link ideas of optimism and empowerment to the concept of democracy. Ask, what kinds of actions are most likely to bring about change? Connect their ideas to the concept of citizenship.

Ask students to put their names on their individual *Student Learning Guide* A-1 and collect them. **Save these for future reference.** At the end of the unit redo this activity and then hand students their initial responses to compare their pre- and post-unit work. It might also be helpful for you to tabulate the answers so that you can get a sense of their level of optimism and pessimism at the beginning and at the end of the unit.
FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

1. Asking Questions and Building Hope (See Appendix B)

This case study examined the thoughts and feelings of grade 7 students who undertook to save their park from their city’s budget cuts. Shira Eve Epstein, the researcher, found that students were pleased with themselves for being successful in undertaking mainly a letter writing campaign and credited themselves with the success without recognizing the community-wide efforts that were also at play. Basically, students were very happy and proud of the positive results of their efforts and articulated that they would have been devastated had their campaign not worked; something that could have happened.

Epstein believes that it is important to build hope and resilience because not all actions result in success. She suggests that to avoid the outcomes related to naïve optimism or conversely, potential defeatism, ask these three questions:

- **What makes us strong?** Name your reality. Students need to reflect on the realities of their situation and ask questions about their strengths and weaknesses. For example, in this case the students said that their strength was in writing strong persuasive letters to those in positions of power; however, they neglected to acknowledge the contributions to the action by the community at large in saving the park. Listen and learn from others. Find out what is already being done.

- **How might things be different?** Imagine yourselves beyond this immediate reality. Use visualization strategies to imagine actions that could be taken. Brainstorm ideas and then discuss benefits and drawbacks. Consider the viewpoints of those who oppose your ideas. This analytical process can result in creative new ideas for action and provide inspiration.

- **How can we move forward?** Take action-steps with purpose. Take steps to enact the vision. Don’t hesitate to identify people in positions of power and go beyond the usual methods of communication. Consider face-to-face meetings. Believe that your actions can make a difference. Work with the broader community and build solidarity.
2. See The Man Who Planted Trees (in Section D)

**Action:** How can I engage in meaningful and effective actions? This lesson highlights the power of an individual to affect change. It offers opportunities to speculate on the possibilities for difference if he had undertaken his task with others to accomplish the same goal.

**Ask:**

a. What might have been different?

b. How would people have benefitted?

c. What effect would a community effort have made in the recovery of the land?

NOTE: You may decide to insert this lesson here to help inspire optimism or you can wait until you are engaging in the last section of this resource.

- *The Man Who Planted Trees*
  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTvYh8ar3tc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTvYh8ar3tc)  
  English version

- *L'homme qui plantait des arbres*
  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjqiptmoEqE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjqiptmoEqE)  
  French version
Can students make the world a better place?

STEP 1: Using the continuum below, circle the number that best represents your answer to the following question:

“Can students make the world a better place?”

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Really</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absolutely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP 2: Using the chart below, record fact-based reasons for your choice on the left. On the right side, record reasons based on your feelings.

External
Reasons that I THINK make sense
FACTS

Internal
Reasons that I FEEL make sense
FEELINGS
Overview

It is important to recognize that most students consciously or unconsciously already take actions to improve the world. This activity is designed to stimulate thinking about the kinds of actions students already take in their daily lives, many of which indicate an attitude of caring and compassion. Their answers should provide important insights to the teacher in planning and selecting subsequent learning activities. This activity readies students for introducing various visions of citizenship.

Inquiry Question

How do we participate in school and community activities?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
   • value citizens’ participation in a democratic society
6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

Knowledge and Understanding
6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
   • How can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?
Learning Competencies

- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Cultural and Global Citizen

Time

- One class period

Materials

- Student Learning Guide A-2 – Find a Person Who . . . (print one per student)
- Master Chart – print larger versions of the above chart on 11” x 17” paper (one per group of 4)
Key Concepts

- **Engaged Actions** – actively undertaking steps to address an injustice
- **Participation** – working with others toward a common goal
- **Social Good** – achieving a positive outcome that benefits society as a whole

Learning Activity

**STEP 1: Walkabout**

Ask everyone to stand up with their *Student Learning Guide A-2* – Find a Person Who chart and have a pen in hand. Ask them to circulate around the classroom looking for peers who match a description. Write their name and example onto their charts. You can only use a classmate’s name once. Give about 7 - 10 minutes and ensure that students keep moving to get as many different names and examples as possible.

**STEP 2: Our Group Responses (optional step)**

Provide the larger Master Chart (increase size to fit an 11 x 17 sheet of paper) to each group of 4. Ask students to share and record examples of actions (not using the names) using their own “Find a Student Who …” pages. When they have compiled their list and to stimulate further discussion, ask them to determine which action they think is most creative, unique, or powerful. Circle that one. Post the large Master Charts around the room and ask students to do a Gallery Walk so that they can see others’ selections.
Ask the following questions to the whole class or ask students to answer in their smaller groups.

- What does all this information tell you about our class? (make some generalizations)
- What was the most interesting or powerful action that you found out about?
- Are you surprised by the actions our class takes to help others?
- How do you think you would feel if you were to take an action like one on the list?
- Why do we do these types of actions or activities?
- What does it tell you about what is important and what we value?
- Have you thought about actions you might take but haven’t done so yet?
- Have any of the actions you learned about today inspired you?

Complete this sharing discussion by connecting the lesson’s key concepts to the activity.

How do these actions show these characteristics?

- Engaged actions
- Participation
- Social good

Save the charts so that students can use them later in developing actions to promote and sustain democracy (Section D). Next, we will use the Westheimer and Kahne Venn Diagram (see Appendix A: Teacher Backgrounder) to analyze and categorize the types of actions students can and do take.
### Find a Person Who...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find a Person Who</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Example Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belongs to a youth group that helps do charitable work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has participated in a march for a social cause.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has helped to organize a school, faith-related, or community event.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains an environmental project at home or school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has sent an email or letter to a newspaper or website about an important issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has signed a petition.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has created a poster or pamphlet about an issue of concern.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has visited a website to donate money to a cause.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has contacted an elected representative (politician) about an issue of concern.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has developed a website or started a club to help others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has run for school council, class president or other leadership positions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has organized or helped organize a fundraiser or crowd sourcing event.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has investigated a social problem to find out its causes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has participated in a walk-a-thon, bike-a-thon or other similar activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has given spare change to a person who asked for money on the street.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has helped support a refugee family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycles, reuses or repurposes household items.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview

This lesson offers a model to help students understand the relationship between citizenship and democracy. The model is based on the Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne visions of citizenship. In it, they ask, “What does it mean to be a good citizen?” They provide three ways to engage as an active citizen. Students will analyze the approaches using a hands-on learning activity. Ultimately, they will consider the effectiveness and sustainability of each approach. You will see references to their model used throughout the resource.

“Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action”
Specifically, students will become familiar with the model (shown in the Venn diagram above) and then apply the descriptors using a card matching strategy that connects the visions to sample actions. There are three different sets of Action Cards; each set relates to one of three topics: food access, immigration/refugees and child labour. The diagram is explained on a prezi titled “Visions of Democratic Action”, available at https://prezi.com/nawajyrzq5xp/approaches-to-democratic-action/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy.

To prepare yourself, we suggest that you read Appendix A: Teacher Backgrounder. Westheimer and Kahne’s Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action (at the end of this resource) plus the accompanying paper titled, What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy. The article is available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/243786974_What_Kind_of_Citizen_The_Politics_of_Educating_for_Democracy

Inquiry Question

To what extent can students take actions that reflect a vision of social justice?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
- recognize and respect the democratic rights of all citizens in Canada
- value citizens’ participation in a democratic society

6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
- How can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?
Skills and Processes

DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.5.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
- critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
- re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
- generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities
- seek responses to inquiries from various authorities through electronic media

6.5.4. demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
- collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with problems and issues

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE
6.5.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:
- demonstrate the skills of compromise to reach group consensus
- work collaboratively with others to achieve a common goal

6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed

COMMUNICATION
6.5.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:
- respond appropriately to comments and questions, using language respectful of human diversity
Learning Competencies

- Problem Solving
- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Cultural and Global Citizen

Time

- One class period

Materials

- Student Learning Guide A-3 – Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action: Venn Diagram
Materials

- Student Learning Guide A-4 - Take Action: “What kinds of actions are most likely to create meaningful change for democracy?”
- One large outline of the Venn diagram (poster paper sized) per group; draw and label the three circles but leave the circles blank
- Sets of colour-coded Action Cards (e.g. Food Access cards are printed on pink, Immigration/Refugee cards on green and Child Labour on blue)
- Cards and Answer Key for Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action: Card Sort (see the end of this lesson)

Key Concepts

- **Democratic Citizenship** – for people (citizens) to take actions that reflect the principles of democracy
- **Visions of Citizenship**
  - **Personal Citizenship** – occurs when one considers good citizens to be personally responsible and who display positive character traits.
  - **Participatory Citizenship** – occurs when students collectively agree to take an action to support a worthy cause.
  - **Social Justice Citizenship** – occurs when students explore and research a particular issue and then determine courses of action to address root causes.
- **Consensus** – coming to mutual agreement concerning an issue, usually through sharing perspectives and ideas.
Learning Activity

STEP 1: Getting Ready
Ask students this question: “What kinds of actions are most likely to create meaningful change for democracy?” You may have a short discussion that helps them understand the question and prepares them to explore it more deeply.

Provide each student with Student Learning Guide A-3 – Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action: A Backgrounder for Students and use the complementary prezi [https://prezi.com/nawajyrzq5xp/edit/#1_24309637](https://prezi.com/nawajyrzq5xp/edit/#1_24309637) to guide your explanations of the diagram. The prezi will help explain the model and should be used prior to engaging in the activity.

STEP 2: Card Sorting
- Place students in groups of 3 at tables and provide each group with a large pre-drawn poster paper of a blank Venn diagram (see below). Ensure that they are large enough so that three cards can be shown individually and face up on each circle. Each student will have the detailed smaller copy of the Venn diagram for reference.

![Venn Diagram](image_url)

- Provide each group with just one set of cards (e.g. pink paper for Food Access cards) and ask the members to distribute one card to each member. Ask each person to read their card aloud and then come to a group consensus as to which category on the Venn diagram the action best fits. Tell them that they can place the card between two categories if they can’t decide. Try to get consensus on where the card fits best.
- Repeat this process for each colour group (Immigration/Refugees – green cards and then Child Labour – blue cards). Tell students that they can change their minds if the group agrees.
STEP 3
- Use the Answer Key (at the end of this lesson) for Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action: Card Sort to have students correct their answers.

STEP 4
This step provides a chance to step back and examine insights gleaned from the activity. Students will begin to examine the benefits and challenges of each approach, consider the type of actions that are relevant to them personally, and begin to better understand the types of actions that are most consistent with socially just democratic action. This activity will set the stage for them to begin to identify an issue they may select for their exploration.

- Provide each student with Student Learning Guide A-4 – Taking Action: What kinds of actions are most likely to create meaningful change for democracy? Ask them to write answers either individually or while discussing ideas in their groups.

Assessment

After students have completed Student Learning Guide A-4, you may want to assess their responses and provide formative feedback.

Follow-up Ideas

- As individuals, students could identify an issue that interests them and suggest an approach to action—one that is most likely to make a real difference.
- The class might identify an issue and do the research regarding root causes and collectively implement actions based on their learning.
- Consider brainstorming for additional issues that can be researched in their own school, town or city.
- Quick Application: Use Student Learning Guide A-2, the “Find a Person Who…” charts (from the previous lesson), to apply the principles related to each circle. Which actions taken by the class fit into the various categories?
Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action

This prezi will help you understand the ideas of Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne’s theory of democratic citizenship. The guiding question is, “How can students take actions that reflect a vision of social justice?” https://prezi.com/nawajyrz5xp/visions-of-democratic-action/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy

Application

Use your Student Learning Guide A-2, Find a Person Who . . . chart, to think about the actions you and your classmates already do. Which circle do you and your classmates’ actions fit into or overlap with one or two other circles?
Take Action: What kinds of actions are most likely to create meaningful change for democracy?

You just completed a card sort activity that will help you understand the three visions of democratic citizenship and action.

- Personal
- Participatory
- Social Justice

Three different issues were used to consider these actions. They were:

a. food access (pink cards)
b. immigration and refugees (green cards)
c. child labour (blue cards)

1. What is the problem at the heart of each issue?
   a. food access (red cards)

      b. immigration and refugees (green cards)

      c. child labour (blue cards)

2. Examine your Venn diagram charts and consider the discussion you had. Which approach to citizenship is most likely to create meaningful change? Why?
3. What are the benefits and challenges of each type of citizenship?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision of Citizenship</th>
<th>What is/are the benefit(s) of this type of citizenship?</th>
<th>What are the challenges of this type of citizenship?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory Action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Justice Oriented Action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. What is the connection between taking an action and the idea of maintaining democracy?

5. Identify a problem your class sees as an issue? How might you go about making a long-term change to address the issue?

6. Do the kids described here have the same opportunities to promote change as you do? Why or why not?
**Cards and Key** for Approaches to Democratic Citizenship and Action: Card Sort

For the Teacher – run off these cards on different coloured paper

For example, use pink paper to run off the first row, green paper for the second row and blue paper for the third row.

### Food Access – Use pink paper for these action cards

- Maggie is a generous person. She often uses her allowance to buy non-perishable food items to give to the local food bank. She especially likes to do this at Christmas time and once during the summer.

- Yuki and four of his friends see that some of the younger kids in their school are coming without lunches. With the help of one of their teachers, they decide to make extra sandwiches each on one day of the week to be distributed anonymously at lunch time.

- Cora is the president of the students’ union and the group noticed that there is an increasing demand at the local food bank. They decided to examine why this was happening. They learned that jobs were being lost and kids in their school were coming without lunches. After researching the problem, they decided that poverty was at the root of the problem. They consulted with users of the food bank and it was decided that they would establish a community garden. Both students and users would take responsibility for making the garden work.

### Immigration and Refugees - Use green paper for these action cards

- Carl’s family immigrated from Germany two generations ago and he hears stories of the struggles of his pioneer great grandparents as they adjusted to life in Canada. He has decided that he will attend Heritage Days in his city and support various groups by buying their food and enjoying their dancing and ethnic traditions.

- Janis and her class of grade 6 students have a new boy in their class. He arrived from a country that is experiencing a devastating war and they know his life has been difficult. He doesn’t know how to speak English. He appears to be very shy and reluctant to take part in social activities. They decide that a way to help him fit in is to talk to him as often as possible and help him learn new words. They asked the ESL teacher in their school to give them some tips about how they can best help him learn English.

- Johanna and her family belong to an organization that supports refugee families escaping warlike conditions in foreign countries. They studied the desperate situation of refuges coming to Canada due to circumstances beyond their control. They joined a group that helped organize visas to bring a family of Syrian refugees to their community. They decided to focus on including the children in their activities and helping them learn English. They also make it their goal to learn from the children about their culture.
Every year during the holiday season, the Parker family receives brochures from various charitable organizations asking for donations to support various causes. The Parker family has decided that each family member can select one charity to support by giving a donation. The children in the family will get their donation money by doing extra chores. They like it when they find out that their money went to an individual child and that he or she was grateful for the support.

Ms. Irving’s social studies class has just viewed a video that shows very young children in India sitting on a cement floor peeling shrimp. They are told that the children cannot talk and only have one break every five hours. They look very sad and thin. Ms. Irving’s students are aghast. They decide that they should raise money and send it to an organization that they think will give poor families more money, so that their children won’t need to work.

In some places, even in Canada, some children are required to help their families out financially because there isn’t enough money for basics. Mr. Dean’s class decided to find out about the conditions that led to children being pressured to go to work at very young ages. Their findings pointed to many factors causing this circumstance. They brainstormed options they might take to alleviate or eliminate child labour. They decided to start in their local community. They wrote letters to the provincial government in support of increasing the minimum wage. That was their first step.

### Answer Key – Abbreviated answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Citizenship</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Access</td>
<td>Maggie is a . . .</td>
<td>Yuki and four of his friends . . .</td>
<td>Cora is the president . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration/ Refugees</td>
<td>Carl’s family . . .</td>
<td>Janis and her class of grade 6 . . .</td>
<td>Johanna and her family belong . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Labour</td>
<td>Every year during the holiday season, the Parker family . . .</td>
<td>Ms. Irving’s social studies class . . .</td>
<td>In some places, even in Canada, some children are required to help their families out financially because there isn’t enough without their help. Mr. Dean’s class . . .</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section Overview
The Westheimer and Kahne model will help students become more knowledgeable and better prepared to take responsible social action.

This section attends to the first step of the research process, selecting an issue and developing an inquiry question. In it, we draw attention specifically to issues related to child labour, refugees, and poverty. Activities will utilize pictures, stories, graphic novels, music, and videos to stimulate interest. Learning activities in this section are designed to stimulate interest in these topics.

Lesson 4, the first one in this section, introduces the “Put a Pin-In-It” chart – a method to log various issues and draft potential inquiry questions following each activity. Students will identify and record an issue in column 1 – Potential Issues/Topics after completing each learning activity. They will use column 2 – Possible Inquiry Questions to generate questions as a group and later select just one for research in Section C.
LESSON 4
Put a Pin-In-It: Identifying Issues and Inquiry Questions

Overview

As a start to undertaking research and action, it is important that students be introduced to many potential topics for later exploration. Lessons in this section will enable them to make a choice about which issue they would most like to pursue. In it, we will undertake stimulus activities (Lessons 5 – 10) designed to pique interest and raise questions. A chart titled “Put a Pin-In-It” is provided in this lesson for students to identify and record issues and potential questions for all of the stimulus lessons. Ensure that the chart is completed after each lesson. Consider making a master “Put a Pin-In-It” chart and posting it on the classroom wall.

Time

- Ongoing through Section B
Materials

- Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues and Inquiry Questions
- Teacher’s Key of Potential Issues and Questions

Learning Activity

Lessons 5 to 10 each identify an issue related to our three topics: child labour, refugees, and poverty. At the end of each lesson go to the Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues and Inquiry Questions. Ask students to record the issues and potential questions related to the lesson.

Go to Lesson 5 – Iqbal the Carpet Boy: A Story of Child Labour to begin the process of issue exploration.

A list of potential issues related to each lesson is provided at the end of this lesson (Teachers’ Key). A sample entry is provided using information from the graphic novel, Iqbal the Carpet Boy: A Story of Child Labour. The guide provides suggestions; the answers are not definitive. Your students will generate their own.

* See the Teacher’s Key of Potential Issues and Questions at the end of this lesson. These answers serve as suggestions only.
Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues and Inquiry Questions

You will engage in several activities that use stories to illustrate an issue related to poverty, child labour and immigrants/refugees. After engaging with each of the stories, you will need to identify the issues related to that story and think of questions that arise from it.

1. Use the chart on the next page to keep track of the issues because later it will be important for you to pick one that interests you.
2. Many of the stories identify things people have done to address their issue. Go to the Action Ideas (that follow the chart) to keep a record of things a person or group might do to address an issue. At this point actions appear as suggestions only.

Later you will research an issue that interests you most and eventually consider actions that you or your classmates might take to address it. This chart will provide many ideas to get started.

The first row on the next page has been filled out and serves as an example of how you can record your ideas after each activity. The example is based on the graphic novel, *Iqbal the Carpet Boy: A Story of Child Labour*. 
Your Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues and Inquiry Questions

Capture the key ideas from each lesson (for reference later). Provide these charts to individuals or student groups. Also consider making a wall chart to get input from the class as a whole. See Teacher KEY on the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story, Video or Activity</th>
<th>Potential Issues/Topics</th>
<th>Possible Inquiry Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(SAMPLE)</td>
<td>• Child labour • Poverty • Sweatshops • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
<td>• Should parents be allowed to pay their debts through their child’s labour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>• How can conditions change so that poor people are not forced to sell their child’s labour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILD LABOUR:</td>
<td></td>
<td>• How can we ensure that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is enforced? How can we know if our clothing has been made by children?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iqbal the Carpet Boy: A Story of Child Labour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFUGEES: Stories of Refugees – Peer Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFUGEES: Stormy Seas – Jigsaw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD: A Basic Human Right? Lunchroom Leftovers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WATER: A Basic Human Right? Bottle This!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHELTER: A Basic Human Right? People Without Homes Lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Topics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Teacher’s Key of Potential Issues and Questions

These are suggested ideas. This is not a definitive list of “answers,” rather it is a guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story, Video or Activity</th>
<th>Potential Issues/Topics</th>
<th>Possible Inquiry Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(SAMPLE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHILD LABOUR:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *Iqbal the Carpet Boy: A Story of Child Labour* | Child labour  
Poverty  
Sweatshops  
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child | Should parents be allowed to pay their debts through their child’s labour?  
How can conditions change so that poor people are not forced to sell their child’s labour?  
How can we ensure that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is enforced? How can we know if our clothing has been made by children? |
| Lesson 6                 |                         |                           |
| **REFUGEES:**            |                         |                           |
| Stories of Refugees –    |                         |                           |
| Peer Teaching            |                         |                           |
| Book Series              |                         | Each book concludes with a list of actions under the title, “You Can Help!”  
- Life in a refugee camp for children  
- Extremist groups  
- Girls education  
- Islamophobia, prejudice, discrimination  
- Adjusting to a new life  
- Slavery, bondage  
- Child soldiers  
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child  
- Boat people  
- Others? | - Do these ideas make sense? Are they doable? |
| Lesson 7                 |                         |                           |
| **REFUGEES:**            |                         |                           |
| *Stormy Seas – Jigsaw*   |                         |                           |
|                          |                         | Should we sponsor a family?  
- Boat People  
- Anti-Semitism  
- Holocaust  
- Human Traffickers (Pirates)  
- Asylum Seekers  
- Extremist Groups (Taliban)  
- Refugee or Detention camps  
- Others? | - How do we pressure for changes in the law?  
- What more can we learn about the plight of those escaping conflict and oppression? |
| Lesson 8                 |                         |                           |
| **FOOD:**                |                         |                           |
| *A Basic Human Right?*   |                         |                           |
| Lunchroom Leftovers      | Waste  
Consumption  
Environmental Stewardship  
Others? | Should I pack my own lunch and know the quantity and quality?  
How can I reduce food waste?  
What changes can I make by going over the grocery budget with my parents or caregivers?  
Should we start a “no waste” campaign in the school? |
| Lesson 9                 |                         |                           |
| **WATER:**               |                         |                           |
| *A Basic Human Right?*   |                         |                           |
| Bottle This!             | Some people make a lot of money selling water  
Consumption  
Convenience  
Environmental hazards  
Access to drinkable water | Should we allow the selling of water or should it be free? |
| Lesson 10                |                         |                           |
| **SHELTER:**             |                         |                           |
| *A Basic Human Right?*   |                         |                           |
| People Without Homes     | Poverty  
Security and Safety  
Sense of belonging (family and community) | How can housing be provided for people who cannot afford it?  
What are the root causes of homelessness? |
Overview

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to examine the issue of child labour using a story that can also serve as an exemplar for completing the Put a Pin-In-It Chart (see Lesson 4). The main story features true events of Iqbal Masih, an Indian boy who became an indentured worker in the carpet industry at age 6. Reading graphic novels is an excellent way to increase skills in literacy, engage interest, and explore issues. The graphic novel, *Iqbal: The Little Carpet Boy*, can be used to create dramatic freeze frames, readers theatre scenarios or storyboards (see Ideas for follow-up). There are numerous opportunities for stimulating critical thinking about social actions students can take. Suggestions for follow-up are provided to stimulate cross curricular connections in drama, art, and social studies.

Inquiry Question

Should children be forced to work?

English Language Arts 6 Learning Outcomes

2.2 Respond to texts

Experience various texts

- experience oral, print and other media texts from a variety of cultural traditions and genres, such as autobiographies, travelogues, comics, short films, myths, legends and dramatic performances
- explain own point of view about oral, print and other media texts
- make connections between own life and characters and ideas in oral, print and other media texts
- discuss common topics or themes in a variety of oral, print and other media texts
- discuss the author’s, illustrator’s, storyteller’s or filmmaker’s intention or purpose
Construct meaning from text

- observe and discuss aspects of human nature revealed in oral, print and other media texts, and relate them to those encountered in the community
- summarize oral, print or other media texts, indicating the connections among events, characters and settings
- identify or infer reasons for a character’s actions or feelings
- make judgements and inferences related to events, characters, setting and main ideas of oral, print and other media texts

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Skills and Processes

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE

6.S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed

COMMUNICATION

6.S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:
- express opinions and present perspectives and information in a variety of forms such as oral or written presentations, speeches or debates
- express reasons for their ideas and opinions, in oral or written form
- respond appropriately to comments and questions, using language respectful of human diversity
- listen to others to understand their perspectives
Learning Competencies

- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Problem Solving
- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Cultural and Global Citizen

Time

- 1 – 3 class periods

Materials

- Student Learning Guide B-2 – Know/Want to Know/Learned (KWL) Chart
  The Clothes on Our Backs: Inside a Garment Factory (2:29 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qky39OWdXX0
- For the Teacher: Strategies for Teaching Graphic Novels (end of the lesson)
Key Concepts

- **Child Labour** – when children are employed or forced to work when they should be in school or playing.
- **Sweatshop** – is a term for a workplace that has very poor, socially-unacceptable working conditions. The work may be difficult, dangerous, climatically challenged, or underpaid.
- **Exploitation** – when workers are not paid adequately, they become unfairly indebted, or are used and abused. This can happen to people who lack power or are desperate.

Learning Activities

Opener

Ask students: Do you think children should work to help their parents? If so, under what circumstances? Generate some ideas from a whole class discussion. This will indicate to you how students perceive work done by children. Prompts might be:

- What is the difference between helping out and working?
- Do you help your parents? Do you get paid for doing so? Is this a good idea or not?
- What conditions make child labour acceptable or not acceptable?

Show the video clip: *The Clothes on our Backs: Inside a Garment Factory* (2:29 minutes) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qky39OWdXX0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qky39OWdXX0)

On October 11, 2013, Raveena Aulakh a writer from the Toronto Star worked undercover in a Bangladesh garment factory and experienced firsthand working conditions there. She wrote an article titled, “I got hired at a Bangladesh sweatshop. Meet my 9-year-old boss.”

**Option A – Know, Want to Know, Learned (KWL)**

Place students in pairs or groups of three and show the clip *The Clothes on our backs: Inside a garment factory*. Use Student Learning Guide B-2 – KWL Chart to help them generate thoughts and ideas.
If KWL Chart is new to you or your students, explain it by asking them to consider things about child labour that they already KNOW in the first column. Second, write questions about what they WANT TO KNOW in the second column. Return to the chart at the end of the lesson (or the end of the unit after doing research on this topic) to have them record things that they LEARNED. Share their learnings with everyone.

**Option B – Whole Group Discussion**

After viewing the video clip discuss:

- What is your first impression of this situation?
- How would you feel if you were one of the children who worked in these conditions?
- What is your first thought about what should happen?
- Do you think that children in Canada worked to support their families in the past? Now?

**Main Learning Activity: Graphic Novel Analysis**

**STEP 1**

Explain that students will read the graphic novel, *Iqbal: The Little Carpet Boy*, to better understand one true story of conditions that some children undergo as part of a system that leaves families in debt and forced to offer the labour of their children to pay money back to ruthless factory owners (see brief synopsis below).

**Synopsis – *Iqbal: The Little Carpet Boy***

Iqbal Mashih was around 5 or 6 when he started working in the carpet factory. He worked from early morning until evening and was often treated badly. When his mother, Anayat, needed money for an operation, she took out a loan from a carpet factory owner. The loan, or “peshgi”, was taken out in Iqbal’s name. That means that Iqbal owes Ghullah the 5000 rupees (100 US dollars) that his mother’s operation cost. Now Iqbal is a debt slave and the factory owner is in charge of his life.
Use the following graphic to stimulate interest in the story students are about to read.

Retrieved from: https://i.pinimg.com/originals/2a/64/37/2a6437b4b5de9f7fb2e2c7da586b8245.jpg

**STEP 2: Silent Discussion – Language Arts/Social Studies**

Cut out key panels from the graphic novel and paste each onto a different large, blank poster paper. Post these randomly around the room or place them on tables. Provide each student with a coloured pen and ask them to circulate around the room without talking. Tell them they can write their own ideas or respond to what others say. After the students have circulated, post the pages for all to see. Conduct a verbal debriefing of what they wrote on the sheets.
**STEP 3: Story Analysis**

Students will analyze the graphic novel genre using three elements: words, artwork, and layout.

- The words tell us the story by providing important narration and dialogue using word bubbles.
- The artwork provides symbols and images to help determine characters’ attributes, setting, mood, and action. Deliberate use of colours, shading, and pencil pressure convey meaning to bring the story to life.
- Layout provides the sequencing for the plot line and is viewed in frames. Layout gives the story logic in terms of the story’s beginning, middle, and end.

Write these three elements on the board and generate a discussion that focuses on each category.

**SHARE BOX**

Ask questions that require students to explain and highlight the story’s meaning in general. Some prompts for discussion might be:

- How does the graphic novelist narrator want us to think and feel about the characters he describes? What key words are used to do this?
- What images does the artist use to convey thoughts and feelings?
- How is the story sequenced to convey meaning? Does the sequencing follow a logical pattern or were you confused?
- This graphic novel is based on a true story. What is your thinking about the situation Iqbal finds himself in? Is it fair that he was forced to pay his family’s debts? What could he do? What might others do?
- Discuss the terms *sweatshop* and *exploitation*. How do these terms play out in this story?
STEP 4: Bringing It Home

Bring It Home: Child Labour in Canada – It is not uncommon for Canadians to think that child labour is a condition experienced only in developing countries. Consider presenting facts relating to child labour in Alberta.

- The Alberta Federation of Labour’s policy and information on "Alberta’s Child Labour Laws: The Need for Change" https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/afl/pages/2318/attachments/original/1305755182/AFL_CHILDLABOUR_220910_FINAL%20(2).pdf?1305755182

Examine this two-page document and use it as a stimulus for thinking about:

- Types of jobs children do in Alberta
- Statistics on child labour
- Reasons for child labour
- Children’s rights and strategies for addressing abuse or overreach

STEP 5: Back to the KWL Chart

A way to check for understanding is to have students complete the final column in the chart. What have they learned? Collect their ideas and share these with the class. Consider using Kahoot or Menti or similar sharing technology to highlight what students have learned.

Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues and Inquiry Questions

Ask students to go to their Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin-In-It chart and generate their own ideas about what issues are raised in the story and identify the questions the story stimulates. Use the Teacher Key (end of this lesson) to double check their answers and provide formative feedback. You may find that students will come up with other valid ideas or questions.
Ideas for follow-up – Connecting with Other Subject Areas

Drama – Readers Theatre

Convert the graphic novel, Iqbal: The Little Carpet Boy, by rewriting it so that it can be presented in readers theatre format. See one strategy for doing this below.

To prepare for Readers Theatre, teach all students the skills of choral speaking (see the list of techniques below). Use the Alberta Education drama curriculum to identify the skills appropriate to Grade 6. Use any familiar rhyme (such as Jack and Jill) to provide and practice the basic skills. Write the lyrics to Jack and Jill on the board. It is helpful to post definitions of each skill so students can refer to them throughout the process of interpretation. Also review and practice skills of interpretation (pitch, pace/rate, pause, intensity, and volume) suggesting ways that these skills can provide meaning for words and phrases. Again, practice these skills using a popular rhyme. Determine the skills most suited to your class and limit or increase the skills based on their grade and level.

Skills of Choral Speaking

- Unison – all group members speak together at the same time
- Repetitively – say the same word or phrase over again for emphasis
- Responsively – have part of the group respond to the others (could be like question and answer, male and female, and so on)
- Cumulatively – start with one voice and add on voices throughout the verse or stanza or vice versa (decrease numbers of voices)
- Solo – one voice speaks

Interpretive Skills

- Pitch – making voices go high or low
- Pace/Rate – speeding up or slowing down, tempo
- Pause – Stopping or pausing for emphasis
- Intensity – degree of the strength of the word or phrase (can indicate degree of passion)
- Volume – loudness or softness of voices from yelling to whispers
Drama – Freeze Frames

After reading the graphic novel, ask students to select key panels that highlight main ideas in the novel. Designate individuals to take the role of characters in the story. They can use suggestive costuming and props. Practice mimicking key panels and freezing the picture. Create a sequence that provides the basic story line. If you have access to an old-fashioned overhead projector, cut a circle in a piece of paper to create a spotlight. Dim the lights and view the scenes in order. Create a script to narrate the essence of the story.

Language Arts - Sequence the Story

Cut key panels of the graphic novel up and paste them to index cards. In groups of six, take turns reading the various cards aloud. Ask students to decide the logical order and justify their responses. Once the sequencing is completed and confirmed, they can discuss the characters, theme, and style.

Social Studies – Assessment Idea

Draw a diagram of one of the characters in the novel on a large sheet of paper. Use this to discuss the perspectives of various characters to understand their motivations. Use round table to share ideas based on different characters.

For the Teachers: Strategies for Teaching Graphic Novels

How to teach ... graphic novels
https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2015/nov/30/how-to-teach-graphic-novels

Using Graphic Novels to Teach the Classics
https://prezi.com/mkxa6aclo8t/using-graphic-novels-to-teach-the-classics/
**KWL Chart**

Watch the video *The Clothes on Our Backs: Inside a Garment Factory* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qky39OWdXX0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qky39OWdXX0)

**Step 1** – In the first column, list the things you already know about children who work at jobs that adults usually do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOW</th>
<th>WANT TO KNOW</th>
<th>LEARNED</th>
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Overview

It is very effective to put your students in the position of being the teacher. This learning activity asks students in Grade 6 to create learning activities to engage younger grades in learning about refugee children’s experiences. In doing so, they will better understand others’ lives and be prepared to take action themselves to help newcomer students integrate into their schools and communities.

To promote initial engagement, we use one or more books from the series Leaving My Homeland. There are eleven books in the series; each is titled A Refugee’s Journey from – Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Columbia, Guatemala, Myanmar, Somalia, Yemen, and South Sudan.

Each book offers fictionalized accounts of events in each country from children’s perspectives. The short books provide relevant visuals and highlight historical, geographic, and statistical information. They are written at a Grade 4 level. They are available at a reasonable cost in soft cover.

Make a connection with another teacher of younger grades in the school who would like to work with your class. Explain that it will provide both groups with a unique opportunity to teach and learn. Show the teacher this lesson and discuss any possible changes or adaptations that may be required.

It is easiest for groups of three Grade 6 students to work with small groups (of about 4 or 5) younger students over the course of 2 or 3 classes.

Inquiry Question

How can I help younger students understand the experiences of refugee children?
Values and Attitudes
6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
- value citizens’ participation in a democratic society
6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

Knowledge and Understanding
6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
- How can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?

Skills and Processes
6.5.2 develop skills of historical thinking:
- explain the historical contexts of key events of a given time period
- use examples of events to describe cause and effect and change over time
6.5.3 develop skills of geographic thinking:
- construct and interpret various types of maps (i.e. historical, physical, political maps) to broaden understanding of topics being studied
6.5.4. demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
- consider multiple perspectives when dealing with issues, decision making and problem solving
- collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with problems and issues
6.5.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:
- demonstrate the skills of compromise to reach group consensus
- work collaboratively with others to achieve a common goal
6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed
Learning Competencies

- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Problem Solving
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Communication

Time

- 2 – 3 class periods

Materials

- **Book series** – *Leaving My Homeland* (2017) – select the books that are most relevant to your context. Several different countries are featured.
- **Student Learning Guide B-3** – Getting Ready to Teach: What’s Important?
- **Student Learning Guide B-4** – Sharing the Data
- **Student Learning Guide B-5** – Our Lesson Plan
- **Student Learning Guide B-6** – What We Learned from Peer Teaching
Key Concepts

- **Refugees** people who leave their homeland due to persecution, natural disasters, or war. They leave to seek protection or shelter in another country.
- **Immigrant** – person who leaves their homeland to live permanently in another country. They seek citizenship for a variety of reasons such as better living and working conditions or family reunification.
- **Temporary Resident** – a person who lives in a foreign country usually to perform a specific job but is not granted citizenship and has a limited time to be there.
- **Asylum Seeker** – a refugee who is seeking protection or shelter in another country.
- **Internally Displaced Person (IDP)** people who are forced from their homes during a conflict but remain in their own country.

Learning Activities

**STEP 1: Getting Started**

Let the class know that they will have the opportunity to be teachers. This means that they will develop a lesson plan to help the students in your selected grade understand the experiences of refugee children. You will help them to find out what it is like for them to leave their home country because of war, persecution, and/or natural disasters. They will prepare for their teaching in the same way a teacher does. Ask them to tell you what they think a teacher needs to do to get ready to teach a lesson.

Ultimately, they will:

1. Identify a learning outcome or purpose and pose a question for inquiry.
2. Prepare themselves by reading a story book and doing research relating to the topic of child refugees.
3. Find materials to teach the lesson.
4. Develop a learning activity.
5. Think of ways to find out what students learned (assessment).
STEP 2: Learning the Background

A good way to stimulate interest with your Grade 6 students, is to have them select one of the books from the series, Leaving My Homeland. It is best if your students are placed in groups of about three with each group using a different book. Each book will be presented by members of the HOME GROUP (each person in the group uses a different book). All the books in the series are formatted similarly and common themes and ideas are repeated. Each country’s history and geography are explained, and the book features a story of one child who becomes a refugee.

It is critical that before your students teach others, they are familiar with the story in their book. They will need to read the books aloud to each other to get a sense of the content. Use Student Learning Guide B-3 – Getting Started: What’s Important? to help them focus on the content of their book. Then use Student Learning Guide B-4 – Sharing the Data to focus on the knowledge components of the book.

STEP 3: Determining the Purpose and Guiding Question

After everyone has read their book and discussed the content using Student Learning Guide B-3, undertake a whole class brainstorm to begin to discuss how they might begin planning to teach their story to Grade 4 students.

- Hold a discussion on what the books may have had in common and create a mind map on the board to illustrate the commonalities.
- What do you think is the main reason, I, as a teacher, would use this book in social studies? Write their answers on the board and tease out the purpose for teaching the lesson using their ideas and suggestions.
- If you were going to ask a big question pertaining to all the books, what might it be? Again, examine the various questions and determine the criteria to make a choice about a good inquiry question. It is probably best to agree as a class on one common question.

Highlight the agreed upon question and tell them that this will be what their lesson will seek to answer.
STEP 4: Develop Learning Activities

See Student Learning Guide B-5 – Our Lesson Plan to help your students think and plan their learning activities for Grade 4 students. There are any number of creative and engaging activities you can suggest. One idea that works well is to create booklets that feature ideas they gleaned from their own understanding of their stories. Use computers to create pages for a booklet. The booklet can include word searches, maps, colouring pages and pictures – anything that will engage the younger students in thinking about the stories.

Take these booklets to the younger students’ class. Have one or two of your students work with groups of four of them. The younger students first read the book or book selections and then under supervision, complete relevant pages in the booklets. The Grade 6 students can assess their work. Consider providing stickers for them to use for this purpose.

STEP 5: Actions Younger Students Can Take

End by focusing on ways Grade 4s can help newcomer students feel more at home in school. What can students do as a group and/or as individuals? Discuss the list and ask, which actions are best? Why?

Make a list and post it in the younger students’ classroom. Encourage your students to assist in following through on ideas that seem good and doable.

STEP 6: Sharing What We Learned from Peer Teaching

Use Student Learning Guide B-6 – What We Learned from Peer Teaching to help your students reflect on their experience as teachers. There should be a rich discussion around the prompts provided in the handout. Their answers can serve as a formative assessment tool too.
Review their responses to these questions:

- The best part of the lesson or things that went well for us were . . .
- If we were to do this over again, we would change . . .
- Overall, we think our students learned . . .

Working with Younger Kids

- How many of you think you might like to be a teacher or work with children in some way?
- What jobs besides teacher can you think of?
- What are some of the challenges working with children?

STEP 7: Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues, Inquiry Questions and Possible Actions

Complete the section of the chart pertaining to this learning experience.
Getting Ready to Teach: What’s Important?

You will be given the opportunity to be a TEACHER! An important thing about teaching someone else, is for you to know the topic yourself. That’s why you need to read and understand the book you’ve been assigned before you make a plan to teach it to a small group of younger students.

1. You have just read your book titled _________________________________.

2. Where did this refugee child come from and where did they settle?
   - Find the country of origin and locate it on this map. Label and colour it.
   - Find the country of settlement and label it on this map. Colour it a different colour.

3. What is this book about? What important facts did you learn about being a refugee?

4. What do you think is most interesting fact in this book? Why?
5. What do you think a younger student would find most interesting? Why?

6. What terms or ideas or words might a younger student need to know to ensure that they understand this book?


8. There is a section at the end of your book called, You Can Help! What do you think of the ideas they provide? Which of these ideas do you think would be best to pursue? Why?

9. Compare your answers with the peers who read the same book as you. Remember, it is very important for a teacher to have a good understanding of the material before you teach!
Sharing the DATA

In your HOME GROUP, use this chart to record other's answers as you take turns sharing information about your books. Wait for your teacher to give you the signal to start a new topic.

STEP 1
Start by referring to your own outline map of the world and label each country and its major cities – ones that are featured in this study. Show each other where the countries are and fill them in on the maps you have.

STEP 2
Review your definitions of the terms
- Refugee
- Immigrant
- Internally Displaced Person (IDP)

STEP 3

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What are the geographical features (landforms, climate and vegetation) of your country?

What conditions led to war or conflict in each country?
### STEP 4
Discuss the experiences children had while living in refugee camps. What conditions did they experience?

### STEP 5
Refer to *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children*. List the rights of children that were violated in most of these situations. Were there any rights upheld?
Our Lesson Plan

Every teacher needs to consider what they will teach, to whom they will teach (in this case small groups of Grade 4 students), how they will teach and how will they know what students learned. Your job with your HOME Group is to teach a small group of Grade 4 students about your book. Your group will use this as a planner for your lesson.

Peer Teachers in our group are:

Title of the Lesson:

What will we teach?
Purpose – What do we want younger students to learn?

We want our younger students to know . . .

We want our younger students to be able to . . .

Inquiry Question
What is the main question this topic explores?

How will we teach?
Learning Activities – What engaging activities will help them understand their topic?

How will we know what students learned?
Assessment – How will we test for understanding?
What We Learned from Peer Teaching

After teaching your lesson to younger students, it is important to think about how it went.

In your HOME Group consider these prompts in thinking about your teaching experience. Discuss each prompt and write key thoughts on this page.

- The best part of the lesson or things that went well for us were . . .

- If we were to do this over again, we would change . . .

- Overall, we think our students learned . . .
Overview

This lesson is based upon Mary Beth Leatherdale and Eleanor Shakespeare’s 2017 book titled, *Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees*. The learning activity has students involved in a cooperative jigsaw designed to help them better understand what it is like for a young refugee to leave their homeland because of war or persecution. In each of the five true stories, the main character and his or her family seek refuge in Europe, North America, or Australia. The asylum seekers have little or no hope of ever returning home. It is recommended that you have a minimum of six copies of the book available for this lesson (one per group). It is available at a reasonable cost.

**NOTE:** Any stories that you find in your own school’s library on the topic of child refugees can be substituted for the stories mentioned in *Stormy Seas*.

The jigsaw strategy has each student working in two groups; the EXPERT Group (those who focus on the same chapter) and a HOME Group (a heterogeneous group where they share their different chapters). Each chapter of *Stormy Seas* tells the story of one child or young person from a different country and a different time period.

**Guiding Question**

What is it like to be a child or young person who must leave her or his homeland because of war, persecution, or natural disaster?
Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
- value citizens’ participation in a democratic society
6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies
6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
  - How can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?

Skills and Processes
DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.5.2 develop skills of historical thinking:
- explain the historical contexts of key events of a given time period
- use examples of events to describe cause and effect and change over time
6.5.3 develop skills of geographic thinking:
- construct and interpret various types of maps (i.e. historical, physical, political maps) to broaden understanding of topics being studied
6.5.4. demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
- consider multiple perspectives when dealing with issues, decision making and problem solving
- collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with problems and issues

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE
6.5.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:
- demonstrate the skills of compromise to reach group consensus
- work collaboratively with others to achieve a common goal
6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed
Learning Competencies

- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Communication
- Problem Solving

Time

- 2 – 3 class periods

Materials

- You Tube clip *Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees* (1 minute)
- Student Learning Guide B-7 – Exploring Our Story of a Young Boat Refugee
- Student Learning Guide B-8 – Sharing the Stories
- Student Learning Guide B-9 – If I Were a Newcomer
- Background Information for the Teacher: The Refugee Convention (end of lesson)
Key Concepts

- **Refugees** - people who leave their homeland due to persecution, natural disasters, or war. They leave to seek protection or shelter in another country.
- **Pirates** - people who rob others mainly on the high seas.
- **People Smuggler** - people who, for a fee, provide illegal transportation of persons to another country.
- **Boat People** - people who flee their homeland by boat and hope to land in a place that offers asylum.
- **Refugee Camp** - place that houses displaced people that have nowhere to go until they are given asylum in another country.
- **Prejudice** - to prejudge others usually based on negative stereotypes.
- **Asylum Seeker** - a refugee who is seeking protection or shelter in another country.
- **United Nations Refugee Convention** - see end of lesson "For the Teacher" for more information on the legal guidelines relating to refugees.

Note for the Teacher – United Nations Refugee Convention

Seeking asylum for protection from persecution is legal.

The United Nations 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (The Refugee Convention) was drafted in response to the many thousands of displaced people in Europe after the Second World War (1939-1945).

Under the Refugee Convention a refugee is a person who is:
- outside their own country, and
- has a well-founded fear of being persecuted due to his/her race, religion, nationality, member of a particular social group or political opinion, and is,
- unable or unwilling to return.

Many countries, including Australia, have signed and ratified (legally implemented) the Refugee Convention. This means that countries are obliged to help individuals who are dislocated from their home country because of the threat of persecution.

By signing the Refugee Convention each country shows their intention to implement the legislation and policy that is required in order to support the refugee protection process.
Countries that are not signatories to the Refugee Convention have no international obligation to accept people seeking asylum, although many still do.


### Learning Activities

**STEP 1: Getting Started**

Introduce this lesson by asking the class if anyone has ever moved to a new school, town, country, etc. If students are comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings, ask them to do so.

- Ask students to think about the challenges of moving to a new place within Canada or the province.
- What was the best thing about moving?
- What is the hardest thing about moving?
- Can you imagine moving to a place where you don’t know the language, customs, or even share the same culture and/or faith as others?

Explain that we will be examining stories of kids about their age who have moved from war torn countries to Canada, the USA, and European countries to learn about their experiences, challenges, and rewards.

As a way to introduce the book, show the one minute YouTube clip, *Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees*.

- **EXPERT Group** – focuses on the same chapter/story and ensure they know and can teach their chapter/story. They use *Student Learning Guide B-7 – Exploring Our Story of a Young Boat Refugee* to ensure knowledge of their part.

- **HOME Group** – heterogeneous group that comprises five different people who studied different chapters. This group shares information and records each other’s information on *Student Learning Guide B-8 – Sharing the Stories*.
STEP 2: Jigsaw – Form EXPERT GROUPS

Organize class into five groups of equal numbers (5 per group). Those in the EXPERT Group will be assigned one of the chapters from the book *Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees* listed below.

In a class of 25 there would be 5 students assigned to each of the 5 topics. Adjust according to your class size.

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<th>Chapter Title</th>
<th>Main Character, Country and year</th>
<th>Starts on page #</th>
<th>Expert Groups’ Members (list students reading the same topic – about 5 in a group)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Turned Away</td>
<td>RUTH from Germany (1939)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fighting to Survive</td>
<td>PHU from Vietnam (1979)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Stormy Seas</td>
<td>JOSÉ from Cuba (1980)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fenced In</td>
<td>NAJEEBA from Afghanistan (2000)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Nothing Left to Lose</td>
<td>MOHAMED from Ivory Coast (2006)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Provide each group with one copy of the book. To familiarize students with the content, ask students to take turns reading their chapter aloud in their small groups.

**STEP 3: Individual Work**

After the chapter is read and pictures viewed, ask students to use *Student Learning Guide B-7 – Exploring Our Story of a Young Boat Refugee* to individually write their thoughts about how they understood the content and the context of the story.

Before moving on, make sure that the information in *Student Learning Guide B-7* is correct and accurate. This is done among EXPERT Group members. Circulate around the classroom to answer questions or help clarify information.

After discussing and clarifying answers, talk about creative ways to share information with peers who had different chapters (in a seven to ten-minute time block). Provide each student with *Student Learning Guide B-8 – Sharing the Stories*. Use the chart to fill in the section relating to your own topic first.

**STEP 4: Sharing in the HOME GROUP (groups composed for each topic)**

Move students into their HOME Groups – one where each person studied a different story. They will take turns helping understand and learn about each other’s stories. Ensure that they continue to complete the chart on *Student Learning Guide B-8*.

Organize the class into heterogeneous groups with one of each of the five topics in each group. You could number off each expert group (1 – 5). All the 1’s are now a HOME group, the 2’s are another HOME Group, and so on.

**STEP 5: Debrief**

Debrief the whole class to address the Guiding Question: What is it like to be a child who must leave her or his homeland because of war or persecution?

After the data has been recorded on *Student Learning Guide B-8*, take time to allow for discussion of key ideas in the HOME Groups. You may ask students to write their thoughts on large sheets of paper that can be posted. Consider having them do a Benefits, Challenges and Inquiries, or Questions large chart prior to writing.
Review the terms and ask for examples from any of the stories that illustrate the terms. See definitions under “Key Concepts.”

- Refugee
- Pirates
- People Smuggler
- Boat People
- Refugee Camp
- Prejudice
- Asylum Seekers

STEP 6: Assessment

Most of the children in these stories went to another country. Consider the positives and hardships for them in leaving their home country. What question might one have in this situation?

Consider the children who left their countries. What it would have been like to leave?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITIVES +</th>
<th>HARDSHIPS −</th>
<th>QUESTIONS?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Review the Background Information for the Teacher: The Refugee Convention (end of lesson) and provide key points to your students. What are country’s responsibilities when it comes to taking in refugees?

Use Student Learning Guide B-9 – If I Were a Newcomer to write individual or group answers addressing the question, “What is it like to be a child who must leave her or his homeland because of war, persecution or natural disasters?” The assessment includes a grading rubric.
STEP 7: Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues, Inquiry Questions and Possible Actions

Complete the section of the chart pertaining to this learning experience.

**Activities for Extension**

1. Groups that came to Canada as Refugees

*Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees* provides a timeline (page vi) that provides examples of other historical events that have led to groups fleeing their homelands by boat mainly because of persecution in their home countries. Find time to explore other events. Students can describe conditions that lead to their exodus, find connections among the various groups regarding their motivations and learn more about how their lives turned out in their new country (if they could stay). If they were not allowed to stay, explore the government policies that kept them out or sent them back home.

Conclude by discussing the responsibilities we have as citizens in helping victims of injustice, persecution, and war.

Two examples are:

**The Komagata Maru Incident** – involved the Japanese steamship Komagata Maru on which a group of citizens from India attempted to emigrate to Canada in 1914 but were denied entry and forced to return to Calcutta (present-day Kolkata), India.
Voyage of the Damned 1939, Canada turned away the MS St. Louis with 907 Jewish refugees aboard. They were forced back to Europe where many died.

2. Canada: A History of Refugees
This Canadian government site documents key historical time periods starting in 1770 that focus on people coming to Canada as refugees from such places as Poland, Ukraine, Chile, Indochina, Bangladesh, Kosovo and so on. Use it to identify topics of interest for future research. Note: the site is not definitive.

3. View a Documentary Film
4.1 Miles is a documentary showing the efforts of a coast guard captain on a small Greek island whose people are suddenly charged with saving thousands of refugees from drowning at sea. This film is very graphic and could be disturbing to some students. Ensure that you preview it prior to viewing in class. Clips can be used to show students the trauma often associated with people escaping their home countries. 4.1 Miles
https://vimeo.com/185717440 (21minutes)
4. Review the United Nations Refugee Convention 
   (see the end of this lesson)

Ask students to bring in their own stories of refugees coming to Canada. The winter of 2016/17 saw many people trying to leave the USA often leaving under harsh conditions. The people were mainly worried about their status as refugees in the USA. The Trump administration was said to be introducing new policies which they feared would result in deportation or loss of citizenship. They saw Canada as a place of safety and refuge. Use the following picture to stimulate discussion and follow up.

What do you think of when you see this picture?
What questions does it raise?

Family members from Somalia are helped across the border into Canada from the United States Friday, February 17, 2017 near Hemmingford, Que., as part of a growing number of asylum seekers braving the elements to illicitly enter Canada.

With permission of The Canadian Press/Paul Chiasson

See more on this story at: Global News, February 18, 2017 http://globalnews.ca/news/3258012/mounties-refugees-quebec/
Exploring the Story of a Young Boat Refugee

Using information from the chapter you have been assigned, individually, answer these questions in preparation for sharing first with your Expert Group (peers who did the same chapter/story).

My Thoughts About this Story

1. My book focuses on the story of ___________________________ from the country of ________________. He or she was ________ years old when they left. Eventually, the family ended up in___________________.

2. What are the geographical features (landforms, climate and vegetation) of the home country?

3. Find a map that features your young boat person’s home country and paste it onto this page. You can include the surrounding countries too.

4. List the conditions that led to conflict in the country from which your young person fled. What historical facts are most important?

5. Is there an example from your story that illustrated the idea of persecution? What is it?
6. What was the journey like for your young refugee?

7. Pick out one quotation from the story that gives us an insight into how the young refugee thought and felt. What does the quotation mean to you?

8. Try to imagine that this situation was happening to you. How would you think and feel? If this was you, would you want to return to your home country? Why or why not?

9. What is the International Law on Refugees? What is the most important part of the Law?

10. Define the terms that came up in your story.

   - Refugee
   - Pirates
   - People Smuggler
   - Boat People
   - Refugee Camp
   - Prejudice
   - Asylum Seekers
Sharing the Stories

Each young refugee featured in this book lived in a place and time that was not safe for them or their family. You will share your impressions of the young person you focused on in your EXPERT Group with your HOME GROUP. The information you exchange will help you understand the forces that require people to make hard decisions, often under desperate circumstances. Use this chart to record other’s answers as you take turns sharing information about your young boat refugee. Wait for your teacher to give you the signal to start a new topic as you go around the table.

STEP 1

When it is your turn, start by referring to your own map showing the geographical location of the home country of your young refugee. Write the home country name on this map draw a line to the country of final destination and label it.
Complete this chart to help see the similarities and differences among the young refugees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RUTH</th>
<th>PHU</th>
<th>JOSÉ</th>
<th>NAJEEBA</th>
<th>MOHMED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is his or her home country?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How old was he or she when the story began?</td>
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<tr>
<td>When was the family forced to flee?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why did the family leave? What were the conditions that led the decision to leave?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What country did the young refugee eventually settle in (if they found a new place to go)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What were their thoughts and feelings before, during and after the boat trip?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If I Were a Newcomer

What’s it like to be a child who must leave her or his homeland because of war or persecution?

Try to picture yourself in the situations of the young refugees we just learned about and answer the question above. From a newcomer point of view, think about the action you would most like kids in your school to take to help you adjust to living in Canada, in school, and in the community. Use the charts and map to provide supporting information for your ideas.

Grading Rubric

What is it like to be a child who must leave her or his homeland because of war, persecution or natural disasters?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>EXCELLENT 3</th>
<th>VERY GOOD 2</th>
<th>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant and valid reasons are given that address the main question.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The writing draws on information from all the stories to provide examples of thoughts and feelings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The writing shows the ability to empathize with struggles of refugee children.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies ways to help newcomer students that will work in our context.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes in first person. There is evidence of proofreading and checked spelling and grammar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments/Suggestions

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Overview

For students to better identify with social issues, it is important that they first connect with issues they can relate to personally. This activity will do that! What we throw away tells us a lot about our attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs. “Throwaways” show us what we value and what we take for granted.

To stimulate thinking related to inequality and issues related to poverty, we will focus on food—one of the basic human needs. As we all know, food is a fundamental requirement to human survival. Access to food is not always a given. Often, we take food for granted; we waste it, or we don’t think of it as a human right. The ability to access food is not the same for everyone. This lesson is designed to bring the issue of food; its consumption, disposal, and importance to a more conscious level. It will help launch critical questions related to food issues and help students identify questions for deeper research and action.

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes

6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
   • value citizens’ participation in a democratic society

6.1.2 demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles of democracy by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
   • What are the rights and responsibilities of citizens living in a representative democracy?

6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
   • How can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?

note

It is essential that you collect food waste from other anonymous classrooms rather than using the bags from your own class. This will avoid potential embarrassment and possible stigmatization.
Skills and Processes

DIMENSIONS OF THINKING

6.S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
- critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
- re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
- generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities
- seek responses to inquiries from various authorities through electronic media

6.S.4. demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
- collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with problems and issues

6.S.4. demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- solve problems requiring the sorting, organizing, classifying and extending of data, using such tools as calculators, spreadsheets, databases or hypertext technology
- use graphic organizers, such as mind mapping/webbing, flow charting and outlining, to present connections among ideas and information in a problem-solving environment

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE

6.S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed
Learning Competencies

- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Managing Information
- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Problem Solving
- Creativity & Innovation
- Student Learning Guide B-10 – Cartoon Analysis

Time

- One class period
- Collect two or three bags of garbage (after lunch) from the school cafeteria or other anonymous classrooms

Materials

- 2 – 3 large garbage bags
- A box of child-sized rubber gloves
- Three plastic tarps to lay on the floor
- Large weigh scales (if possible)
- Student Learning Guide B-10 – Cartoon Analysis


### Key Concepts

- Consumption – to use something.
- Waste – the things we throw away because we no longer need or use them

### Learning Activities

**STEP 1: Sorting Food**

Organize desks in a large circle facing inward or have students sit on the floor in a large circle. Place the three plastic tarps and the filled, unopened garbage bags (collected after lunch from other classrooms or the school cafeteria) in the centre of the circle.

Tell the students that we will ask three or four student volunteers (who will wear plastic gloves) to sort garbage into pre-established piles based on the type of waste that we find. Prior to opening the bags, brainstorm and list on the whiteboard items they think they will find in the bags. Separate waste into the following three categories:

1. whole, uneaten food
2. partially eaten food
3. true waste

While student volunteers are sorting, ask all other students to observe the activity so that they are ready to share their thoughts and feelings after the sorting and weighing is done.

**STEP 2: Weighing Food**

Ask other students to weigh the food waste in each pile. Record and post the results for each category.

**STEP 3: Thinking about the Food**

This step requires that students verbalize their impressions or reactions to the different piles of waste.

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*note: Usually, there is a significant amount of uneaten food.*
Stimulate their thinking by asking them to first share their impressions and insights with a partner who is sitting close by.

Prompts to focus on what their impressions are of the piles is a first step.

• What are your impressions as you gaze at these piles?
• Are you surprised by what you are seeing?
• How do you feel about what you see?
• Which pile is the largest? Smallest?
• Can you remember what you personally threw away after eating lunch today?
• What are the impacts of wasting food?

What does this activity tell you about our values and beliefs?

You might want to consider using an electronic method to get student reactions. For example, ask these questions using Word Cloud to solicit impressions.

STEP 4: Assessment

This step asks students to probe more deeply into what drives our eating behaviours. You can follow-up with any number of methods to ask the question, what does this activity tell you about our relationship to food?

1. **Brainstorm List** – The quickest method is to ask students in a whole group to list their reasons for throwing out some or part of our lunches and post them for all to see.

2. **Concept Map** – Small groups could each create a concept map on paper or using a technology (such as Mindmeister, Bubbl.us or any software your school district supports). Use their concept maps to reveal their impressions and explore their thinking on the topic of consumption and waste.

3. **Write your Ideas** – Ask students to write a paragraph that asks them to personally reflect on the activity and suggest reasons for behaviours related to consumption and waste. Ask them to share their key observations or reflections with others. Help them to speculate on the causes of food waste and consumption. Provide formative feedback.

STEP 5: Cartoon Analysis

Use **Student Learning Guide B – 10 – Cartoon Analysis** to consider some opinions about the issues related to food consumption and waste. In small groups, discuss the cartoons and their messages. Some questions are given to prompt thinking.
STEP 6: Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues, Inquiry Questions and Possible Actions

Complete the section of the chart pertaining to this learning experience.

Follow-up Activities

Use these now or save these for the next section when students will be researching their own topics.


  Wasted! The Story of Food Waste aims to solve the problem of food waste by changing the way people buy, cook, recycle, and eat food. The world’s most influential chefs demonstrate how to make the most of every kind of food, transforming what most people consider scraps into incredible, delicious dishes that create a more secure food system.


- Grocery Wars – Food Waste in Canada – An Epidemic! Food Starter, Jan. 28, 2117.
Cartoon Analysis

Examine the following cartoons with your partner or group. What point is being made? Use the prompts after each cartoon to guide your thinking.

There is No Away to Throw To

- Who might the woman in the cartoon be/represent?

- What is she doing?

- Why is she doing it?

- Is she solving a problem or creating one? Why?
• What do you throw away?

Lifestyle (not budget) screening

Note: You can see waste in everyday life by analyzing your garbage.

With permission from Miyako Ecology Center HP.

• Do you recycle, reuse or reduce?

• What does the man in this cartoon mean when he says he will need the cob of corn to run his car?

• Should we use food to produce energy?

By permission of Michael Ramirez and Creators Syndicate, Inc.
• What comment is the cartoonist making in the above drawing?

• Have you ever seen this happen?

• Do you waste food?

• What are the causes of food waste in your home, in the world?

Infographic: The Rotten Truth About How Much Food We Waste...
Courtesy Andy Warner and KQED News
LESSON 9
Bottle This! WATER – A Basic Human Right?

Overview

This social studies/music lesson brings awareness to the issue of access to clean water. It engages students initially using the song “Bottle This” by Evalyn Parry. The lyrics pose questions and provide examples regarding the ways Canadians think about their consumption of water. Use this lesson to help students identify and consider issues related to human rights, the environment, Indigenous peoples’ right to clean water, and commercialization of the resource.

Guiding Question

Should water be for sale?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.2.1 appreciate the relationship between the values of a society and the model of government adopted within a society

Knowledge and Understanding
6.1.3 analyze how the democratic ideals of equity and fairness have influenced legislation in Canada over time by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
- How does the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protect the individual rights and freedoms of all Canadians?

Skills and Processes
DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.5.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
- critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
- re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
- generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities

6.5.4. demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
- consider multiple perspectives when dealing with issues, decision making and problem solving
• collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with
problems and issues

COMMUNICATION
6.5.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:
• express opinions and present perspectives and information in a
variety of forms such as oral or written presentations, speeches
or debates


Elements
7. The words of a song are very important to the understanding of
the song (text).
15. New sounds may be created using instruments in new ways, by
inventing new instruments or by electronic methods.
17. The lyrics (text) and meaning of a song may be enhanced by the
vocal interpretation as well as by its instrumental accompaniment.

Moving
7. Improvise movements to poems, stories and songs.

Learning Competencies
Time

- Two class periods

Materials

- **Student Learning Guide B-11** – Drinking water survey: It should be so simple!
- **Student Learning Guide B-12** – ”I Noticed, I Wondered”
- **Student Learning Guide B-13** – Bottle This! What’s the Problem?
- **Student Learning Guide B-14** – Bottle This! Lyrics


Key Concepts

- **Human Rights** – rights all people have that are guaranteed by various conventions and bills of rights.
- **Luxuries** – items that we buy but do not need
- **Public access to water** – water is free or bought from government owned systems and is available to everyone.
- **Private access to water** – water is something one needs to buy from companies who market and sell it.
Learning Activities

STEP 1: Think, Pair, Share – Openers
Select either Option 1 or 2 to Stimulate Thinking

Think Option 1
Stimulate thinking by bringing in a bottle of water and show it to your students. Be dramatic in opening it and taking a drink. Have a glass of tap water on hand.

Create a mind map on the board and record student answers to questions listed below. Ask questions such as:

- Are you familiar with this product?
- Have you personally purchased one of these (a bottle of water)?
- How much does it cost to buy a bottle of water?

Show students the glass of tap water and again take a dramatic drink. Prompts for discussion might be:

- Do you drink water directly from a tap?
- Why would you buy water when it comes out of the tap (there will be a lot of reasons)?
- Do you think that buying water is a good thing? Who does it benefit most when people buy water rather than get it out of the tap?
- Discuss any other related questions that emerge in conversation.

Think Option 2
Another way to capture their initial thinking is by asking them to take a short survey. Use Student Learning Guide B-11 Drinking Water Survey: It should be so simple!

As the teacher, you have several options for doing the survey:

- Provide the survey in hard copy as seen on Student Learning Guide B-11 and manually compile results.

OR

- Cut and paste the individual questions into Google Forms, Kahoot, or Survey Monkey after downloading the lesson and using an editing program such as Acrobat. This way you can add, modify or delete the questions and have the results easily available and visible to students.
Pair and Share
Either look at the mind map (Option 1) and talk to your partner or show students the survey results (Option 2). Ask them to identify any aspect of the mind map or survey that they find most surprising or interesting. Ensure both partners have a chance to talk equitably.

STEP 2: Listen to Bottle This!
Play the YouTube video, Bottle This! by Evalyn Parry. The lyrics can be found at the end of the lesson Student Learning Guide B-14 – Bottle This! Display the lyrics during the discussion.

Ask students to use Student Learning Guide B-12 – I Noticed, I Wondered to open the conversation about the messages in the song.

STEP 3: Digging Deeper
Student Learning Guide B-13 – Bottle This! What’s the Problem? Take up their questions in a way that suits you and your students.

STEP 4: Other issues related to Drinking Water
Explore related issues by showing the videos associated with these Canadian examples of water related problems.

Bad water: ‘Third World’ conditions on First Nations in Canada (Video) By Joanne Levassor, Jacques Marcoux, CBC News Posted: Oct 14, 2015 (3:49 min.) Two-thirds of all First Nation communities in Canada have been under at least one drinking water advisory at some time in the last decade, a CBC News investigation has revealed.

Inside Walkerton: Canada’s worst-ever E. coli contamination
The shock, the investigation and the aftermath
CBC News Posted: May 10, 2010 (1:23 minutes)
Canada’s worst-ever outbreak of E. coli contamination took hold 10 years ago in a typically quiet town in the rural heartland in Walkerton, Ontario.
STEP 5: What about the music?

The song Bottle This! lends itself to musical improvisation and using other objects to create sounds effects.

The lyrics provide a powerful message and the sounds enhance the words in new ways. Use Student Learning Guide B-14 – Bottle This! to view the words to the song.

- How does the music enhance the message?
- Ask the students to consider the instruments used in this song to create a unique instrumentalism.
- What has Evalyn Parry done to combine lyrics with sound effects? Is it effective? Why do they work in this song?
- What do you notice about the props, melody, and lyrics that enhance the message of the song?

Students could combine instrumentation with vocals and physical movement to illustrate the message more dramatically. The activity can be fun and energizing.

Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues and Inquiry Questions

Go to Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin In It: Generating Issues, Inquiry Questions and Possible Actions and fill in the potential issues and inquiry questions.

Activities for Extension

- Create a rap
- Write your own song and record it
- Movement to words
- Create cards with key lines from the song and show them in human tableaux
- Dramatize one problem or issue raised in the song
- Check out and discuss questions students may have regarding the results of this online survey on water usage titled, “Results for—the Water Bottle Deception: Tap Water Wears a Bow Tie When It’s Put in a Bottle and Sold.” at: https://www.tellwut.com/surveys/lifestyle/food-drink/58192-the-water-bottle-deception-tap-water-wears-a-bow-tie-when-it-s-put-in-a-bottle-and-sold-.html
Drinking Water Survey: It should be so simple!

Examine the following cartoons with your partner or group. What point is being made? Use the prompts after each cartoon to guide your thinking.

1. When I drink water, I most often get it from:
   Circle your answer.

2. Do you ever think that the water you drink in Canada is not safe?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Depends

3. Do you think all drinking water should be free?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Depends

4. Do you think all drinking water should be publicly accessible?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Depends

5. Do you think bottled water is better and safer than tap water?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Depends

6. Why might you sometimes drink bottled water? You can pick more than one answer.
   a. convenience
   b. tastes better
   c. safer
   d. other
7. Should having access to clean water be a basic human right?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Depends

8. Do all Canadians have access to free, accessible, and safe drinking water?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Depends

9. Can you think of any issues or problems associated with drinking bottled water?

10. Having completed this survey, is there something that you thought about that is a new idea about water? What is it?
I Noticed, I Wondered

I Noticed

I Wondered
Bottle This! What’s the Problem?

You have just viewed and listened to Bottle This! a song written by Evalyn Parry to raise awareness about how we purchase and consume water. With your partner, consider the following questions as you think about the lyrics of the song and consider the musical instrumentation she used to get across her message. Lyrics are provided on the next page.

1. What do you think Evalyn Parry thinks about buying water in bottles? What does she think about selling water in bottles?

2. Do you agree or disagree with her? Do you agree with your partner? Why?

3. If you were going to challenge Ms. Parry, what arguments might you use?

4. What does this quotation from the song mean? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?
   
   Water must be public, water must be free
   Water is a human right not a luxury

5. Write down one other line from the song that is important or interesting? Why?


7. Do you think water should be for sale? Explain.
Bottle This! Lyrics

Just hold on before we go any farther –
I want to take a moment to talk about water.

That liquid that you’re holding, that bottle in your hand,
you thought it was water you were drinking, not a corporate brand.
You thought it was cleaner and safer, and better for your health,
but were you thinking about who profits from the wealth
of the public water that’s been taken for free
and sold back to you for an exorbitant fee?
Listen my friends, listen up folks:
Aquafina is Pepsi. Dansani is Coke.
They’re selling filtered tap water and this is not a joke.
These corporate giants buy tap water
at a tax-free-super-discount,
filter it five times, then sell it back to you
for five thousand times the amount
you pay for running water from your tap,
and when I start thinking about that,
my blood starts to boil, my head starts to spin
as I try to understand where to begin.

That H2O, the bottle you just tossed,
it represents garbage, safety and cost,
and water table depletion, which is all of our loss.
Let’s talk about land-fill:
plastic bottles piled high
slowly decomposing, leaching toxins back into our water supply.
Furthermore, the more water bottles we buy,
the more we send a signal to the powers that be
that we believe the fear that they’re selling us about water safety.
We’re swallowing the idea that good water isn’t free,
that of course one must pay for water of quality.
Meanwhile, beyond the periphery of our rich country
(where, incidentally, tap water is actually tested far more stringently
and regularly
than bottled water) women walk farther and farther
to find water for their families,
a desert spreading rapidly,
while we sit sipping on a billion dollar industry.

They say water is the new oil!
Water is the new oil!
And Canada’s got it, so this war will come to our soil.
But oil is a luxury; water a necessity.
We’re fighting over oil ‘cause we like to drive cars,
’cause trucks must deliver, ‘cause we want to fly to mars.
But a body can only live without water for so long.
Water should not belong to anyone.

Water belongs to everyone.
Water must be public,
water must be free,
clean water should not be a commodity
to be bought and sold on the open market,
which pits those who can afford it against those in need.
Water is a human right, not a luxury.
Water is a human right, not a luxury.
You gotta think
about what you drink.
Think! Think about what you drink.

Let’s talk about India, let’s talk about Africa
let’s talk about China, or right here, in North America.
Let’s talk about the watersheds and aquafirs,
let’s talk about Walkerton and Native reserves.
This matter is urgent, it requires our attention,
it demands immediate public intervention.
If we’re going to be paying, it should be for water from our tap,
ensuring it remains reliable, clean and safe, so that
we can take a container, fill it again and again,
fill our bodies with the water we need and then
leave enough for our neighbours, enough for the farmers
enough for the future, our sons and our daughters.
It’s the blood of the earth in that bottle right there,
a resource we have no choice but to share.
Before you buy another bottle and down what’s in there
Think about what you drink.
Think! Think about what you drink.

Maybe I’m preaching to the choir, to the converted masses,
the concerned and the conscious, the educated classes.
But even you out there, who already know everything I’ve said,
how many times does convenience win out instead
of what we know is right, and what we know we should do?
You know ignoring the facts doesn’t make them less true.
Think about what you drink.
Think! Think about what you drink.

Tell your friend, tell your neighbour, write a letter to your leader
It is never true that there is nothing you can do:
you can think
about what you drink.
Think! Think about what you drink.

Water must be public, water must be free,
clean water is a human right, not a luxury.
Think about what you drink.
Think! Think about what you drink.

Evalyn Parry, Bottle This!
Overview

It is important that students have opportunities to consider facts and feelings when dealing with issues relating to accessing basic physical needs. Poverty directly contributes to one’s ability to access food, clean water, clothing, and shelter. This lesson focuses on the issues related to adequate shelter and addresses issues of homelessness.

Guiding Question

Should having a home be everyone’s right?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.2.1 appreciate the relationship between the values of a society and the model of government adopted within a society

Skills and Processes
DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.5.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
- assess significant local and current affairs from a variety of sources, with a focus on examining bias and distinguishing fact from opinion
- re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed

COMMUNICATION
- organize information gathered from the Internet, or an electronic source, by selecting and recording the data in logical files or categories
Learning Competencies

- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Problem Solving
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Critical Thinking

Time

- Two class periods

Materials

- **Student Learning Guide B-15** – Create an Infographic: People Living Without Homes in [_____](your town or city)
- **Homelessness in Calgary (Street Address: Unknown)**
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zu1iWifJoE (6:43 minutes)
- **Meaning of Home** on the Homeless Hub website
  http://homelesshub.ca/resource/meaning-home.
• Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Child-friendly Version)
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Child-friendly Version).


• 10 Fun Tools to Easily Make Your Own Infographics https://www.scoop.it/topic/infographics-in-educational-settings

• For the Teacher – Suggestions for teaching the potentially sensitive topic of homelessness (end of lesson)

Key Concepts

• “people without homes” – term used to describe the condition of homelessness

Learning Activities

STEP 1: Opener

Ask students to brainstorm the reasons that people may not have a place to live (i.e. lack of money, parents or guardians might kick their child out, mental illness, loss of a job, marital breakdown, natural disaster, and so on). Use their ideas to stimulate a discussion about poverty in general and life's basic needs. One connecting factor in people's inability to have the basics is not having enough money. When people don't have money or resources to trade it is difficult and sometimes impossible to provide the basics of life for their families.

Have students think about the questions:

• Where did you sleep last night?
• How would you define the term homelessness?
• Is the expression “people without homes” a better way to think about this situation? Why or why not?
• What would it mean to not have a home?
• What does a home provide?
• What is the most important thing about having a home to live in?
STEP 2: YouTube Video
Prior to viewing, ask what would be the worst thing about being homeless in an Alberta town or city?

*Homelessness in Calgary (Street Address: Unknown)* Inn From the Cold Program

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zu1IWiRJoE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zu1IWiRJoE) (6:43 minutes)

This video highlights the living conditions of Calgary’s homeless population. Show the video and ask students to generate their own questions and comments. Ask them to send their questions using a software program that allows everyone to see the questions. Ask – which questions can be answered with facts and research; which ones generate a debate?

Alternatively, you might ask students to provide single words to describe their thoughts or feelings and create a word cloud using Wordle. The Wordle can serve as a stimulus to probe for more questions and help to understand students’ perceptions, priorities, and even their biases.

STEP 3: Stories of Children Without Homes

Read the short story excerpts from the *Meaning of Home* on the Homeless Hub website [https://homelesshub.ca/resource/meaning-home](https://homelesshub.ca/resource/meaning-home). Use the short stories written by children to generate questions and help your students understand the perspectives of children who are without homes. You might also make cards of each of these six stories and ask students to read them one at a time in small groups. Prompt them to have a discussion following these stories.

STEP 4: Create an Infographic: People Living Without Homes in _____ (name of place)

To better understand the issue of people living without homes, it is important to learn some facts.

Use *Student Learning Guide B-15 – Create an Infographic: People Living without Homes in _____* (insert your town or city or one near you). You will need to do research to find the information. Limit infographics to four or five of the most important facts. Encourage creativity and clarity.

For the Teacher – use *Infographics for Change*, The Teaching Channel (8:29 minutes), for representing ideas visually. Show an exemplar and how the rubric is used.

You may be familiar with these tools and select one for use on this project.

10 Fun Tools to Easily Make Your Own Infographics
- https://www.scoop.it/topic/infographics-in-educational-settings

STEP 5: Consider the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Post and review
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Child-friendly Version).

Article 25, Right to adequate living standard: 1) You have the right to the things you and your family need to have a healthy and comfortable life, including food, clothing, housing, medical care, and other social services. You have a right to help if you are out of work or unable to work.
-Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Child-friendly Version)

Why are food, clothing, housing, medical care, and other social services considered to be basic human rights worldwide?

STEP 6: What do you do? What should you do?

Most of us have passed people on the street who are asking for spare change. Many of these people do not have a home and often very little to eat. Their clothes can be tattered and sometimes dirty. A high percentage of people without homes suffer from mental health problems. Most people have strong feelings when they see people in such conditions.

We have already looked at reasons why people do not have homes. How do you feel when you pass people who are asking for spare change? What do you think about? How do you feel? What can you do? Is there something that could be done to help people overcome the obstacles that prevent them from accessing shelter?

- Write a paragraph that expresses your thoughts and feelings about this situation.
- Draw a picture that depicts your feelings or responses.

Put a Pin-In-It: Generating Potential Issues and Inquiry Questions

Go to Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin In It and fill in the potential issues and inquiry questions related to the topic of “people living without homes”.

Activities for Extension
- Guided Visualization – reflective writing. There are many definitions of homelessness. One simply asks the question: Where do you sleep at night? Imagine that you don’t have a place to sleep at night. What would the night be like from beginning evening until morning?
• Genworth Canada National Writing Contest
  http://meaningofhome.ca/
  The Meaning of Home contest invites Grade 4, 5 and 6 students from across Canada to submit a written essay about what home means to them. Genworth Canada donates $10 per entry and the winner gets to direct a $50,000 grant from Genworth Canada to a Habitat build of their choice. Ten runners-up will also each receive a $5,000 grant towards the Habitat for Humanity project of their choice. Additional prizes include a pizza party for the class and $1,000 to the winner’s school!

• Stories of kids without homes. Find or collect stories that describe what life is like from a child or teen’s perspective when they don’t have a place to live. For example, Working Yet Homeless in Banff, Alberta http://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/working-yet-homeless-in-banff-alberta

• Animal Homes Discuss what home is for animals. How are homes for animals different or similar to homes for humans? Consider using a Venn diagram. The purpose of this exercise can be to connect the theme to topics in science.

• Conduct a Webquest of the Alberta Government’s Human Services Programs and Services relating to homelessness. http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/homelessness.html
Create an Infographic: People Living Without Homes in

An infographic is a way to show information in a visual format using a few key words, numbers, pictures, charts, or phrases. You can make your own infographic by using a program approved by your teacher. She or he will guide you through the process of developing a clear, readable, and visually appealing infographic and provide a format for your references. Use your own town or city to make your infographic about homelessness.

A starter list of potential resources you can use to make your infographic.

1. **Habitat for Humanity**
   Habitat for Humanity Canada is committed to helping low-income families caught in the vicious cycle of poverty. [http://www.habitat.ca/](http://www.habitat.ca/)
   NOTE: Larger towns and cities in Alberta have their own chapters of Habitat for Humanity.

2. **The Homeless Hub**
   A Canadian resource that provides resources, stories, and ideas for addressing homelessness. [http://homelesshub.ca/](http://homelesshub.ca/)

3. **Website Search Alberta Government for your area, town or city**
   [http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/homelessness/14630.html](http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/homelessness/14630.html)

**Infographic Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXCELLENT 3</th>
<th>GOOD 2</th>
<th>NEEDS MORE WORK 0-1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOPICS</td>
<td>The topic of the infographic is clear.</td>
<td>The topic of the infographic is too broad.</td>
<td>The topic of the infographic needs to be clearer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJECTS/ VISUALIZATION</td>
<td>The objects and visualizations are clear and convey meaning.</td>
<td>The objects and visualizations are acceptable.</td>
<td>The objects and visualizations are not related to the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPE</td>
<td>The type of infographic fits with the topic and supports the content.</td>
<td>The type of infographic generally fits with the topic and usually fits the content.</td>
<td>The type of infographic doesn't fit the topic or convey meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCURACY</td>
<td>The facts are conveyed clearly and accurately.</td>
<td>The facts are generally clear and accurate.</td>
<td>There are errors in the information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLOUR</td>
<td>Uses eye-catching colours to draw the viewers to important points.</td>
<td>Uses good colour but may have too many or too few.</td>
<td>Colours are not used or lead to confusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMAT/FONT</td>
<td>The infographic is easy to read, and fonts are carefully selected.</td>
<td>The infographic is generally easy to read, but may have too many different fonts.</td>
<td>The layout is confusing and doesn't clearly show what is important and what is less so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>Full citations for source material are evident.</td>
<td>Citations are generally adequate.</td>
<td>Citations are missing or incomplete.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the Teacher – Suggestions for teaching the potentially sensitive topic of homelessness

*Unsheltered Lives* retrieved from:

The best way of addressing homelessness is through a clear, positive, and simple presentation of reality.

1. Talk about both facts and feelings. Homelessness is a complex and emotional issue, and most students have strong opinions and feelings to express.
2. Validate children in their own background. Some children may feel guilty about their standard of living in comparison to that of people without homes. Some children may feel that the discussion of poverty and homelessness reflects their circumstances.
3. Plan to undertake an action project. There is no better education about poverty than meeting someone who has a low income (or no income). Resources have been provided to allow any group to become involved locally, even as kindergarten-aged children. It may be the beginning for students of a greater commitment to social justice.

Whenever possible, Unsheltered Lives aims to use “people without homes” or “people without shelter” to shift the emphasis to the fact that we are talking about people and not “the homeless.” While this may seem awkward, it is crucial to recognize that anyone can lose his or her home; even a co-worker, friend, or relative.

Good resources to find more information and activities.

- The Homeless Hub [http://homelesshub.ca/community-profiles/alberta](http://homelesshub.ca/community-profiles/alberta)
- *The Orange Door Backstop Story* (one-minute video) [http://homelesshub.ca/resource/orange-door-project-backstory](http://homelesshub.ca/resource/orange-door-project-backstory)
**Section C. Understanding**

What are the root causes that underlie my issue?

**Section Overview**

This section is based mainly on learning outcomes related to deliberative inquiry that asks students to apply research to their selected issue. Here we provide teaching strategies for various steps in the deliberative inquiry process. The section is set up as a single lesson, albeit one that would take several class periods. The teacher needs to pick those strategies that are most appropriate. Ultimately, the goal of student research will be to inform and prepare them to take meaningful and effective actions for the next part Section D – Action and Reflection, where students will determine their own action plan – one that is based on considerations of root causes underlying their issue.

According to Westheimer and Kahne, the most important difference between the personally responsible/participatory visions of citizenship and the social justice vision is the inclusion of research that explores the root causes of an issue. In this section, students will use skills of critical thinking to determine biases, question assumptions, and examine arguments from multiple perspectives. Through undertaking research, they will better understand the factors and complexities of the issue they selected.

*note*

Activities in this section are primarily based on social studies learning outcomes but they may include outcomes in other subject areas such as art, drama, science, language arts, and so on.
LESSON 11
Deliberative Inquiry: Steps to Understanding the Root Causes of an Issue

Overview

In this lesson (which will take several classes), students will undertake research using deliberative inquiry. They will start by identifying their own inquiry question based on their exposure to many possible issues in Section B. They will select one issue and formulate related questions using ideas identified in their Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin In It charts. You can decide to have students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups.

Guiding Question

Each student will generate her or his own question based on her or his selected topic
Skills and Processes
DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.5.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
- consider multiple perspectives when dealing with issues, decision making and problem solving
- collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with problems and issues
  - select and use technology to assist in problem solving
  - use data gathered from a variety of electronic sources to address identified problems
  - use graphic organizers, such as mind mapping/webbing, flow charting and outlining, to present connections among ideas and information in a problem-solving environment
  - solve issue-related problems, using such communication tools as a word processor or e-mail to involve others in the process

RESEARCH FOR DELIBERATIVE INQUIRY
6.5.7 apply the research process:
- determine reliability of information filtering for point of view and bias
- formulate questions to be answered through the research process
- use graphs, tables, charts and Venn diagrams to interpret information
- draw and support conclusions based on information gathered to answer a research question
- include references in an organized manner as part of research
- formulate new questions as research progresses
  - design and follow a plan, including a schedule, to be used during an inquiry process, and make revisions to the plan, as necessary
  - access and retrieve appropriate information from the Internet by using a specific search path or from given uniform resource locators (URLs)
  - organize information, using such tools as a database, spreadsheet or electronic webbing
use a variety of technologies to organize and synthesize researched information
reflect on and describe the processes involved in completing a project

COMMUNICATION
6.5.9 develop skills of media literacy:
- detect bias present in the media
- examine and assess diverse perspectives regarding an issue presented in the media
- identify and distinguish points of view expressed in electronic sources on a particular topic
- use selected presentation tools to demonstrate connections among various pieces of information
- recognize that information serves different purposes and that data from electronic sources may need to be verified to determine accuracy or relevance for the purpose used
Time

- Several class periods

Materials

- Student Learning Guide C-1 – What I See and What I Think
- Student Learning Guide C-2 – Formulating an Inquiry Question for Research
- Student Learning Guide C-4 – Undertaking Research
- Student Learning Guide C-5 – Is the Information Reliable?
- Student Learning Guide C-6 – Exploring Your Issue

Key Concepts

- Research – to examine credible sources relating to a topic of inquiry
- Bias – prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair
- Assumptions – a thing that is accepted as true or as certain to happen, without proof
- Perspectives – one’s point of view or way of thinking about a person or event
- Inquiry – a question for investigation
- Root Causes – the underlying causes of a particular issue

Learning Activities

STEP 1: Pick an Issue

- What I See, What I Think
  Students will identify their own inquiry questions based on their exposure to the different issues generated in Section B – Awareness. Use Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin In It: Generating Issues, Inquiry Questions and Possible Actions chart (first column completed in the previous section) to help guide their selections. Consider the issues generated in the first column and encourage students to develop one question for each issue. This would work well in small groups. Write answers in Column 2 – Potential Topics/Issues – to begin the research.
• **Select and Issue**
  Step back and ask students to select the issue that interests them most.

• **Create a picture, cartoon or digital representation of your issue**
  Create a picture, cartoon or digital representation – one that highlights the selected issue, problem or concern (cartoons should include a caption). For students who are not artistically inclined, it is important that the drawing itself is secondary to their concept. Allow options for generating pictures. Print the visuals that were generated electronically.

  The visual should be accompanied by a written explanation describing their visual and caption and the students’ reasons for selecting their topic. For instructions and a rubric for this activity, use *Student Learning Guide C-1 – What I See and What I Think.*

  For example, students may have been moved by images of refugees from Syria being lifted onto rescue boats as they attempted to cross the Mediterranean Sea. They might draw a picture of a mother holding up her baby to rescuers in a stormy sea. A caption might be, “Please help my baby be safe.”

• **Post or View the Visuals**
  After the visuals have been assessed using the rubric provided in *Student Learning Guide C-1*, post them around the room or on the class website. The posted visuals serve many purposes:

  ◀️ they help create an environment in your classroom that speaks to issues relevant to your students,
  ◀️ students can connect with others who share similar concerns,
  ◀️ it allows them to see other issues they may not have considered.

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**SHARE BOX**

Do a gallery walk so that students can show and explain their visuals to each other.
Consider clustering the visuals into categories with the idea of grouping students for research and presentation purposes later. Students may also be involved in the process of grouping their visuals. A closing activity in Section D Taking Action will have groups sharing their findings and reporting on the effectiveness of their actions.

**STEP 2: Formulate an Inquiry Question**

Now that your students have selected an area of personal interest and begun engagement by creating a visual, they will need to write a research question to better focus and explore their issue. An open-ended, inquiry-based question will allow them to focus their research and narrow their searches. It is important that the inquiry question allows them to explore multiple perspectives and utilize critical thinking.

To get started, ask students to again return to their Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin In It chart and review the Possible Inquiry Questions column. It is critical their question relate to the topic of their visual.

Use the suggestions on Student Learning Guide C-2 – Formulating a Research Question to help students develop their main inquiry question.

- It is critical that you assist in question development and provide formative feedback at this stage. Ask them to hand in their inquiry question to ensure that they have a good question prior to proceeding - one that allows for the investigation of multiple perspectives.

Once students have fine-tuned their questions, provide large Post-It-Notes for them to print their questions. Post these on the wall in groupings that reflect similar issues close to their visuals.
STEP 3: Determine What We Already Know

- **Think, Know, and Wonder**
  
  While it is important that students be open to exploring their topic, it is also essential that they put their previous and current knowledge and beliefs on the table. A simple way to do this is to use the Think, Know, and Wonder strategy (see Student Learning Guide C-3 – Think, Know, Wonder). Use the information from the chart to help students begin to understand some of the complexities and perspectives that underlie their issue.

  This activity can be done individually first and then shared in small groups of students who have selected similar inquiry questions. It is recommended that the sharing be done using large sheets of poster paper using the categories shown below.

  **My Inquiry Question is:**

  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THINK</th>
<th>KNOW</th>
<th>WONDER</th>
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1. **THINK** – What are your thoughts and opinions about your issue?
2. **KNOW** – What do you think you know for sure about your issue?
3. **WONDER** – What other related questions do you have?
STEP 4: Find and Record Evidence

This step requires students to search for information pertaining to their topic and questions.

You may want to provide a pre-approved list of references or use your school library to help students search for information on their topics. We have provided some suggestions to help students get started (see chart below). There are many more resources on these topics. It is important that they have a way to capture the main ideas, important points, and key evidence. Continue to use and expand the graphic organizer provided in Step 3 (Think, Know, Wonder).

We have identified some helpful resources. Some of the following websites can help you get started. This list reflects the topic areas explored in Section B: Awareness. You may find that some sites are better suited to the reading and comprehension abilities of your students. They may also find more sites, so add these to the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD LABOUR</th>
<th>Factory Girl</th>
<th>Fictional story about a girl who works in a New York garment factory. Learn about the fight to improve social conditions, the plight of working children then and now.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.kidscanpress.com/products/factory-girl">http://www.kidscanpress.com/products/factory-girl</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Myths About Modern-Day Child Slavery (12/02/2015)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/debbie-wolfe/modern-child-slavery_b_8681584.html">https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/debbie-wolfe/modern-child-slavery_b_8681584.html</a></td>
<td>This touches on one of the six myths about modern-day slavery – that child workers actually have the choice about whether to labour in dirty, dangerous, and degrading jobs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Day Against Child Labour (01/06/2018)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.un.org/en/events/childlabourday/">https://www.un.org/en/events/childlabourday/</a></td>
<td>The United Nations World Day Against Child Labour focuses attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it. Each year on June 12, this UN World Day brings millions of people from around the world to highlight the plight of child labourers and what can be done to help them.</td>
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**REFUGEES**

  - Immigrants vs. refugees: How are people getting into Canada? (1:38 min)
  - How is Canada’s immigration system different from that of the U.S.? (2:32 min)
  - What happens when an asylum seeker gets picked up at the border? (1:57 min.)
  - And others.

  - This book is part of a series that documents the harrowing escape of young boys in Sudan as they flee militants who have ravaged their villages.

  - This book is part of the series “Children in Crisis.” Readers understand what it means to flee all that one knows and loves with the hope of surviving.

  - This book can be used to accommodate challenged readers. It tells the true story of a Chechnyan boy who steps on a land mine and shows how he overcame hardships.

  - The story of a young Chinese girl who arrives in North America only to discover that her father has died building the railway.
| **CHILD SOLDIERS** | **Michel Chikwanine** (Feb 2013)  
You tube video  
www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FgYDTs0mzI (3:11 minutes) | A former child soldier, Michel has already endured and overcome unimaginable pain and struggle. His passion and belief in the possibility for change makes him a remarkable individual and humanitarian. He leaves his audiences with a new perspective on life, a sense of hope through social responsibility and a desire for change. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GIRLS’ EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stone, T.L. (2013). Girl rising: Changing the world one girl at a time. New York, NY: Wendy Lamb Books.</strong></td>
<td>Girl Rising, a global campaign for girls’ education, created a film that chronicled the stories of nine girls in the developing world, allowing viewers the opportunity to witness how education can break the cycle of poverty.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|  | **Malala Yousafzai (Canadian honorary citizen)  
https://www.biography.com/activist/malala-yousafzai** | Read about Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani schoolgirl who stood up to the Taliban and defended her right to an education, at Biography.com. |
| **FOOD AS A HUMAN RIGHT** | **Food and Our Planet**  
|  | **Trish Garner: Donating isn’t a long-term solution for poverty and hunger (01/09/2014)  
https://www.straight.com/news/564271/trish-garner-donating-isnt-long-term-solution-poverty-and-hunger** | Food banks were, in fact, initially meant to be a temporary measure but they have now been around for over 30 years. Should we still have them? Are they working to counter hunger? |
|  | **Food Banks are not Enough. (10/06/2014)  
https://www.thestar.com/opinion/letters_to_the_editors/2014/12/06/food_banks_are_not_enough.html** | This *Toronto Star* article asks you to consider the thinking behind food banks and whether or not they are a good way to address hunger problems. |
|  | **Many go hungry, too embarrassed to use food banks. (05/08/2014)  
http://perpetualpoverty.ca/many-go-hungry-embarrassed-use-food-banks/** | This article highlights the issues faced by those who might use food banks but are reluctant to do so. |
|  | **Popcorn for dinner (02/08/2009)  
http://popcornlover-shell.blogspot.ca/2009/02/pros-and-cons-of-food-banks.html** | This blog talks about the experience of a 9-year old later recalling her experiences working at a food bank on Christmas. Part of the Pros and Cons of food banks discussion. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>WATER AS A HUMAN RIGHT</strong></th>
<th><strong>SHELTER AS A HUMAN RIGHT</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBC <em>Marketplace</em> spent six months investigating the food thrown out by supermarkets. <em>Marketplace</em> staff found dozens of bins full of food behind two Toronto-area Walmart locations.</td>
<td>This website features stories of kids who don’t have homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So, how much food do Canadians waste each year, what can families do to cut their food waste and how could better communications regarding expiration dates be critical to success?</td>
<td>Find out about the services offered throughout Alberta. Pick the place closest to where you live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights Watch discusses how the water on which many First Nations’ communities in Canada (on lands known as reserves) depend on is contaminated, hard to access, or toxic due to faulty treatment systems. The federal and provincial governments need to take urgent steps to address their role in this crisis.</td>
<td>What are the numbers that show the need for greater housing in Alberta?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The David Suzuki Foundation has ongoing projects to promote Canadian’s right to a healthy environment, to understand how to manage and protect ecosystems, and to end drinking water advisories for First Nations.</td>
<td>An estimated 20,000 First Nations people living on reserves across Canada have no access to running water or sewers. In addition, at any one time 110 to 130 First Nations are under boil water advisories because their municipal water is not safe to drink.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP 5: Make Sense of the Date
Checking for Reliability
Use Student Learning Guide C-5 – Is the information Reliable? To help students use critical thinking skills to determine the reliability of each source.

We all know that the Internet is rife with sites that do not hold up to critical scrutiny. Once students have recorded the information that will be relevant to their inquiry question, it is a good idea to provide guidance for them to check the reliability of their sources. J. Craig Harding and Alan Sears in *Take Action, Make a Difference: A Social Studies Handbook*, p.14 (available from www.pearsoncanadaschool.com) provide suggestions for determining the reliability of a source. The handbook asks these questions to ensure source reliability:

- **Who is the source?** In other words, does the person have an interest in only providing one set of facts – ones they are promoting?
- **Is that person an expert?** In other words, has the person examined and studied this issue and done research to come to a valid conclusion?
- **Is the source giving facts or opinions?** In other words, are conclusions backed up by evidence (facts) or is it just what the writer believes to be true (not necessarily based on facts)?
- **Is only one side given?** In other words, does the person take a serious look at others’ ideas and consider them in a rationale manner?

STEP 6: Consider Perspectives and Arguments
Checking for Reliability
Encouraging Students to Take Action (on The Teaching Channel, 9:19 minutes) has documented, inspirational teacher, Matt Colley, of Oakland Technical High School in Oakland, California working with his students to analyze data. He uses a tree diagram as a graphic organizer to explore root causes and consider their effects on their issues. The ideas generated using this graphic organizer help students organize research, provide suggestions for action strategies, and enable them to consider various perspectives and arguments. Ultimately, the goal of the research is to formulate possible actions based on newfound insights and deeper understanding. You may find it helpful to allow students to view this video. The activity can easily be adapted to use with grade 6 students. Use Student Learning Guide C-6 – Exploring Your Issue with the video.
Below is pictured our adaptation of the graphic organizer Mike Colley uses to help students structure information and stimulate discussion. We have adapted it for this resource and made slight modifications to suit our Alberta context. We use a tree with branches, not leaves, to get started. Each branch will indicate a manifestation of the problem. For example, if the issue is related to hunger (labeled on the trunk) one branch might say – need for food banks. Why do we need food banks? A root could say, "because people have lost their jobs."
What I See, What I Think

We have been viewing videos, reading stories, and reading books that feature issues of importance. You will have the opportunity to identify and explore one issue from these to take action to address your issue.

Here is the first step!

Go to your Student Learning Guide B-1 – Put a Pin In It chart and select one of the issues that you found to be most interesting, concerning, or important.

1. Create a picture, cartoon, or graphic image that highlights the problem as you see it. Include an original caption with your visual. Your teacher will describe an example or show some student work from the past.

2. Write two paragraphs:
   - Describe what your picture, cartoon, or graphic is intended to convey.
   - Start your second paragraph with “This issue interests me because …” Provide two or three reasons for your interest and provide examples from the videos, stories, or personal experiences to support your reasons.

Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXCELLENT 3</th>
<th>GOOD 2</th>
<th>NEEDS MORE WORK 0-1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual with caption – picture, cartoon or other graphic</td>
<td>The visual is thoughtful, relevant and great care was taken to create it. The caption is highly related and applicable.</td>
<td>The visual is well done and care was taken to create it. The caption is related and applicable.</td>
<td>The visual is either minimal or incomplete and/or it appears to be a rush job. May not include a related caption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the visual and caption</td>
<td>The description of the visual and caption is comprehensive, logical, and complete.</td>
<td>The description of the visual and caption is generally good and most of the explanation makes sense.</td>
<td>The description of the visual and caption is incomplete and/or missing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why the issue interests me</td>
<td>The reasons are logical, and examples are relevant.</td>
<td>The reasons are good, and the examples are generally relevant.</td>
<td>The reasons are incomplete and/or they are not related to the issue or topic.</td>
</tr>
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Formulating an Inquiry Question for Research

It is very important that your research be directed by a good question. It should allow you to explore a big idea. It will help you stay focused and consider action ideas that you can reasonably undertake.

Here are some guidelines to help you develop your Inquiry Question:

a. **Relate it to something you care about and find relevant** to your life and/or the lives of others.

b. **Cannot have a right or wrong (yes or no) answer.** Your question cannot lead the answer. It should not include a preference or a point of view (even if you have one). For example, a question such as, “Why is it bad to use bottled water?” would be very one-sided and not allow you to find reasonable arguments that might support the other side. Instead, you might say, “Should I buy bottled water?”

c. **Questions that begin with should or to what extent** are good ways to formulate an open-ended question – ones that allows you to explore an issue openly and prepare to undertake appropriate action. Ensure that your question allows you to examine different perspectives. Later, you will decide whether the arguments are credible.

d. **Stimulates you to consider many viewpoints.** Your question should allow you to find various perspectives on the topic. Understanding others’ points of view is important in examining the deeper roots of the problem.

e. **Avoid using questions that start with who, what, why, where or when.** Often these questions can be answered with simple facts. These sentence starters are important to ask throughout your research but should not be your main inquiry question.

f. **Allows you to think and wonder.** Be ready to challenge previously held beliefs and thoughts.

g. **Be ready to change your mind.** You may find that evidence points to a direction that asks you to question yourself and your previously held positions. Be ready to accept and consider new information and determine whether it is true. Write your question below and hand it in to your teacher.

My Inquiry Question is

My name
Think, Know, Wonder

My Inquiry Question is ____________________________________________________________

<table>
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<tr>
<th>THINK</th>
<th>KNOW</th>
<th>WONDER</th>
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Undertaking Research

Now that you have selected a topic, formed an inquiry question, generated other related questions, it is time to do some research. Find out as much as you can about the facts of the issue and various perspectives. You will eventually be taking action to address your issue. Find out what is being done, by whom, and what you might eventually do to address the issue.

Make sure to keep notes while you research your topic.

Use this page to guide your research.

1. Always be thinking about answering your specific inquiry question. Try not to get sidetracked when you are searching for sources. Your teacher can help you stay on track.

2. Remember, one important component of your research is to find out what the root causes of the issue are. In other words, how and why did this become a problem in the first place?

3. Be aware of your initial thoughts, biases (your opinion), and assumptions (what you think is true), and be open to considering viewpoints with which you may not agree.

4. It is very important to always record important information you find. At the outset, keep a list of the sources you are using. This chart can help you. Your teacher will suggest the format she or he wants you to use for your bibliography. If you interview a person, include relevant information on this chart.

5. Ways to find out information
   - **Develop a survey** using a tool your teacher suggests and find out what your classmates think. Compile the results and use these to inform your research.
   - **Phone or email** an organization and speak to a person who is knowledgeable about your topic. Prior to phoning or emailing, have a list of questions ready to ask. Make sure to record their answers and find out their contact information, position and organization.
   - **Search the Internet.** Be aware whether the websites you select are legitimate and appropriate to your inquiry.
   - **Contact organizations** that focus on the issue you are researching. Why do they undertake their work? How do they take action?
   - **Contact people in your own community** (groups and organizations) and find out how and why they undertake their work. Ask about students taking action.
   - **Read articles, books, stories** and find information to provide a context for your research. Always ask, what brought this problem about?
Use this organizer to make notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTICLE TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR(S) NAME</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>NAME OF SOURCE</th>
<th>PAGE NUMBER</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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Is the Information Reliable?

How do I know if the information I found is credible (honest and based on evidence)? Ask:

- **Who is the source?** In other words, does the person have an interest in only providing one set of facts—ones they are promoting?
- **Is that person an expert?** In other words, has the person examined and studied this issue and done research to come to a valid conclusion?
- **Is the source giving facts or opinions?** In other words, is what is being presented backed up by evidence (facts) or is it what the writer believes to be true and not necessarily based on facts?
- **Is only one side given?** In other words, does the person take a serious look at others’ perspectives and consider them in a rational manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source (insert name)</th>
<th>WHO IS THE SOURCE?</th>
<th>IS THAT PERSON AN EXPERT?</th>
<th>IS THE SOURCE GIVING FACTS OR OPINIONS?</th>
<th>IS ONLY ONE SIDE GIVEN?</th>
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Exploring Your Issue

Now that you have researched your issue, it is time to focus on key ideas. Use this tree diagram to consider the problem and highlight the main points in your research. You may come to this activity with several branches that you have written on.

**Trunk** – What is the issue? Label your specific issue on the trunk.

**Branches** – What do we see? Write each cause of the issue or problem on separate branches.

**Roots** – What is the reason for the problem? Write your reasons for the problem or issue on the different roots. These can be short.

Bring your diagram to your group and create one large tree diagram on large poster paper using input from everyone.
Section D. Action and Reflection
How can I engage in meaningful and effective actions? How important are these actions in a democracy?

True democracies demand that citizens participate continuously, not just in periodic elections. Voting with conviction and knowledge is important; however, continuous engagement with elected officials is the preferred way to hold them accountable and affect change that reflects the will of the people.

While it is important to help alleviate oppressive conditions through good works, charities, and other agencies, if the underlying causes of the problem are not addressed with those in power, the status quo will remain, and the problems will continue. In fact, those in power can become dependent on these kinds of citizen actions and may not feel a pressing need to bring about systemic change. Therefore, continuous citizen engagement that involves contacting and pressuring government is crucial.

We know that meaningful and effective actions occur when students have a critical understanding of the root causes of their issue, make connections to relevant causes, and feel they have agency and voice. When individuals experience these processes as students, they are far more likely to become engaged adults. Civic engagement, not apathy, is what keeps democracies healthy and alive.
We start this final stage of *Citizens in Action: More Than Just Voters* by providing inspiring examples of people who witnessed injustice and did something about it (Lessons 12 and 13). Most have continued to press for changes not only by supporting short-term projects but by engaging with government officials at local, provincial, federal, and international levels beyond their initial projects. The stories of these young people should provide impetus for your students to believe that they too can make a difference, not just in the short-term, but over time.

Lessons 14 through 17 provide a path to take action and reflect on outcomes.

This section includes the following lessons:
- **Step 12:** Young People Who Inspire Action – Creating a Poster
- **Step 13:** The Man Who Planted Trees
- **Step 14:** Step 1: Setting Goals for Action
- **Step 15:** Step 2: Exploring Action Ideas
- **Step 16:** Step 3: Taking Action
- **Step 17:** So What? Options for Reflection

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**LESSON 12**

**Hey, That’s Not Fair! Kids Inspire Action for Justice**

**Overview**

Kids have a strong sense of knowing when things are not fair, or an injustice is occurring. They won’t hesitate to voice their concerns verbally or even on social media but may not know what to do beyond that. This learning activity provides an opportunity for students to become aware of actions taken by young people about their age who have taken steps to address an injustice or inequality. Strong democracies require citizens who are active, engaged, and work in solidarity to address injustices and to stand up for the principles of equality and fairness. They go beyond just doing charity activities to engaging with people in power at various levels of government to push for policy changes that make a difference in the long run.
The inspirational stories of the young people selected for this learning activity illustrate the attitudes, beliefs and strategies that can bring redress to injustices in a sustained way. Characteristics that these young people hold in common and underlie their success and commitment are that they:

- Identified an injustice that matters to them
- Learned more about the root causes of their issue
- Organized with others to take effective and meaningful actions
- Contacted and pressured political powers to push for legislative and policy changes to bring about more sustained change
- Continued their efforts to create change into adulthood
- Persevered against odds

Most of the young people cited in this lesson have gone on to careers that continue to support their passions and some even have world-wide followings.

Your students will, individually or in pairs, create a visual display that highlights the motivations, achievements and impacts of one of the inspiring young people. Your students will share their visual display and then utilize the Westheimer and Kahne visions of citizenship to consider the approaches that best demonstrate their actions and intents. Throughout the assignment, your students will consider the inquiry questions stated below while beginning to consider taking action on issues that matter to them.

**Guiding Question**

- In what ways have young people in Canada and the world taken meaningful and effective actions to address inequality or injustices?
- What kinds of actions are most likely to create meaningful change?
- To what extent are the collective actions of young people important in maintaining a democracy?
Values and Attitudes
6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
- value citizens’ participation in a democratic society
6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

Knowledge and Understanding
6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
- How can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?

Skills and Processes
SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE
6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed

RESEARCH FOR DELIBERATIVE INQUIRY
6.5.7 apply the research process:
- use graphs, tables, charts and Venn diagrams to interpret information
- include references in an organized manner as part of research access and retrieve appropriate information from the Internet by using a specific search path or from given uniform resource locators (URLs)
  - use a variety of technologies to organize and synthesize researched information
Learning Competencies

- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Collaboration

Time

- 2 – 3 class periods

Materials

- Student Learning Guide D-1 – Kids Who Inspired Action: Picture and Name/Description Cards – print and cut out one set of cards per group using the templates
- Student Learning Guide D-1 – Kids Who Inspired Action: Key
- Student Learning Guide D-2 – Kids Inspire Action: Create a Visual Display
- Student Learning Guide D-3 – Share Your Posters
- Student Learning Guide D-4 – Final Thoughts
Key Concepts

- Engaged actions
- Fairness
- Stereotyping
- Solidarity
- Social good
- Injustice/Justice
- Democracy

Learning Activities

Creating and sharing the visual displays.

Step 1  Opener – Kids Who Inspired Action
Step 2  Create a Visual Display (digital or paper poster, google slides, prezi, etc.)
Step 3  Share Inspiring Stories
Step 4  Final Thoughts

STEP 1: Opener Card Sort – Who Has Made a Difference?

This opener should build on some knowledge that students may already have regarding noteworthy young people from Canada and the world who have advocated for change and made a difference into adulthood. The card sort will help them begin to recognize these inspiring people that were about the age of your students. It will provide the context for more in-depth exploration and research.

Group students into 3 or 4 per table. Prepare by using Student Learning Guide D-1 to create picture and name/description cards (one per group).
• Hand out the PICTURE CARDS only to groups and ask them to lay them out on their tables.
• Hand out NAME/DESCRIPTION CARDS and ask one person in the group to shuffle them and then deal them out to the group. The goal is to mix them up.
• One at a time, come to a consensus about which description most likely matches the face. Place the description beside (not on top) of the picture; ready to make changes based on conversations.
• When the groups have completed the matching, provide Student Learning Guide D-1 – Kids Who Inspired Action: Key. They may have only recognized a few faces, so spend time speaking briefly about each individual. Encourage students to contribute any other information they might have at this point.

**Debrief**
• How did you decide which faces matched the descriptions?
• Were any of the faces familiar to you already?
• What is it that these kids seem to have in common?

**STEP 2: Create a Visual Display**
Students will research the motivations and actions of their subject by examining their websites and other sources. They will express their learning by creating a visual display and later sharing these with the whole class. One website is already provided for them to get started.

The visual displays can take whatever form you, the teacher, decide. For example, they can be digital or paper poster, google slides, prezi, etc.

Find a way to ensure that all 8 topics are chosen and that several students are working on each one.

Provide Student Learning Guide D-2 – Kids Inspire Action: Create a Visual Display

This handout provides steps and tips for making a digital display based on one of the young people listed at the beginning. They may know of others not included in this list. A grading rubric for the display is provided.

Notes gathered on Student Learning Guide D-2 will provide the information they need to include on their displays. Provide formative feedback prior to creating the displays to ensure accuracy of facts and comprehensive understanding.
Here are some suggestions if your choice is to have students make digital posters, google slides or prezis. Poster tools:

- Picktochart [https://piktochart.com/](https://piktochart.com/)
- Educational Technology and Mobile Learning (various poster applications) [https://www.educatorstechnology.com/2015/05/great-web-tools-and-resources-for-end.html](https://www.educatorstechnology.com/2015/05/great-web-tools-and-resources-for-end.html)
- Glogster [www.glogster.com](http://www.glogster.com)
- Prezi [www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com)
- Google Slides [https://www.google.ca/slides/about/](https://www.google.ca/slides/about/)

**STEP 3: Share Inspiring Stories**

Use **Student Learning Guide D-3** – Share the inspiring stories of these young socially active students. This handout will help students synthesize and analyze information by finding commonalities and differences among their subjects after they have shared their visual displays.

There are several strategies for your students to share their posters. If several pairs have researched the same topic, it is a good idea to provide some time for them to share their visual displays with each other. This serves as a fact checking strategy and helps them practice thinking and talking about certain elements prior to sharing with the class.

**note**


**SHARE BOX**

Ask students to consider the following questions when examining other’s posters:

- What does a good display look like?
- Which visual display was most successful meeting the criteria in the assignment rubric?

**Share Option 1**

If displays are digital, post them on the class website. Provide time for students to view other’s displays and make critical and respectful comments.

**Share Option 2**

Students present their displays to the whole class (group students to avoid unnecessary repetition).
Share Option 3
Create heterogeneous groups (each pair covering a different topic) and ask them to share their displays in small group settings. Groups should be no larger than 5 students. Pairs can be broken up for this strategy and several groups can work simultaneously.

Share Option 4
Students independently view other’s displays (focusing on topics other than their own).

At the end, ask:
- What did you like about your peer’s displays (be specific)?
- What people or actions would inspire you?
- What kinds of citizens are they?
- How did their actions contribute to democracy?

Through the process of inquiry, try to tease out the following common characteristics shared by these young people:
- Identified an injustice that mattered to them
- Learned more about the root causes of the issue before taking action
- Organized with others (in solidarity) to take effective and meaningful actions
- Contacted and pressured political powers to push for legislative and policy changes (to bring about more sustained change)
- Continued their efforts to create change into adulthood
- Persevered against odds

Your students will likely identify a few commonalities not mentioned above.
STEP 4: Final Thoughts

Use Student Learning Guide D-4 – Final Thoughts to guide the reflection and answer the questions, “In what ways have young people in Canada and the world taken meaningful and effective actions to address inequality or injustices?” “How important are their actions in a democracy?”

Reinforce the connection between social action, citizen engagement, and the effective functioning of democracy.

Follow-up Activities – More Inspiring Actions by Canadian Kids

The following websites provide many examples of students from across Canada making a difference in their schools and communities. You can get good ideas for taking action by checking these out.

1. A Globe and Mail Challenge to Teachers 2017

On World Food Day, many have clever ideas to help solve the problem: poems, posters and more from students across Canada. What our kids say: Canada's schoolchildren send in their thoughts on wasting food. Even a child can see it's wrong to waste food.


2. Imagineaction

   https://www.imagine-action.ca/

   The mission of imagineaction, a Canadian Teachers’ Federation program, is to nurture a generational student-driven social action movement leading to sustainable thinking and action, in the areas of the environment, social justice, participatory democracy, and community improvement.

3. Others...

   Go to https://www.imagine-action.ca/showcase/?g=8 where students in grades 5 to 8 showcase the action projects they have undertaken to address social issues in their communities.
Cards for Kids Inspiring Action Activity – print and cut out one set of cards per group
### Name/Description Cards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Malala Yousafzai</strong>, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and advocate for girls’ education, continues to fight for equality and human rights.</th>
<th><strong>Ryan Herljac</strong>, started the project Ryan’s Well, to allow access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene to people worldwide.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craig Keilberger</strong>, Canadian boy who founded of the WE Movement which advocates for democracy, sustainability, and justice.</td>
<td><strong>Autumn Peltier</strong>, a preteen water advocate from Wikwemikong First Nation, is among 18 Indigenous leaders profiled for National Indigenous Peoples Day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hannah Taylor</strong>, founder of the Lady Bug Foundation, was moved to take action to end homelessness and hunger.</td>
<td><strong>Michel Chikwanine</strong>, a former child soldier, has already endured and overcome unimaginable pain and struggles and has become a leading peace advocate.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**KEY**

1. Malala Yousafzai
2. Ryan Herljac
3. Craig Keilberger
4. Autumn Peltier
5. Hannah Taylor
6. Michel Chikwanine
7. Greta Thunberg
8. Shannen Koostachin
Kids Who Inspired Action: KEY
You have just completed the Card Sort Activity. Here is the Key! How did you do?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Malala Yousafzai</strong>, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and advocate for girls’ education, continues to fight for equality and human rights.</td>
<td><strong>2. Ryan Herljac</strong>, started the project Ryan’s Well, to allow access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene to people worldwide.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Hannah Taylor</strong>, founder of the Lady Bug Foundation, was moved to take action to end homelessness and hunger</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kids Inspire Action: Create a Visual Display

In what ways have young people in Canada and the world taken meaningful and effective actions to address inequality or injustices?

You probably notice or feel uncomfortable when something isn't fair or right. And sometimes you wonder if you can do something to help. This activity highlights kids from Canada and around the world who did do something when they saw something that bothered them. What inspired and motivated them to take action? How did these kids model democratic citizenship?

STEP 1: Your Task – Choose a Subject

Your task will be to share the story of one person who made a difference by creating a visual display featuring their motivations and actions. Later, we will look at all displays to find out what these kids had in common and find out how their work has continued.

Even though some of the young people listed are adults now, they all took action to make a positive difference when they were students in school. You can select one person from the following list, or you may know of someone who is not listed.

Start by searching the internet for this person, or by exploring the website provided here:

2. **Ryan Herljac**, Ryan's Well, [https://www.ryanswell.ca/](https://www.ryanswell.ca/)
3. **Craig Keilberger**, WE Movement, [https://www.we.org](https://www.we.org)
4. **Autumn Peltier**, use your favourite search engine to find information about her.
6. **Michel Chikwanine**, use your favourite search engine to find information about him.
9. If you know of another young person who is inspiring and want to suggest their name, put their name here . . .
**STEP 2: Research Your Subject**

Name(s)

Get started by finding out the facts related to your “inspiring kid.” Use the links provided and any other materials you find (that are reliable and credible). Explore the personal story and accomplishments of your subject. Write your answers on this page to guide the creation of your visual display.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTION</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is the young person to be featured in my display? Name, age (when she or he started), place where she or he lived?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What incident motivated the action? What problem or issue was she or he addressing? Tip – search for the STORY.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What specific actions did she or he take to make a difference? Did this person contact people in power (politicians or journalists) to make their case?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did this person get others involved? If so, why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has her or his actions made a difference? What have been the long-term impacts of those efforts?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links and other sources we will use on our display. Make a list of your references.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources used for the research (name and URL)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP 3: Your Task – Choose a Subject

1. Familiarize yourself with the software program if you will be making a digital poster. Your teacher will provide suggestions and other web links.

2. Get started on your visual display

You have selected one “young person of action” as the subject of your display. Use the research you gathered to collaboratively create categories to highlight key points about your subject.

- It is OK to hand sketch your poster first to get an idea of how it can be laid out and visualize the connections among your categories.
- Shorten your ideas into key phrases while maintaining the most important points. Use bullets, symbols, pictures, or lines to highlight big ideas.

3. Tips about making a visual display that is both eye-catching and informative:

- Think about who will be viewing the display (your classmates, parents, teacher, etc.) and consider what they might want to know.
- Make it visually appealing (include some pictures, graphics, symbols, and basic text information). Use colours and shapes to attract attention to main ideas.
- Use headings to focus on important ideas. Size indicates importance.
- Text should be brief but meaningful and accurate. Use bulleted lists (maximum three or four points per list).
- Be selective about fonts and font size, avoid too many different ones. Pick fonts that are easy to read.
- Include some white spaces (empty space); it helps in the readability.
- Include hyperlinks to short videos (preferably showing your subject engaged in action).
- Provide links to relevant websites.
- Use arrows, lines, caption boxes to show relationships among elements of your poster.
- List your sources.

* See the Grading Rubric on the next page.
## Rubric for Visual Displays

Name(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXCELLENT 3</th>
<th>GOOD 2</th>
<th>NEEDS MORE WORK 0-1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Information is accurate and clear. It makes logical sense.</td>
<td>Information is accurate but some required information is missing and/or not presented logically.</td>
<td>Information is inaccurate. It is not presented in a logical order, making it difficult to follow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pictures, Graphics and Labels</strong></td>
<td>Images are relevant. Layout is pleasing to the eye. Graphics are used to show connections.</td>
<td>Most images are relevant. Graphics are generally accurate and show some connections.</td>
<td>Few or no images. Graphics are not evident and/or fail to show connections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Links and Sources</strong></td>
<td>Links are appropriate and sources are accurately and clearly cited.</td>
<td>Links are generally appropriate, and sources are well cited.</td>
<td>Links and sources are missing or not accurately cited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>No spelling errors. No grammar errors. Text is in your own words.</td>
<td>Some spelling errors. Some grammar errors. Text is in your own words.</td>
<td>Many spelling and/or grammar errors. Text is copied.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**  /12

**Comments**
Share Inspiring Stories

Your teacher will organize a way for you to share your visual display and look at what others have produced. After you have seen other posters, discuss and record your answers to the following questions.

1. In terms of motivation, what did all or most of these young people have in common with each other? Are their stories similar? What do you think motivated these young people to action? Be specific.

2. Think about the actions they took. How are they similar?

3. Were there differences in how they reacted to situations of unfairness or injustice?

4. Use the Westheimer and Kahne Venn diagram below to consider the motivations and actions of the various young people you examined. Do this by writing their names near the circle that best represents their approach to action.
5. Which person (other than the one you studied) interested or inspired you most? Why?

6. In what ways did these young people?
   • Influence government officials?
   • Appeal to the public at large?
   • Connect with like-minded groups and/or involve their communities?

7. To what extent have their collective actions been important in maintaining a democracy? Why or why not?
Final Thoughts

Write a response that answers the questions:

- “In what ways have young people in Canada and the world taken meaningful and effective actions to address inequality or injustices?”
- “How important are their actions in maintaining democracy?”

Include these elements in your written answer:

- Use information from all the displays you worked on or observed.
- Provide specific examples to illustrate a point you are making.
- Which of the Venn diagram circles is strongest for most of the young people who took action? Why?
- What is the evidence?
- Think about the issue you have been working on. What might you consider doing?

Grading Rubric for Final Thoughts

Name(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXCELLENT 3</th>
<th>GOOD 2</th>
<th>NEEDS MORE WORK 0-1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answers the Inquiry Question</td>
<td>It is clearly evident that the reasons and facts presented answer the inquiry question. Clearly identifies an area of personal concern.</td>
<td>It is generally evident that the reasons and facts presented answer the inquiry question. Generally, identifies an area of personal concern.</td>
<td>The reasons and facts presented to answer the inquiry question are minimal or missing. An area of personal concern is missing or unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence and Examples</td>
<td>Clearly and accurately uses evidence and examples to support points and arguments.</td>
<td>Generally, uses evidence and examples to support points and arguments.</td>
<td>Examples, evidence, supporting points and arguments are minimal or missing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application and Analysis of the Westheimer/Kahne Venn diagram</td>
<td>There is clear and logical evidence of the application of the approaches to action using the Venn diagram.</td>
<td>There is generally support and some evidence of the application of the approaches to action using the Venn diagram.</td>
<td>There is little or no clear evidence of the application of the approaches to action using the Venn diagram.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>No spelling errors. No grammar errors. Text is in your own words.</td>
<td>Some spelling errors. Some grammar errors. Text is in your own words.</td>
<td>Many spelling and/or grammar errors. Text is copied.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total /12
Overview

The Man Who Planted Trees or French title L'homme qui plantait des arbres, is a 30-minute Canadian short animated film, directed by Frédéric in 1987 and authored by Jean Giono in 1953. It is an allegorical story illustrating the profound impact one person can have when he sets about to improve their world. The Man Who Planted Trees tells the true story of Elzéard Bouffier, a man who single-handedly and with great patience transformed an area of war-ravaged France into a liveable and sustainable environment, eventually housing a community of people, as well as plants and animals.

This story can be used in English Language Arts to focus on outcomes related to storytelling and Science to discuss ecology, sustainability, and stewardship. The French version of this animation is also useful in francophone or French immersion classes.

Guiding Question

- Can one person make a difference? How might things have been different if the whole community participated in restoration of the land?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
- value citizens' participation in a democratic society
6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

Skills and Processes
DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.5.2 develop skills of historical thinking:
- explain the historical contexts of key events of a given time period
- use examples of events to describe cause and effect and change over time
6.5.3 develop skills of geographic thinking:
- construct and interpret various types of maps (i.e. historical, physical, political maps) to broaden understanding of topics being studied

6.5.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE
6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed

Learning Competencies
Time

• one period

Materials

• *The Man Who Planted Trees* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTvYh8ar3tc
• *L’homme qui plantait des arbres* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzjqptmoEqE French version
• Large blank Post-It-Notes and dark felt pens

Key Concepts

• Sustainability
• Power of One
• Stewardship

Learning Activities

STEP 1
Begin the class by asking students if they think that one person can take action to make the world better. You may reference the Bookend Activity: Optimism/Pessimism in Section A – Getting Started.

Ask students to provide examples from their own lives or lives of others that show the “power of one.”

STEP 2
Generate a discussion that asks students to speculate on a situation where a devastating war has occurred. The land is ravaged, crops and houses are burned, all human life, plants, and animals are nowhere to be seen. If you were confronted with this reality:

• What would you think?
• What would you do?

Explain that you are going to show a film that is based on the true story of how a Frenchman named Elzéard Bouffier, single-handedly and with great patience transformed an area ravaged by battles of World War I. He
transformed the area into a sustainable environment eventually housing a community of people, plants and animals. Show *The Man Who Planted Trees*.

**STEP 3**

Use small group discussion format and ask students to generate questions or comments about how they thought and felt about what they saw in the film.

**SHARE BOX**

On Sticky notes, write your questions after viewing the film.

For example, they might ask:

- How are you feeling after viewing the film?
- Would this happen now?
- What motivated Mr. Bouffier to do what he did?
- The main point of this story is to show how one person can make a difference. What if Mr. Bouffier had encouraged others to help him at the outset? What would have been different (consider environment, society, and even government)?
- How would the community have benefitted sooner?

Group the Post-Its into categories reflecting questions that are similar. Use these to engage students in discussion.

**Assessment**

Ask students to speculate by considering the following question:

What might be different if there was a collective effort to plant trees rather than just one person? What if Mr. Bouffier had asked for help?

Express your thoughts by:

- Drawing a picture
- Writing a short poem (i.e. haiku)
- Writing one paragraph
- Conducting an interview using role play
Overview

For action to be meaningful and effective it must have clearly defined goals. Having done research to better understand the root causes of their issues, students should now be able to decide their specific goals for taking action. Goal setting is important as it focuses actions and clarifies what they want to accomplish.

It’s a good idea to put students in groupings that addressed the same or similar topics. For example, topics relating to child labour, refugees, lack of basic needs, and so on should be grouped together.

Guiding Question

- **What do we want to accomplish?**

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

**Values and Attitudes**

6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

**Skills and Processes**

**DIMENSIONS OF THINKING**

6.5.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
- critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
- re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
- generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group
  - seek responses to inquiries from various authorities through electronic media activities

6.5.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
- propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
- consider multiple perspectives when dealing with issues, decision making and problem solving
- collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with problems and issues
use graphic organizers, such as mind mapping/webbing, flow charting and outlining, to present connections among ideas and information in a problem-solving environment

solve issue-related problems, using such communication tools as a word processor or e-mail to involve others in the process

solve issue-related problems, using such communication tools as a word processor or e-mail to involve others in the process

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE

6.5.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:
- demonstrate the skills of compromise to reach group consensus
- work collaboratively with others to achieve a common goal

6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
- demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed
Time
- One class period for setting goals

Materials
- Practical considerations and templates for taking action are available in *Take Action, Make a Difference: A Social Studies Handbook*, and in the textbooks.
- *Student Learning Guide D-5 – Let’s Set a SMART Goal*

Key Concepts
- Engaged actions
- Participation
- Social good
- Fairness
- Injustice/Justice
- Democracy

Learning Activities

STEP 1: Inspiring Goal Setting – Opener
An excellent way to inspire action-planning is to view other Grade 6 students developing a plan and carrying it out; in this case, to deal with pollution affecting the shoreline of California.

Watch
Watch Marisa and Baylee engage with their project to bring awareness of pollution off the coast of San Diego. This is an issue they are passionate about: *Student Profile: Collaborating to make a change*. The Teaching Channel (4:33). Retrieved from https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/real-world-student-projects-hth
Goals

Engage students in a discussion by analyzing what Maresa and Baylee planned to address regarding the problem of pollution.

- What did they want to do?
- What did they do to make it happen?
- Was it realistic?
- When was it timely for them to do it?
- How will they know if they accomplished their goal?

Answers to the above questions are important considerations in developing SMART Goals.

STEP 2: Set a SMART Goal

For action to be effective, it needs to be clearly defined by a goal. What is it we want to accomplish and why? Use Student Learning Guide D-5 – Let’s Set a SMART Goal to identify a goal for the action relating to specific issues. The SMART goals should answer the questions:

- What do we want to do?
- Can we accomplish it (is it in our power)?
- Is it realistic?
- When will we do it?
- How will we know if we accomplish it?
### Let’s Set a SMART Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>SPECIFIC</th>
<th>What do we want to do?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>MEASURABLE</td>
<td>How will we know if we accomplish it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>ATTAINABLE</td>
<td>Can we accomplish it (is it in our power)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>REALISTIC</td>
<td>Is it realistic to think we can do this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>TIME BASED</td>
<td>When will we do it? How long will it take?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now write your goal in one clear sentence using information from above

Our goal is to
Overview

Having carefully examined the root causes of their issues in Section C (Understanding), your students are now in a position to consider taking action of their own. This on-going activity provides various action ideas while challenging students to consider their potential to address root causes of their own problem or issue. They will consider whether the potential actions they select are going to be meaningful, effective and result in long-term change. By the end of the activity, students will be in a good position to select appropriate actions for their own action plans.

- Practical considerations and templates are available in *Take Action, Make a Difference: A Social Studies Handbook* (available from Pearson Canada) and in the course textbooks.
- By this point, the social-justice oriented approach to action is the umbrella approach to reinforce and encourage. Lesson 12 Kids Inspiring Action illustrates this approach.

Guiding Question

- **Which actions will be most effective and meaningful in the short and long-term?**

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes

6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

Knowledge and Understanding

6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- how can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?

Skills and Processes

DIMENSIONS OF THINKING

6.5.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
• critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
• re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
• generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities
  ▶ seek responses to inquiries from various authorities through electronic media

6.S.4 demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:
• propose and apply new ideas, strategies and options, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to decision making and problem solving
• collaborate with others to devise strategies for dealing with problems and issues

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE
6.S.5 demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:
• demonstrate the skills of compromise to reach group consensus
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6.S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
• demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed

COMMUNICATION
6.S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:
• respond appropriately to comments and questions, using language respectful of human diversity
Learning Competencies

- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Teamwork
- Time
  - One class period to explore and evaluate action ideas
- Materials
  - 15 sticky notes per group for Action Ideas – see end of this lesson for list of actions
  - Felt markers and a large blank flip chart paper (one per group)
  - Student Learning Guide D-6 – Visions of Citizenship and Action
Key Concepts

- **Engaged actions** – things that students can do to address their issue
- **Participation** – to work with others to carry out actions
- **Social good** – undertake actions that will serve a larger purpose and help society as a whole
- **Fairness** – ensuring that people are treated equitably
- **Injustice** – when actions are taken that favor some at the expense of others

Learning Activities

Your students should be ready and anxious to undertake action(s) of their own. This activity provides ideas for them to consider, keeping in mind the important criteria that determine meaningful, effective, and long-term actions.

**STEP 1: Create Stickies for Action Ideas**

Supply each group with about 15 sticky notes. Display the Action Ideas Grid to the class and then take five minutes to have each group write each action idea on a separate sticky note.

**STEP 2: Define the Action Ideas**

Ensure that students know what each action idea is (some will be obvious, others not so much). They may utilize their textbook or use brainstorming to come up with definitions for each action idea. Another excellent source is *Take Action, Make a Difference: A Social Studies Handbook*. Encourage their original ideas for action too (on the other sticky).

**STEP 3: Analyze the Action Ideas**

Provide each group with a large piece of poster paper and some felt pens. Ask them to draw a grid like the one on the next page using the whole paper.
Our Issue is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Meaningful Actions</th>
<th>Most Meaningful Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Least Effective Actions</td>
<td>Most Effective Actions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have students deal out the stickies and one at a time determine where to place each card on a quadrant. Consider demonstrating how to make placement decisions based on thinking about EFFECTIVENESS (the x axis), then thinking about MEANINGFUL, (the y axis). Draw the intersectional point and place the card there. Using stickies allows them to change their minds as they progress through the activity.

Before the “group” decides where to place the sticky, consider:

- What do you expect this action to accomplish?
- What makes an action meaningful?
- What makes an action effective?

**STEP 4: Which actions are most effective and meaningful? (optional)**

Provide each group with Student Learning Guide D-6 – Visions of Citizenship and Action Venn diagram. Take some time to discuss meaningful and effective actions in terms of the Visions of Citizenship and Action on the next page. This conversation will set them up to develop their action plans.

**note**

What is important here is the process of deciding where the cards lie in relation to each other rather than a “correct” order.
Visions of Citizenship and Action

STEP 5: Share Action Ideas

SHARE BOX

Post the charts on the wall and consider the overall worth of various actions. Return to the Guiding Question: Which actions will be most effective and meaningful in the short and long-term?

DISCUSSION

- Which actions are MOST likely to address root causes of an issue? If so, how and why?
- What can we can do immediately?
- Consider the future, which actions will need to be taken to follow-up or continue?
- What will we do if our idea for action didn’t work the way we expected? Group the Post-Its into categories reflecting questions that are similar. Use these to engage students in discussion.

Assessment

Return to the tree posters generated in Section C.

1. Photocopy the leaves below and distribute several to each student group. Ask them to write possible actions they can take to address their issue (include their name) on separate leaves.

2. Tell them to paste the leaves onto the branches of their tree poster. This can serve as a good starting point to develop an action plan and narrow down possible actions to carry out.

3. For specific examples and step by step instructions on carrying out many of these activities go to *Take Action, Make a Difference: A Social Studies Handbook*

Photocopy the leaves shown on the next page. Make several leaves per group. Label the action ideas with an

- S – short term or immediate action
- M – medium term action
- L – long-term action
Display this chart to students and ask them to reproduce the words on separate sticky notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CREATE A FLYER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIRCULATE A PETITION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOST AN EVENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOIN A POLITICAL PARTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERFORM A DRAMATIZATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOST A DEBATE/PANEL DISCUSSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOLD A RALLY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visions of Citizenship and Action

JUSTICE ORIENTATED CITIZEN
I want to know why things happen
I want to see connections amongst all aspects of life
I want to share ideas and come to consensus before taking action
I want to learn about others’ projects/ideas
I want to work with others to make life better for myself and others

PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN
I want to set an example for others
I want to do acts of charity
I want to believe in such things as honesty, integrity, self-discipline and hard work
I want to value compassion and empathy

PARTICIPIATORY CITIZEN
I want to work actively with others to achieve a more just world
I want to help my family, community and others in the world
I want to plan and organize events with others to address problems
Overview

Your students examined an array of potential action ideas in Lesson 15. This lesson asks them to select action(s) they will undertake to best address their issue. Ask them to consider what things they can do immediately and what actions will either be follow-up or long-term items. Remember to emphasize that change takes time, but citizen advocacy needs to be continuous. Here is your chance to implement actions suggested in Learning Outcome (6.1.6)!

Guiding Question

- To what extent can we undertake actions to bring about effective and meaningful change?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes
6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

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6.5.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
• demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed
Time

- One class period for planning actions (set aside future times to carry out actions)

Materials

- Practical considerations and templates for taking action are available in *Take Action, Make a Difference: A Social Studies Handbook* and in the textbooks.
- *Student Learning Guide D-7 – Deciding on Action(s)*
- *Student Learning Guide D-8 – Let’s Do It!*

Key Concepts

- Decision making
- Engaged actions
- Participation

Learning Activities

**STEP 1: Assess Potential Actions**

Return to the leaves pasted on the branches of the tree graphic and ask students to select about three that are most likely to achieve the student’s main goal. Use *Student Learning Guide D-7 – Deciding on Action(s)* to consider the pros and cons of various actions prior to selecting ones to pursue.

**STEP 2: Prioritize Actions**

Now that students have considered the pros and cons of various actions, ask them to discuss these actions in terms of the questions below. This is a way to hone their ideas down.
SHARE BOX

Important considerations in selecting appropriate action(s), ask.

- Does the action honour those it is designed to assist?
- Does it address the root causes?
- Is it doable?
- Is it time sensitive?
- Does it involve others?
- What kinds of actions are we inspired to do to continue to address our issue?

STEP 3: Take Actions

Use Student Learning Guide D-8 – Let’s Do It to specify the plan of action involving your students and others who may assist. Provide time for students to prepare materials, make contacts with others, attend or host events, and so on. Encourage them to document or journal their experiences for later reflection.

STEP 4: Compiling and Documenting Responses

Consider posting responses, pictures, and other documentation on the class website or poster board.

Provide time to review, share, and respond to other’s actions.

SHARE BOX

- Did things go according to plan?
- Did you have to change or adjust anything?
- Can you name a positive effect? What was the evidence of this?
- Were you disappointed in anything? What was it?
- How would you describe the engagement and participation of others?
Deciding on Action(s)

Now that you have researched your issue and learned about the root causes of the problem, it is time to do something to make a difference. Return to the leaves on your tree branches poster to pick actions you think might work most effectively to accomplish your goal. Use this graphic organizer to help determine the best option for action.

My/Our Issue is...

My/Our Goal is...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION IDEA #1</th>
<th>ACTION IDEA #2</th>
<th>ACTION IDEA #3</th>
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Let’s Do It!

What – The action we have decided to take immediately is:

Who – Who can we involve in taking this action? Who will we need to work with to carry out our plan? For example, community members, fellow students, members of the public, elected representatives?

How – How can others help? List specific things you will do. List things you want others to do.

When – Our timeline for action is:

NOTE:
Addressing the root causes of issues often takes time and a continuous effort. What actions might you continue to do to bring about long-term change?

Record your Experiences – Find a way to record your own reactions during or shortly after taking action. Do this by journaling, taking pictures (with permission) and conducting interviews.
LESSON 17
So What? Options for Reflection

Overview

After undertaking action, it is important that students have an opportunity to step back and reflect on their learning. We ask them to consider whether their actions made a difference and help them better understand the critical role of active engagement in democracies.

Important questions are:

- What does it mean to be a citizen in a democracy?
- How is a democracy sustained by citizen action?
- How important is it to work together to achieve goals?
- What values and beliefs are important in maintaining democracy?

Guiding Question

- To what extent does active citizenship contribute to maintaining democracy?

Social Studies 6 Learning Outcomes (2007)

Values and Attitudes

6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:
- value citizens’ participation in a democratic society
- value the contributions of elected representatives in the democratic process

6.1.2 demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles of democracy by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
- What is democracy (i.e. justice, equity, freedoms, representation)?
- What are the rights and responsibilities of citizens living in a representative democracy?

6.2.2 value the role of participation by citizens in diverse democratic societies

Knowledge and Understanding

6.1.6 analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

note

Sometimes positive results are not immediately apparent. For example, they may not receive responses to their queries; they may not think their goals have been achieved, and/or they may even experience negative reactions to their efforts. Use this opportunity to address disappointments or stumbling blocks. Allow for time to discuss feelings and perceptions and encourage them to continue pursuing their goals in other ways.
• how can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e. lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?

• in what ways do elected officials demonstrate their accountability to the electorate (e.g. respond to constituents, participate in local events, represent and express in government meetings the concerns of constituents)?

Skills and Processes
DIMENSIONS OF THINKING
6.S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:
• critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
• re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
• generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities
  ▶ seek responses to inquiries from various authorities through electronic media

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE
6.S.6 develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community, such as:
• demonstrate commitment to the well-being of their community by drawing attention to situations of injustice where action is needed
Learning Competencies

- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
- Personal Growth & Well-being
- Cultural and Global Citizen
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Managing Information
- Critical Thinking
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- Critical Thinking

Time

- Can be ongoing or done at the end of the unit or lesson. Time is dependent on the activity options selected.

Materials

- Student Learning Guide D– 9 – Evaluating our Goals and Actions
Learning Activities

There are several options one can use to help students reflect on the overall experience of identifying an issue, finding out its root causes, and taking action to improve the situation.

**OPTION 1 Bookend Activity - Again**

Return to the first activity in this resource Section A – Awareness – Bookend Activity [see Student Learning Guide A-1 – Can students make the world a better place? (student responses saved from Lesson 1)]. Repeating this activity can be the stimulus for thinking about values and attitudes associated with maintaining democratic ideals.

Redo the activity. Compare the results from the beginning and end to determine whether the student’s optimism about their potential to make a positive difference has improved, or not. Discuss the differences. Look at results for the class as a whole and for individuals.

Provide time for debriefing this important component. It is important to explore their reasons, whether students are more, or less, optimistic about the future. Use this opportunity to address disappointments or stumbling blocks. Allow for time to discuss feelings and perceptions and encourage them to continue pursuing their goals in other ways.

**OPTION 2 Evaluating Goals and Actions**

Use Student Learning Guide D-9 – Evaluating our Goals and Actions to stimulate thinking about the student’s experience and help them identify specifics related to the overall experience. It will be important for students to discuss their answers with others in the class, so provide ample opportunity for sharing responses.
Option 3 Write or Tell a Story

In implementing an action plan, it is not uncommon for there to be many interactions with others. Encourage students to share (either in writing or verbally) the anecdotes and stories that were part of the taking-action process. This is a good way to tease out the effectiveness of actions and find out what impact their actions had on others.

Option 4 Revisit the Class Website or Poster Board

Check on action projects throughout the term to help students revisit and revise their action plans and projects. Post pictures, letters, and other responses that students receive as a result of their initiatives and actions. Plan a year end celebration honouring and recognizing students’ achievements. Encourage them to write responses on the poster board or class site.

Conclusion

Return to this lesson’s Inquiry Question – To what extent does active citizenship contribute to maintaining democracy?

SHARE BOX

- What does it mean to be a citizen in a democracy?
- How is a democracy sustained by citizen action?
- How important is it to work together to achieve goals?
- What values are important in maintaining democracy?
- Is citizenship more than just voting?
Evaluating our Goals and Actions

Name(s)

Our Issue was...

Our goal was to...

1. After examining the root causes of the issue, we decided to take the following actions . . .

2. What was the most beneficial result of our action (be specific)?

3. What challenges did we have carrying out our action?

4. What is the most important thing we learned from the experience of taking action?

5. If we had to do it over again, we would . . .

6. Did we make a difference? What changed? Explain and think of an example.

7. What might we consider doing about this issue in the future?
Appendix A. Teacher Backgrounder

OUR THEORETICAL BASE

The Aspen Foundation for Labour Education has based this resource on the work of Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne’s Visions of Citizenship and Action¹. In it, they ask, “What does it mean to be a good citizen?” They contend that there are various visions of civic engagement; personal, participatory, and social justice. While the personal and participatory approaches each have some worthy outcomes, Westheimer and Kahne argue that real social change can only be attained when a social justice approach is used. They contend that the personal approach helps students consider their personal responsibilities and focuses on building positive character traits. For example, in promoting the idea of generosity, students might individually contribute items to a food bank thus sustaining the idea that society needs food banks and they need to be supported by good citizens. The participatory approach would have students collectively agreeing to take an action to support a worthy cause. In this case, organizing a food drive to contribute items to the local food bank might be their action. Again, the approach fails to address the underlying causes of poverty that necessitate food banks.

The social justice approach would engage students in researching the concept of food banks and asking questions such as, why do we have food banks, who uses food banks, do food banks sustain a system of inequality and what are alternatives to food banks? Their approaches to action could be based on the desire to reduce or eliminate the need for food banks by bringing about greater food self-sufficiency. For example, students may consider sponsoring community gardens or cooperative kitchens instead of contributing to food banks. The social justice approach asks that “students engage in informed analysis and discussion regarding social, political, and economic structures. Students consider collective strategies for change that challenge injustice and, when possible, address root causes of problems (143).”

EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL-JUSTICE STUDENT ACTION

There are numerous examples of students initiating action to make positive changes. Take for example, Hannah Taylor who at age 5 was troubled by a homeless man eating from a dumpster. Two years later she started the Ladybug Foundation to address homelessness. Fourteen-year old Joanne Cave from Strathcona County launched Ophelia’s Voice, an organization that builds girls’ leadership skills and confidence and inspires action to

change the world. Lauren Jervis, who in 2001, was upset by the treatment of her gay friends at her high school in Edmonton and established Alberta’s first Gay Straight Student Alliance. Everyone knows of the actions of Craig Kielburger, who at age 12 started Free the Children to address issues of child labour. These are but a few examples.

What conditions were in place that supported these young people in becoming leaders in their schools and communities? What lessons can we take from them to establish environments where even more students will be motivated to engage in meaningful equity, fairness, and justice issues? How can teachers learn from their experiences?

Using the ideas of Westheimer and Kahne, we have developed a Venn diagram model to frame the organization of this resource. The diagram recognizes that while we strive to achieve a social justice approach, there may be instances where aspects of the other two approaches are prudent or work in particular contexts. This model will be taught to students and used to analyze, plan, enact, and assess social actions for democracy.

**Visions of Democratic Citizenship and Action**

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**Note**

Appendix B.

Case Study

Asking Questions AND Building Hope: A Proposal FOR Youth Civic Engagement Projects

SHIRA EVE EPSTEIN

When citizens use their voices to urge change, their messages are at times misunderstood and ignored, and at other times, considered and engaged. Youth activists are vulnerable to these and other varied reactions. In this piece, I offer a proposal of how teachers can support students to navigate the frustrations and successes they encounter in civic engagement projects. Ideally, teachers and students neither respond to their achievements with a wishful optimism that it is easy to make change nor to their setbacks with absolute defeatism. Instead, they form a helpfulness that draws on good judgment and imagination to respond to reality (Lear, 2006), in light of both these achievements and setbacks.

My interest in how youth reflect on civic engagement projects was piqued when I spent months learning from teachers and a group of adolescents involved in what I call the park project. After budget cuts were proposed, a group of seventh graders, students of color living in a low-income urban community, advocated for full funding for a local park in their neighborhood. Without this funding, the outdoor pool would remain closed, the park’s hours shortened, and the programming limited. Near the end of the school year, responding to a community outcry, state legislators ensured a restored, full park budget. The students felt victorious and expressed pride in their work, noting that they “saved” the park. The project concluded with a wave of satisfaction. Then, interestingly, students also expressed what would have been deep discouragement when I asked how they would have felt had the budget not been restored. For example, Isabell said that she “would feel really, really, really bad … I would feel like I didn’t do nothing.” While I saw

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both the students’ pride and their speculations of discouragement as warranted reactions, I began to ponder how youth can be supported to articulate a more complex view of civic engagement as including the need for continuous, hopeful momentum despite advances and setbacks.

My ponderings are driven by two concerns. First, should youth feel too often defeated, and that their work means “nothing,” they are likely to see civic participation as fruitless. Indeed, civic projects that ask students to confront entrenched forms of power have been seen to generate cynicism (Kahne & Westheimer, 2006). Educators have particular reason to feel concern for youth of color who enter civic engagement projects, since these students can hold the assumption that the civic ideal of justice does not apply to their lives (Rubin, 2007). They may be especially inclined to doubt that government or civic processes work for them.

Second, if students express optimism about their power as change makers, it might reflect their naivety about how the civic world operates and suggest that their civic project was underdeveloped or risk free. Teachers commonly limit civic engagement to service and charity projects that avoid political issues and confronting oppression (Schutz, 2006). In these cases, students are denied opportunities to think about long-term problems and the importance of social movements in countering them; consequently, they might adopt simplistic perspectives about how power functions. Given the problems with both defeatism and naïve optimism, I illustrate in the following how youth can get caught in this binary. Then, I propose ways to move beyond it, drawing on the pedagogy used in the park project as well as proposing additional possibilities.

LEARNING FROM SEVENTH GRADERS

Two teachers—a combined English and social studies teacher and a special education co-teacher—enacted the park project with a class of adolescents. In the months before the project began, the teachers and I met routinely to study civic education pedagogy and plan for a civic project that would develop their students’ academic and civic skills. The teachers volunteered for this experience, as they were curious about how to integrate civic experiences in the content areas. Then, when students told them about the possible cutting of the park budget, the teachers developed a unit on this motivating issue.¹

I followed the teachers and students’ experience in the park project, which unfolded in the final weeks of the school year. Through classroom observation, I learned how the seventh-grade students read articles on the proposed budget cuts, interviewed a staff member from the parks department, deliberated on ways to increase park funding, and wrote letters to their local assemblyperson offering
their proposals and protesting the cuts. In many ways, the students meaningfully engaged with a relevant social problem and sought to address it. While I offered guidance and suggestions for practice during the initial planning meetings with the teachers, I did so less often during the enactment of the project, seeking to learn from the teachers and students. Then, near the conclusion of the project, I interviewed students in small focus groups. Data from these interviews are at the heart of this rendering. Particularly, I bring attention to the students’ interpretations of their participation in the project and discuss what educators can learn from the students’ perspectives.

Given the restoration of the budget, the students saw themselves as victorious. Speaking with pride and enthusiasm about their work, they exclaimed: “We actually saved [the park] out of everything”; “I made a big difference to the community.” One said that he would tell a friend, “I saved the pool.” Others pointed to their perceived success with the letters: “Our letters were so convincing and so I think that’s why it made a change.” The students viewed themselves as change makers, potentially augmenting their feelings of civic efficacy. While it is heartening to see their enthusiasm, their framing of their empowerment yields some concerns. Key to this argument is the way they did not acknowledge the role that the broader community played in the restoration of the budget, focusing on their own actions and articulating a false optimism that they saved the park. Courage, of which hope is an ingredient, is predicated on using good judgment and advice to face reality and the avoidance of false optimism (Lear, 2006). In reality, the students’ efforts were a part of a community-wide campaign, the formation of which reflected good judgment as power manifests in solidarity efforts. Yet, this solidarity, and the hopefulness it represents, were ignored in their statements of having saved the park.

Then, when I asked how they would have felt if the legislator voted on a reduced park budget, students expressed defeatism. As introduced at the start of this chapter, one said that she “… would feel really, really, really bad … I would feel like I didn’t do nothing.” Despite weeks of research and letter writing, this student devalued her work and projected how she would have felt as if she did not engage with the problem. Students also questioned the effectiveness of the letters. One said, “It would make me feel sad just because we sent him our letters and they just threw them away.” Perhaps most discouraged was the student who questioned, “What’s the point of doing the letter if we’re not gonna make a difference?” I have compassion for these statements and think it crucial that discouragement is acknowledged if it is to be managed. I also think it important that citizens learn to adopt resilience that enables them to transcend their current situations, even if these situations are riddled with setbacks, and imagine how they might assume power. People experience hope when they imagine their revival and avoid despair, even if they cannot conceive of what this revival
will entail (Lear, 2006). Instead of imagining in this way, the students saw their letters in the garbage.

How might educators support students to build a hopefulness that (a) facilitates the capacity to respond to reality with good judgment and thereby avoids wishful optimism, and (b) challenges them to imagine their revival when they are frustrated (Lear, 2006)? Such hopefulness could support them to see past the binary of short-term success or failure and imagine a “sustained thoughtful engagement with the world” (Lear, 2006, p. 142).

BUILDING HOPE

Drawing on and extending what occurred in the park project, I propose three questions teachers and students can ask to build their capacities to face their realities with hope.

What Makes Us Strong?

Teachers can scaffold opportunities for students to reflect on the realities of their situations and ask questions about the strengths and weaknesses of their civic work. The seventh graders felt that their campaign was strong because they wrote persuasive letters, referencing outside sources of information, to their assemblyperson. Indeed, political change is possible when citizens communicate messages to decision makers in power as opposed to engaging in service or charity-oriented efforts that avoid negotiations with power (Schutz, 2011). Therefore, I see the students’ praise for their letters as representing a hopeful, generative insight that gives them good advice for their future.

The teachers structured less time for the students to reflect on the fact that various community efforts were occurring to restore the park’s budget, a key factor that enhanced the campaign’s strength. In acknowledging this more thoroughly through class discussions and as a result of more engagement with community efforts outside of the school, the students may have been reminded of the reality that they have others with whom to partner in light of successes or setbacks. The members of low-income African American, Latino, immigrant, indigenous, and poor white communities often experience few individual rights and work together to express collective political demands and leverage power (Collins, 2010). Therefore, if the students had reflected on the number of people working together to restore the park budget and the value of solidarity efforts overall, they might have responded to their situation with greater hope and good judgment. Instead, such a capacious hope was evaded, as students articulated a wishful optimism that they alone impacted the legislative vote and disappointment that their work might have had no “point.”
ASKING QUESTIONS AND BUILDING HOPE | 211

How Might Things be Different?

Alongside their analysis of reality, for teachers and students to consider what is possible, they also set time aside to imagine how their lives and communities might be otherwise (Greene, 1995). While this may involve some wishful thinking, wishes can be integrated into a person’s imaginative capacity in ways that develop creative responses to reality (Lear, 2006). In some ways, the seventh graders exercised these imaginative skills when they considered how the park could raise money, proposing that the park apply a service fee upon entrance or that citizens organize a benefit concert. They discussed the benefits and drawbacks of their different imagined options and ultimately shared their proposals with the assemblyperson. With these proposals, they imagined how they might emerge out of their current struggle.

Broadening their vision past the immediate question of funds, the students might have also imagined a fully functioning park in comparison to a defunded park with an empty pool and possible community reactions to both images. Teachers can lead students in visualizations and then ask them to journal about what they see, specifically prompting them to reflect on their emotions in light of their visions. Their visions might lead them to propose action steps that they imagine as needed. Through such a process, the students might have crafted new ideas for action, in addition to their suggestions of how the park could raise money. In their imaginative thinking, students can begin to develop new notions of what is possible.

How Can We Move Forward?

Finally, hope is instilled when students take steps to bring their visions of a changed community to fruition. In this project, the students’ key civic action step was to write letters. As previously noted, directing messages to key decision makers can yield social change (Schutz, 2011). Furthermore, it is in the context of such doable projects with realistic goals (i.e., influencing a vote on a park budget) that students’ civic confidence can develop (Fehrman & Schutz, 2011). This was exhibited in the reactions of the seventh graders; they were able to believe that they contributed to change possibly because they sought to tackle a concrete problem in a concrete way.

Students might take action in many other ways. It is often valuable for students and teachers to engage in a more direct confrontation with power in comparison to sending letters, such as arranging face-to-face meetings with their local representatives and challenging them to address their concerns (Schutz, 2011). Or, at times, we form hope by determining that the next action step must be listening and learning from others, including those with whom we might not
originally agree (Lear, 2006). While the seventh graders spoke directly to a leader from the parks department, who encouraged them to see value in their action, they might have also met with those who felt that the budget cuts were necessary. Indeed, had the budget not been restored, this may have been their next action step. This experience could have helped them understand their opponents’ viewpoints, created an opportunity for them to advocate for their views, and helped them learn about the complexity of moving power. Or in light of the budget’s restoration, they might have identified another social injustice in their community to address with their local representative. Teachers can support students to consistently propose next steps for civic action, following both advances and setbacks, to foster a long-term commitment to justice.

**CONCLUSION**

Teachers and students can establish hope by asking questions that help them name their reality, imagine themselves beyond this immediate reality, and propose and take civic action steps that position them with purpose. These questions can be continuously pursued in light of both achievements and frustrations, throughout civic engagement projects. It is with such questioning that students establish a hopefulness that affirms their ability to respond to and transcend opportunities and obstacles, avoiding binaries of the work as yielding absolute victory or despair.

**ENDNOTE**

1. The original study of the teachers’ experiences, the enacted curriculum, and the students’ responses, was conducted in association with the Kettering Foundation, Dayton, OH.

**REFERENCES**

This case study focuses on why civic engagement projects are important in a pedagogic and curriculum sense. Epstein describes the nature of civic engagement projects and the challenges it brings forth in terms of frustrations and successes. In discussing a seventh-grade project, she described how the students actively participated in activities to advocate for full funding for a local park in their neighborhood. Near the end of the school year, responding to a community outcry, state legislators ensured a restored, full park budget.

She raises further questions for our deliberation: What are effective examples of civic engagement with youth? How might things be different? Alongside their analysis of reality, for teachers and students to consider what is possible, they also set aside time to imagine how their lives and communities might be otherwise (Greene, 1995). How can we move forward? What does this case suggest for understanding education for peace? And perhaps a critical question evoked by Epstein is the following: How does a learning experience affirm a child’s “ability to respond to and transcend opportunities and obstacles, avoiding binaries of the work as yielding absolute victory or despair?”
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