Engaging Students in Sustainable Action Projects

Learning for a
Sustainable Future
LSF

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The Learning for a Sustainable Future Story

Who We Are

Founded in 1991 by a diverse group of youth, educators, business leaders, government and community members, *Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF*) is a non-profit Canadian organization that was created in 1991 to implement education for sustainable development (ESD) into Canada's education system.

Our Goal Is Simple!

LSF's goal is to work together with educators, students, parents, government, community and business to integrate the concepts and principles of sustainable development into education policy, school curricula, teacher education and lifelong learning across Canada!

The Secret to our Success

LSF believes that building comprehensive programs starts with building a solid base. LSF's core program strengths are linked in an Integrated Framework that includes five areas:

1. Advancing education for sustainable development through strategic education policies and curricula enhancements;

2. Supporting education for sustainable development for youth and educators;

3. Fostering sustainable communities that link formal, informal and non-formal education to informed actions;

4. Initiating innovative education, public awareness and training programs through strategic partnerships;

5. Supporting Canada as a leader in the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

LSF's mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices essential to a sustainable future.

For more information on LSF programs, please contact us at:

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Acknowledgements

PART I: ENGAGING STUDENTS IN SUSTAINABLE ACTION PROJECTS

This guide provides a detailed overview of an action process as well as activities to support each step in the design and implementation of your action projects. You probably will not be able to do every activity provided. When choosing which activities you will use, we encourage you to consider the following:

- Listen carefully to what your young people care about (see Activities on pages 21 and 24).

- Take time to fan the flames of the young peoples' concern about the issue (see Activities on pages: 20, 25, 28 and 28).

- Help students to choose a project and goals that are achievable so that the young people will experience success. See steps 5 and 15 in the *Project Planning Template* on page 40.

- Do something real. This is not a guide about simulations or theory.

- Celebrate.

- Ask for help from LSF and from resources within your community.

1.0 A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

- Recognizes that growth occurs within some limits

- Values cultural diversity

- Respects other life forms

- Works toward some shared values amongst the members of the community

- Makes decisions and plans in a manner that includes the perspectives from the social, health, economic and environmental sectors of the community

- Makes best use of local efforts and resources

- Uses renewable sources of energy

- Fosters activities which use materials in continuous cycles

- Does not compromise the sustainability of other communities (human or non-human)

- Does not compromise the sustainability of future generations

- Has a stable, dependable and diversified economic base

- Provides a range of opportunities for rewarding work

- Satisfies the basic needs of every one of its members including the opportunity to fill her or his potential[1]

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[1] Adapted from: Nigel Richardson, (1994) *Making our communities sustainable. The central issue is will*, Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy in Readings on Sustainability, LSF, (2000) pp. 21 and 22.

2.0 WHAT IS AN ACTION PROJECT?

Although *activities* and *Action Projects* are both experiential, there are many differences between them. For example, an 'activity' may involve hands-on work and it may be fun and engaging, but it is not necessarily an action project. An example of an **activity** would be a tree-planting event adults organized without consultation with young people and that is *not* in response to concerns expressed by young people.

In comparison, when doing an **'action project'** students are meaningfully engaged throughout the entire process—from deciding on the topic of the project to how it will be carried out. The following graphic illustrates some of the distinguishing aspects of **Action Projects**:

CHOOSING AN ISSUE THAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE GROUP

VISIONING

RESEARCHING

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS THROUGHOUT AN **entire process**

CELEBRATING

ACTING

REFLECTING

RESEARCH INTO THE ROOT CAUSES, MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES, AND MYRIAD STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN AN ISSUE
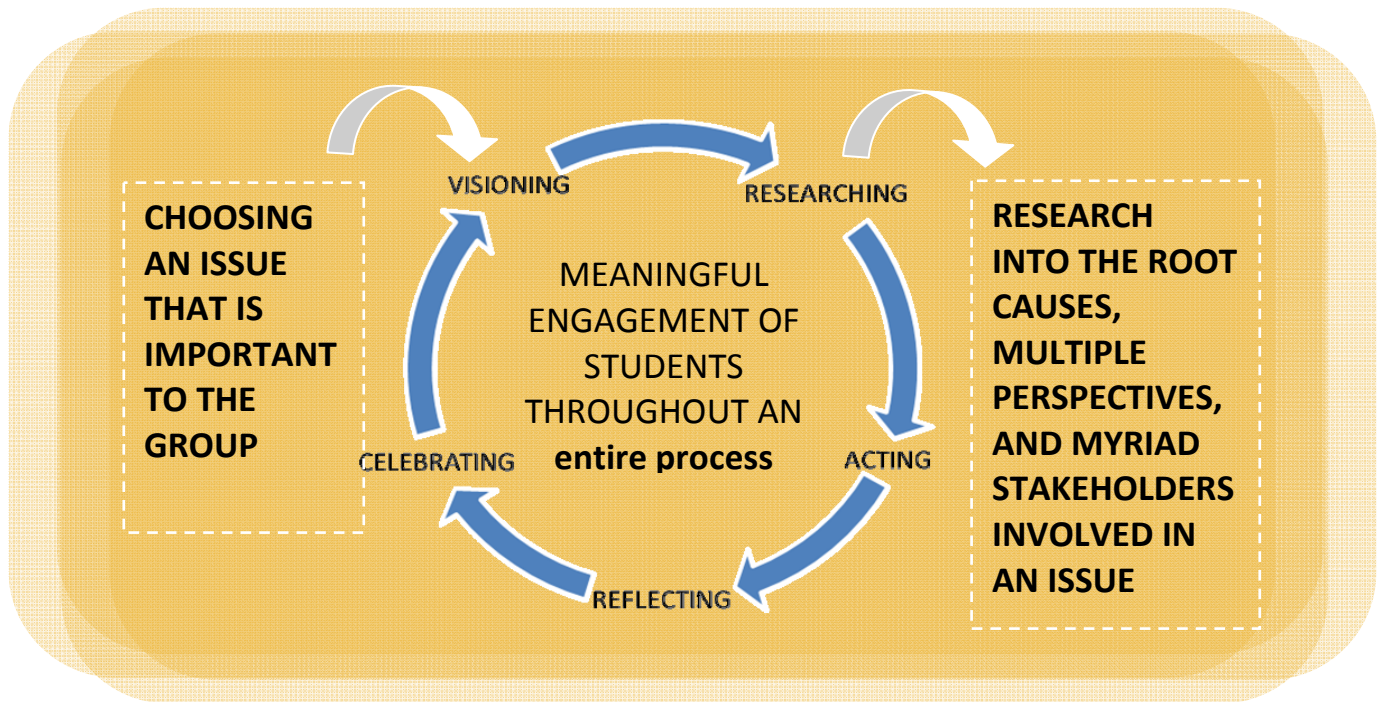
The following continuum illustrates some of the **differences** between activities and action projects.

Activity
• Less student ownership about the Issue and Action
• Less student-led planning of project

Action Project
• More Reflection
• More revisiting of steps in process
• More research
• Action more likely to be about root causes of the problems

3.0 REASONS TO DO ACTION PROJECTS

- Action projects are experiential; they cater to different learning styles.

- Action projects offer authentic, relevant, meaningful opportunities for learning and for taking responsibility. This is motivating for students.

- Action projects illuminate the inter- and trans-disciplinary and deeply interconnected nature of real problems.

- Action projects that involve being outdoors provide students with opportunities to fall in love with the Earth—which then becomes its own motivator to act.

- Using the environment as an integrating context for learning has been linked to improved test scores on standardized tests in the United States.

- Action projects create a natural relationship between the people in the school and the wider community.

- Action projects model for students and for the wider community what active citizenship looks, sounds and feels like; this increases the likelihood that participants will engage in future action projects and be responsible citizens.

- The outcomes of action projects can have substantial, positive, consequences for all of us.

- Action projects cultivate skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for active citizenship.

- Action projects can help students to learn how to think from a systems perspective and how to appreciate complexity.

4.0 THE ACTION PROJECT PROCESS

North
Steps 11 and 12

East
Steps 1, 2 and 3

South
Steps 4, 5 and 6

West
Steps 7, 8, 9 and 10
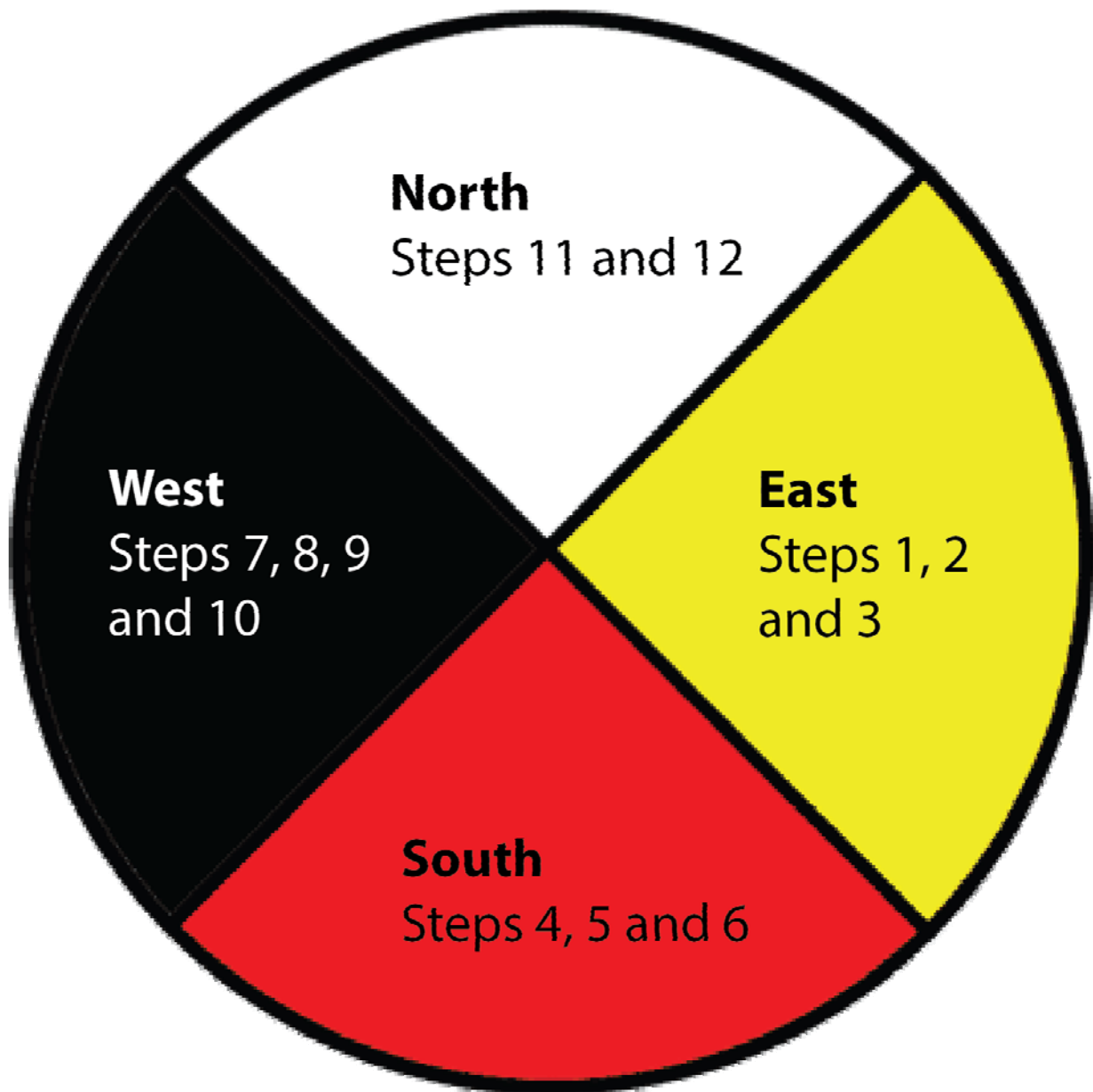
THE TWELVE STEPS OF AN ACTION PROJECT

STEP 1: Decide on Goals, Parameters and an Assessment Plan

- It is important that you clarify the goals and parameters of the project so that you may:

    o Communicate them clearly to the young people.

    - Be consistent with the young people. This will foster trust.

    - Be thoughtful about your own boundaries. Push yourself to offer the young people as much power and choice in the process as possible.

Carefully work through each of the steps below.
i. As a facilitator, decide on your own goals—why are you facilitating an action project?

ii. Decide on your priorities. For example, is it *most* important to you that you:
    a. Address a particular content area of the curriculum?
    b. Help your students to develop a particular skill?
    c. Help your students to experience success?
    d. Or...something else?

iii. Decide how you will measure your own success with the project—from a facilitator`s perspective (participants will also determine indicators of success from their perspective in Step 7):
    a. Create modest goals and create a manageable process for yourself—set yourself up for success. Hopefully this will be the first of many action projects that you facilitate.

iv. If you are a teacher, will the group be your class or an extra-curricular club?

v. Decide on your own boundaries:
    a. Consider doing the "What would You Condone?" activity (page 18) by yourself or with your colleagues.
    b. Read the *Dealing with Sensitive Issues* section in Appendix B in this guide.
    Look for this symbol throughout the guide. It indicates activities that would be well suited to sharing with mentors.

vi. Prepare to facilitate a discussion with the group about how you want your team to work:
    a. What decision-making model will you use? (e.g. majority-wins, consensus decision-making, etc. See the activity on page 51 of this guide)
    b. When and how often will you meet?
    c. How will discussions be handled to encourage constructive dialogue?
        i. See the Deliberative Dialogue and Debate information in Appendix C.

Reflect on your role in the group:
- See the "ladder of meaningful student participation" found on page 8.
- Facilitating effective action projects requires that the facilitator moves along the continuum away from a conventional 'conductor' role toward a 'coaching' role. This is no small task! A facilitator role helps to distribute the power more evenly. Consider the following questions:
    o What are you already doing that supports a 'coaching' relationship?

- What will need to change in order for you to successfully be more of a coach rather than a conductor?
- What skills will you need to work on in order to be an effective coach?
- How will this change in dynamic feel for the young people?
- How will students' past experiences (at home, with other teachers, etc.) influence their perception of/feelings about this type of relationship?
- What skills will the students need to develop in order to effectively capitalize on the new power-sharing dynamic?

Create an Assessment Plan (for action projects facilitated within classes)

- List the knowledge and skills that you would like to assess.
- See the assessment tools in this guide.
- Create your assessment plan.
- Check in: does your assessment plan align with your priorities for this project? Ensure that you implicitly as well as explicitly prioritize the stated goals of the project (for example, avoid saying that the main goal of the project is to build communication skills but assess only scientific knowledge about the issue).

STEP 2: Choose an Issue

1. Where necessary, expose students to a number of different issues facing your community (if your students are already aware of many different sustainability-related issues, you may wish to skip directly to the next step). You could do this by:

    i.   Attending a conference that presents a number of different issues. Visit www.r4r.ca/ecoleague to see if LSF is hosting a Youth Forum.

    ii. Providing a brief overview of current issues relevant to your community.

2. To decide on an *issue* that is important to the group, you may choose to do one or more of the following activities:
    - Value line activity on page 21
    - *Visioning a Change* activity on page 24
    - An environmental and social justice audit at your school (email Teri Burgess, teri@lsf-lst.ca for an example of an audit)

Where necessary, help young people to differentiate between symptoms and root causes of the issue. To do this, you might start by breaking down an example to which the students can relate well (for example, getting poor grades in school). The "*Exploring Root Causes*" activity sheet 28 can be used to help young people do this.

PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS (=something that arises because of something else—but it isn't the real cause)	POSSIBLE ROOT CAUSES (=the underlying cause of something. If this were changed, the problem would be addressed.)
Students come to school without healthy food.	▪ Students may have extreme highs and lows and may have trouble concentrating as a result of excess sugar and caffeine. ▪ There may be lots of food packaging litter in the desks and the school yard.	▪ A lack of knowledge about healthy food choices. ▪ A lack of time at home to experiment and make healthy food options. ▪ A lack of money for healthy food

To choose your *issue* you might consider using consensus-based decision-making. See page 51 in this guide for help.)

3. Explore why the students care about the issue. Take time to do this well. The students' concern for the issue is the fire that will keep the students working. Listening to this fire will help them to take action on a future issue, even if you're not around to fan the flames.
    You may wish to use the following activities:
    - Activity 2C: Exploring why we care on page 20
    - Activity 2D: What would the consequences be…? on page 25

STEP 3: Build Understanding

- See Activities on page 28 for help with the research process
- What has already been done on this issue? What can you learn from those experiences?
- Is there anyone else in your community who is already working on this, or has knowledge that could help you? Don't feel you need to reinvent the wheel!
- Consult traditional stories and teachings

STEP 4: Generate Idea*s* for Action

1. As a group, explore types of projects that can be tackled through action projects.
2. Brainstorm *action* ideas. What could your group do about this issue? See item 4 in Project Planning Template on page 40.
3. As a group, brainstorm and decide upon the criteria you will use to choose an *action*. For help, see criteria in the chart below.

- Choose an action (see the chart that guides students through the action selection process in item 6 in the Planning template on page 40). You may wish to use the consensus model of decision making to pick the action project. The activity on page 51 will help you to teach young people how to build consensus.

Possible Action Selection Criteria	
✓ Is this action consistent with my own values? ✓ Does an Elder or community leader believe that this action is a good idea? ✓ Are relevant resources and information available to us? ✓ Can we finish an important piece of this project within our time limits? ✓ Is the action that the group has chosen the most effective one available? ✓ Does it address a root cause of the problem rather than just a symptom? ✓ Does the action 'walk the talk' so that it will be perceived as credible? ✓ Are there ecological consequences of this action? If so, what are they? ✓ Are there legal consequences of this action? If so, what are they? ✓ Will there be social consequences of this action? If so, what are they? ✓ Are valuable relationships formed as a result of the project?	✓ Will there be economic consequences of this action? If so, what are they? ✓ Do the personal values of members of the group support this action? ✓ Does this action address short or long-term causes? ✓ Does the group understand the procedures necessary to take this action? ✓ Does the group have the skills needed to complete this action? ✓ Does this group have the courage to take this action? ✓ What educational benefits will be obtained? ✓ Will people feel empowered as a result of working on this project? ✓ Does the action feel like a good idea?

- Once you have chosen the action project, decide if you need to do more research related to the specific action. For example, in an effort to protect ground water, if students wish to encourage the community to stop throwing hazardous materials in the landfill, they may need to find out different recycling and waste disposal options for things like batteries and engine oil.

- As a group, make a very detailed plan including timelines and clearly state who is doing what. See item 16 in the Action Planning Template on page 40.

- Post the plan somewhere that everyone in the group has access to it. Check in with the plan frequently and revise as necessary.

- Create milestones that can be celebrated along the way and will help you to track your progress.

STEP 6: Build Motivation

Having young people choose their own issue inherently improves young peoples' motivation; however, everyone needs a little extra motivation some times, so please consider the suggestions below.

Spend time allowing students to describe the reasons they *care* about this issue. This will be the foundation of motivation you will draw on throughout the project—take time to build it well and to revisit it often. Some ways that you may do this are:

- Create a group mural about why your care about this issue. Post it somewhere highly visible to the young people and to others.

- Take and display photos of the important humans and other animals and/or places that you are working to protect.

- Get students outdoors —whenever possible, not just when necessary.

- Tune students in to what is going on outdoors (see the following resources: *Step Outside* [yellow button on www.resourcesforrethinking.ca website], *Up North* and *Up North Again* by Doug Bennett and Tim Tiner and *Backyard Almanac* by Larry Weber).

- Visit the important humans and other animals and/or places that you are working to protect. Consider inviting an Elder or Traditional Teacher to come on a walk with you. You may wish to ask the Elder or Traditional Teacher to speak about traditional activities on the land, traditional uses of plants, and/or stories about plants and animals.

STEP 7: Defining and Measuring Success

It is important to define and measure success so that:

- Success is achievable.

- Success is acknowledgeable.

- You know whether or not your strategy was successful so you can use this information in the planning of future projects.

Help young people choose appropriate goals. For example, for an anti-idling campaign, does "success" mean that 100% of the visitors to the school never idle their cars? Is this realistic? Constructive? Does success mean that most of the students involved in the project become comfortable and effective when educating people they do not know very well?

As a group, choose definitions of success that are appropriate and motivating. Formally assess your 'success' against the criteria the students developed in the action plan (see item #16 in the action planning template on page 40 *)* at least once *before* the end of the project as well as at the end of the project.

STEP 8: Identify Barriers and Supports

Look at the barriers and the supports that may affect your success and reflect on productive ways to deal with them. (See Force Field Analysis Activity on page 50).

Encourage students to consider multiple perspectives. Focus less on opinion and argument, or right and wrong, and encourage students to share and extend their own thinking through discussion with others.

Explore the relationships between concepts. Encourage young people to go beyond dichotomous 'this OR that' thinking. Check out Appendix B.

STEP 9: Teach/Learn Skills

Decide on the skills and knowledge people in the group need to complete the project and teach them these skills for example, interview skills, letter writing, etc.).

Remember that one of the goals of the project is for students to feel equipped and motivated to do another project.

STEP 10: Do it!

a. **Review Action Plan:** As a group, check in with your action plan frequently and revise as necessary. Formally assess your 'success' against the criteria the youth developed in the action plan at least once **before** the end of the project as well as at the end of the project.

b. **Reflect:** Have the young people reflect on your action project *throughout the process.* How are you doing? Are there any changes that could be made to make your project better? See *page62.*

c. **Log your progress:** Have the young people take turns making entries into a group journal or log book tracking what you're doing and how they are feeling about it. The information and the reflections will be helpful to:
     i.   Your own group at the end of the project.
    ii.   You for the next project you facilitate.
   iii.   Another group who wants to do a similar project when they hear about yours.

STEP 11: Share and Celebrate

Celebrate milestones along the way and at the end of the project. You can do this using the **Our Canada Project** – see box below. Check in with your goals for the project (Steps 1 and 7) to celebrate different types of accomplishments like a challenging but effective discussion, new skills, or the new-found support of someone who was previously a barrier.

Consider making the celebration arts based: sing songs, make up a song, create a music video, create a dramatic performance, create a dance, make a photographic display, build a multi-media mural. These creations can be small or big...as long as you celebrate.

Share your project and its celebration with your local community. Where appropriate, invite an Elder to lead the celebration. To help get the project in the media you can reference the LSF How to Media Guide at http://r4r.ca/media/HowtoMediaGuide.pdf. Also, share your success story with LSF by emailing us at info@lsf-lst.ca and entering to win the **LSF Jack Layton Award for Youth Action in Sustainability** – see http://lsf-lst.ca/en/projects/education-sustainable/awards/jack-layton-award.

STEP 12: Reflect

Facilitate a formal reflection activity at the end of the project. Consider using the creative arts as a vehicle for at least one of the reflections. See *Activities on page 62* for suggestions*.*

CONGRATULATIONS!
Rinse and Repeat.

Our Canada Project

The *Our Canada Project* (*OCP*) was the brain child of a diverse group of 22 youth from across Canada. These youth were brought together for 48 hours to figure out how to inspire all youth from every area in Canada to be more responsible citizens. The answer: give youth a chance to share their voice and they will take action. And so, the *Our Canada Project* was born.

The website features an interactive map where students can pin their action projects, including pictures and text. OCP can be used to document the entire project – from class vision and action plan, to pictures, progress updates and sharing success.

What's your vision for a better Canada? What are you doing to make it come true? Share your story today!

5.0 MEANINGFUL STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Roger Hart's "Ladder of Participation" has the following rungs[2]:

Project is student–initiated. Students share decision–making with adults.

↑

Project is student–initiated and directed.

↑

Project is adult–initiated. Students share decision–making with adults.

↑

Young people are consulted and informed.

↑

Young people are well informed and have a meaningful, but assigned role.

↑

Tokenism — student participation appears meaningful, but is not.

↑

Decoration

↑

Manipulation

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[2] From: Hart, Roger (1997). *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care.*

6.0 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ACTION PROJECTS[3]

Take Positive Positions

Instead of saying what you're against, think of what you are FOR.

Listen to All Peoples' Views

Attempt to see all sides of the issue. Focus on the good in others, the good in yourself and the good you are doing. Maintain an open mind and listen actively to what others have to say.

Avoid Stereotyping

It is easy to lump individuals into a category or group like "All developers care about is making money." Stereotyping is misleading, often blocking solutions rather than building bridges among people or groups. Recognize that each person holds his or her own identity within a group.

Act

Micro–movements are better than no movements!

Accept Responsibility

Never blame anyone or anything else for your lack of success. Accept responsibility and move on—look to what you could have done better. When you encounter a block, back off, reconsider your options and directions, and then try another route.

Be Persistent

Hang in there! Environmental problems are complex and usually take years to develop, so long–term commitment is important. Look at the big picture and don't let small obstacles get you down. Think long term — but break your plan into smaller projects and monitor progress on these as you go.

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[3] This list is adapted from the work of Susan Staniforth, Bill Hammond, and a group of Florida Lee County High School Students to come up with this list of tips for successful action projects.

PART II: ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1A: WHAT WOULD YOU CONDONE?

What is Going On?

By examining different types of actions young people can take, facilitators and young people can reflect on what they personally consider appropriate and inappropriate.

Materials

- Chart paper
- Markers
- A copy of the chart on the following page

Time Required

30-60 minutes

Procedure

1. On chart paper, create a Venn diagram using two large, overlapping circles. In one large circle write, "Would not Condone" and in the other, write "Would Condone". The overlapping section in the center of the diagram is for the actions you would condone if they were changed ("WCIC") in a significant way (specify the change required).

2. Read each action listed below. Discuss the student action and decide if you would condone the action described taking place.

3. Write the number of the activity in the corresponding area of the Venn Diagram.

4. After you have placed all of the action numbers in the appropriate places on the diagram, look at the overall pattern on your diagram. Discuss the results (for example: What types of action are supported? Are they effective in making change? What types of action are not supported? Is there a pair of activities in which the action is quite similar but the topic is different, resulting in one action being condoned and the other not?).

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[4] Adapted from an activity by David Selby from the article *Kaleidoscopic Mindset.*

	Student Action
1	Young people follow a local election in all its stages, interviewing voters in their community and attending local election meetings to raise awareness about the impact low-paying jobs have on working families.
2	Young people host a press conference to alert the community about a law that is about to be passed that would make it easier to sell land.
3	After learning that a new, heavily-polluting industry is hoping to come to their community, young people create a campaign to urge fellow young people to write letters to government representatives and to Band Councillors to prevent the company from setting up shop in their community.
4	Frustrated that the car traffic outside of the school is polluting the air, students create a campaign to educate motorists about the negative effects of idling their cars.
5	Young people choose a heavily-packaged toy and write to the company to tell the company executives that they will not buy the toy until the packaging is minimized. The young people actively encourage other people to boycott the toys through Facebook posts and posters at school.
6	Young people organize a fundraiser to raise money for an organization that promotes water protection in Canada.
7	Young people engage in a letter-writing campaign to local newspaper and radio stations to ask them not to advertise a new film which the young people deem to be too violent.
8	Young people create a Youtube video that illustrates how the low wages paid to workers in a South American country indirectly accelerate the destruction of the rainforest. A branch of the multinational company in question employs many of the young peoples` parents.
9	Young people host a press conference to raise awareness about the work they are doing to combat racism in their community.
10	Young people create a brochure and distribute it in the community to alert local residents about the impact household chemicals can have on the local water system.
11	After learning that a local company sells goods created in sweatshops in poor countries, young people mount a sit-down protest at the school gates to stop an exhibitor from the company from participating in the community career fair.
12	Students create a survey to find out what teachers would need to have in an "outdoor classroom" in order to use the "outdoor classroom" well. Students then lobby the school board and the parent council to provide funds to build the outdoor classroom. Students even suggest that money should be taken out of other budgets like the library and the phys.ed. budget to ensure that the "outdoor classroom" is built.

ACTIVITY 2A: WHY CARE? WHAT DOES THIS PICTURE MAKE ME THINK ABOUT?

The examples provided here are related to water; however, this type of activity can be done with any other issue OR it can be done with *diverse* photos that are not related to a particular issue. The water example is provided to demonstrate how an action project can be tailored to

curriculum expectations while still leaving lots of room for student

1. Search for photos that illustrate the diverse and important uses of water to humans and other-than-humans, near and far. You may wish to search using phrases like: 'photos water justice', 'photos water contamination', 'photos water pollution', 'photos water recreation', 'photos water ceremonies'. Look for photos that are compelling and leave room for discussion. For example you might like to use photos from these sites:

> *If the students have mentors, invite them to come to see the images the young people create.*

- http://www.flickr.com/groups/ourworldourwater/
- http://www.fotosearch.com/photos-images/water-contamination.html
- http://www.fotosearch.com/photos-images/water-pollution.html
- http://www.nationalgeographic.com/photography/
- http://www.greenpeace.org/international/photosvideos/

2. Print the photos so there are enough for each group of four people to have a set of diverse photographs. Consider putting the photos in plastic sleeves for reuse.

3. Have young people work in small groups. Ask each group to pick five photos and discuss how they feel looking at the pictures. What thoughts come to mind? What do the photos show about water and humans in other, diverse parts of Turtle Island (for example: rural areas, urban areas, remote areas)? What do the photos show about water, humans and other animals?

4. Have people choose a title for each of the images and place it on the wall. People can also make their own cards, with hand-drawn images, based on their own knowledge.

5. In small groups, ask students to classify the photos and justify their classification system.

6. As a class, discuss the possible classification options.

7. Ask people to choose one image and create another image (photography, drawing, collage,…) that either:

   - Explains why the image is important to her/him, or

   - Changes the image to something she/he would prefer to see, or

   - Represents the 'future life' of the characters/place in the photo.

8. Invite people from the community to come in to speak to the young people about the images they created.

ACTIVITY 2B: VALUE LINE ACTIVITY

Materials:

- Pieces of paper in 3 different colours (each piece should be approximately 1/8 the size of a piece of letter-size paper). Enough pieces so that each student can use approximately 6 pieces of each colour (=18 pieces per student)
- Open space
- Scrap paper
- Masking tape
- Markers
- 8 shoeboxes, plastic bins, or buckets etc.
- Chairs or pylons that can go outside

Preparing for the Activity:

1. Read the entire procedure below; it will help to make sense of these instructions.
2. Distribute pieces of coloured paper so that every person has access to many pieces of each of the different colours of paper.
3. On the board or on an easel (if outside), write the code for what colour matches what venue. For example: pink=home, blue=school, white=community.
4. Outside, create a space where there is an imaginary line upon which your whole group could stand. This line is a scale. Put a sign on one side of the line that says "don't care" and a sign on the other side of the line that says "really really care".

Procedure:

Part I

1. Give young people examples of things that bug you. For example, idling cars bug me because of the noise and air pollution they create. Tell students that when you say "go" you would like them to use the pink pieces of paper to write down things that bug them *that happen at home*. For example, my brother doesn't recycle toilet paper rolls, my parents use pesticides on the lawn, my house is too warm at night so we are probably wasting fuel. Students should write one idea per piece *of paper and try t*o fill as many pieces of paper as possible. Students should put their pieces of paper in a central bin.
2. Repeat step two, this time having students use blue paper to write down ideas about things that *happen at school* that bug them.
3. Repeat step three, this time having students use white paper to write down ideas about things that *happen in their neighbourhood.*
4. Put all of the ideas in a central bin.

Part II

1. Take everyone outside. Create a space where there is an imaginary line upon which your whole group could stand. This line is a scale. Put a sign on one side of the line that says "don't care" and a sign on the other side of the line that says "really really care".

2. Tell students that you are going to draw ideas from the bin. For example, one thing that bugs one of the students is that her sister leaves the television on which wastes electricity. Tell students that in response to the idea of wasting electricity, when you say '1,2,3, go', students should go to stand on the line on the appropriate place on the scale, depending on how much they care about that issue. Explain to students that they are not ranking themselves/comparing themselves to each other. Instead, they are just listening to their own feelings about the issue.

3. Choose one student to be the recorder. Ask the person to sketch a line on a piece of paper and to sketch how people are distributed on it. Label the issue. Repeat this for each issue that comes up. For example, the sketch may look like this:
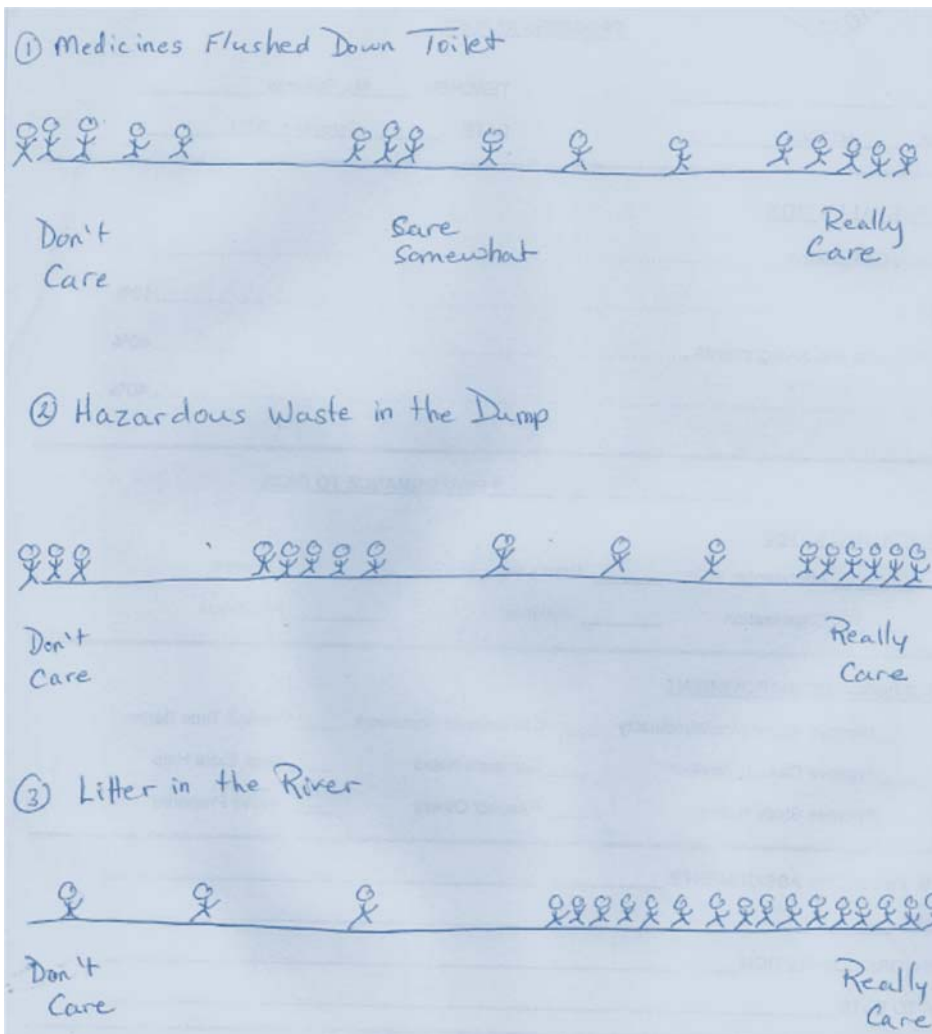
4. Draw a piece of paper from the bin. Read the issue aloud. Ask people to rate their *feeling* about the issue. Emphasize that you want them to pay attention to how they really *feel*, not what they think other people will feel. While you are saying '1, 2, and 3' (slowly), students should decide where they will stand when you finally say "go".

5. Repeat step 3 for as many of the ideas in the bin as you can (depending on time and attention).

6. As a group, reflect on the sketches. You could use these sketches to choose one issue that everyone will work on. It would make sense to pick the issue that got the most people on the 'care a lot about the issue' side of the continuum.

Part III: Use this Activity ONLY if Small Groups of Young People will Choose Whatever Issue they Want

If this is the first time you have facilitated a project, you may wish to have all young people choose the same issue. They can choose different **actions**, but the **issue** must be the same. For example, you may do the value line activity above and find out that all of the young people are concerned about the quality of their drinking water. All of the young people will choose an action that aims to improve and/or protect the quality of your community's drinking water. However, everyone can choose a different **action** to do this. Some participants may wish to create a campaign to educate the community about safe cleaning products. Some participants may wish to ask community leaders to help them start a battery recycling program to divert batteries from the local landfill. Other participants may wish to create an online petition to ask Federal politicians to create stronger laws that protect waterways from harm from industry. All of these actions protect drinking water. They are all about the same issue, but the **actions** are different.
If you want to allow the participants to pick different **actions**, then you may wish to use the activity below.

1. Use previously prepared signs or make up signs that reflect the top issues the young people seem to care about based on the Value Line activity above. Make 1 sign for every two or three people. Make one sign that says "other". Tape the signs to chairs and spread the chairs around an open space.

2. Ask young people to look at the issues. When you say "go", tell them that you would like them to go to the sign that has the name of the issue in which they are *least interested*. "1,2,3…go"

3. Ask young people to look at the issues. When you say "go", tell them that you would like them to go to the sign that has the name of the issue in which they are somewhat *interested*. "1,2,3…go"

4. Ask students to look at the issues. When you say "go", tell them that you would like them to go to the sign that has the name of the issue in which they are *most interested.* "1,2,3…go"

5. Have these groups sit together to discuss the issue more specifically. Go to each group and try to put students into groups of 2-4 depending on common interests. From here, you can use these groups to research the issue and/or act on the issue.

ACTIVITY 2C: VISIONING A CHANGE FOR A SCHOOL

Part I:

1. Use the chart below. Discuss the meaning of each of the headings, using the example to illustrate the meaning.

2. Solicit other examples from the whole group.

3. In small groups, have students work on generating more examples.

4. Debrief in large group.

What Would a School that is Working Toward a Sustainable Future Look Like?

OPERATIONAL PRACTICES	ORGANISATIONAL PRINCIPLES	PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS	CURRICULUM
• Young people are encouraged to bring water bottles to class/meetings • Composting program	• Prioritize tapping into community resources, e.g. Elders, traditional teachers • Decisions are made by consensus wherever possible	• Diversity of indigenous (local) plants thrive in the school yard • Low flow toilets	• Local issues are integrated into the curriculum • Participants are provided with choice wherever possible

Part II:

Ask students to brainstorm in small groups: what are some things that happen at your school that are not Earth-friendly? Think of rules, practices.

Part III

Use the Value Line Activity (page 21) to have students choose: if you could change one thing about your school, what would be the non-Earth-friendly thing from your list that you would most like to change?

ACTIVITY 2D: WHY CARE? WHAT WOULD THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT BE…?

General Overview

Young people create a concept map of an issue. The central picture of the map depicts the issue. Each line away from the central *picture* asks the question "*what would be the consequences of that" ?* At the end of each line is a new picture which tries to address the "*what would be the consequences of that?"* question. See below for an example of a concept map.

Objectives

- Students explore the diverse reasons to care about something.
- Students draw upon emotional and rational dimensions of their responses to an issue.
- Students deepen their understanding that diverse dimensions of issues are interconnected: health, environment, economics, justice, well-being, etc.

Materials

- Chart paper (preferably already used on one side)
- Markers that don't bleed through the page (so you can use the other side!)

Time Required

45 minutes

Procedure

1. Have your students choose an issue that they care about. You may wish to do this using the "Value Line" activity on page 21 above to help them choose something. You will need to decide on the parameters that you want to set. Does it need to be a particular issue studied in the last unit you covered in your course (for example, natural resources)? Does it need to fit within a theme in your club (for example, healthy water ways)?...

2. Model the activity described below using an appropriate issue. **It may be easier for your students to learn how to use the tool using a very accessible issue like `What Would Happen if You Spent all of Your Waking Hours Facebooking?' We used a water issue for our example below simply to provide extra information for the facilitator.**

   a. In the centre of a piece of chart paper, draw a square. Inside that square draw a picture that shows what would happen if the issue you care about was dramatically changed in a positive way. For example:

   *People in our community do **not** put their hazardous waste in the landfill.*

   NOTE: trying to use pictures rather than words can help students to try to think about the issue in a more holistic way.

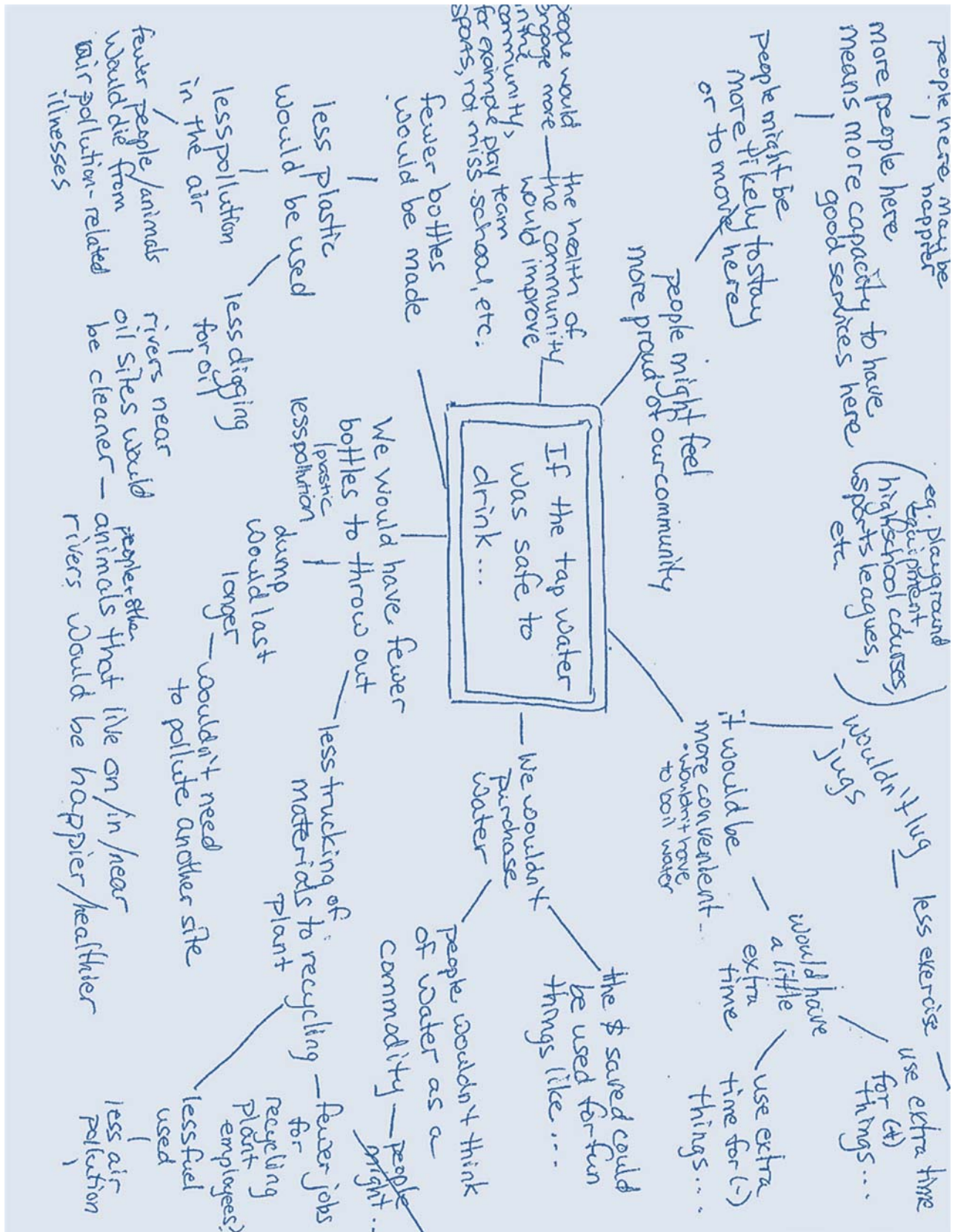   b. Draw a line away from the picture. On top of the line, write the question, "what would the consequences be?"

c. Connect the line to a new shape.

d. Inside the new shape, draw a picture or write a phrase describing one of the consequences of the positive change. The consequence itself can be positive or negative. For example, if people did not put their hazardous waste in the landfill, a consequence would be:

> The chemicals from the hazardous materials would not leach into the water.

3. Draw a line away from the statement/picture from Step d. On top of the line, write the question, "what would the consequences of that be?".

4. Connect the line to a new shape. In this new shape, draw a picture of the consequences of the situation in the previous picture (e.g. Less hazardous chemicals in the water would mean that more diverse insects would grow).

5. Continue with this one line of thinking until you no longer have an answer to the question "what would the consequences be?"(for example, more insects would mean more fish which would mean more fish for humans to eat. This might have consequences like: my grandfather would spend more time fishing which would result in more relaxation which would result in: healthier relationships and longer life. This would make me happy.)

6. Start a new spoke from the central picture with a new line of thinking (e.g. Less hazardous chemicals in the dump may mean more things going to a recycling plant, which may mean more jobs/hours for people at the recycling plant, which may result in…; however, less hazardous chemicals in the dump may mean more hazardous chemicals being shipped overseas for inappropriate disposal in financially poor countries which may result in diminished health for people far away which would make me sad).

7. Repeat steps b to h as many times as possible. For each line, ask if there is more than one possible consequence for that particular result.
   TIPS:
   - Incorporate environmental, social (e.g. justice, health, etc.), economic consequences.
   - Incorporate consequences for humans and animals.
   - Incorporate consequences for humans and other animals near and far, now and in the future.
   - Try to use emotional reactions as well as logical 'reasons'.
   - Try to use pictures as well as words.
   - Try to bring each branch of the diagram into as many different directions as possible.
   - Try to use positive and negative consequences.

8. Have the young people create their own "What would the consequences be?" maps using the issue that they chose in Step 2 of the Action Process.

9. Have the students post their maps around the room and invite everyone to look at everyone else's. Students should be given the opportunity to **_not_** post their maps.

10. Reflect on the interconnectedness of the social, environmental and economic dimensions of the issue.

11. Revisit the maps as your students move through the Action Process to record new learnings.

If the tap water was safe to drink ...

people here may be happier

more people here

means more capacity to have good services here (eg: playground equipment, high school courses, sports leagues, etc.)

people might be more likely to stay or to move here

people would engage more in the community, for example play team sports, not miss school, etc.

the health of the community would improve

people might feel more proud of our community

fewer bottles would be made

less plastic would be used

less pollution in the air

less digging for oil

rivers near oil sites would be cleaner — animals that live on/in/near rivers would be happier/healthier

fewer people/animals would die from air pollution-related illnesses

We would have fewer bottles to throw out

less pollution

dump would last longer — wouldn't need to pollute another site

less trucking of materials to recycling plant

We wouldn't purchase water

people wouldn't think of water as a commodity — people might...

fewer jobs

less fuel used

less air pollution

recycling plant employees?

it would be more convenient — wouldn't have to boil water

wouldn't lug jugs — less exercise — use extra time for (-) things...

would have a little extra time — use extra time for (+) things...

the $ saved could be used for fun things like ...

As young people build their understanding, have them revisit their 'What would happen if' concept map from activity 2D above.

ACTIVITY 3A: SHARE STORIES

- Find stories that involve the issue.

- Invite people from the community to come to tell stories related to the issue your students chose (for example, uses of bodies of water in your community).

ACTIVITY 3B: EXPLORING ROOT CAUSES

What are possible symptoms of this problem?

What are possible root causes of the problem?

What problem has your group chosen to work on? (For example: young people purchase bottled water, young people who do not have good food to eat, young people vandalize the community centre, young people get driven/drive to school, etc.)

What are possible remedies for the *symptoms*?

What are possible remedies for the *root causes*?

ACTIVITY 3C: PLACEMAT RESEARCH ACTIVITY

What's Going On?

In small groups, students write as much as they know about their issue as well as their own questions about the issue on a "placemat". The questions are then coded to determine the best way to find the answers to the questions. Young people conduct research based on the method they identified for each question and the young people conduct their research.

Materials

- Chart paper
- Internet access (desirable but not necessary during class time)
- Markers
- Tape
- Scrap paper

Time

- 60 minutes of class time
- Independent or class time for research
- 4-8 days to wait for responses to emailed research questions

Getting Prepared

1. Read the procedure below first; it will help you to understand the preparation instructions.

2. Do one of the activities from Action Process Step Two—Identifying an Issue (above) to help students to identify an issue of concern.

3. Create placemats for each group of students. Make extras in case some students' topics dictate that they should work on their own or in smaller groups. Each placemat is made from 1 piece of chart paper. Draw 2 diagonal lines on the paper to divide it into 4 sections. In each section, tape a copy of one of the following questions so if 4 people are sitting around the placemat, each person has a clearly defined section with one question in it.

   - What is happening that bugs you? Write details and examples.

   - Who is involved in this problem? Name as many people or organizations as possible.

   - How could this be different? What are alternatives?

   - What else do you want to know about this issue?
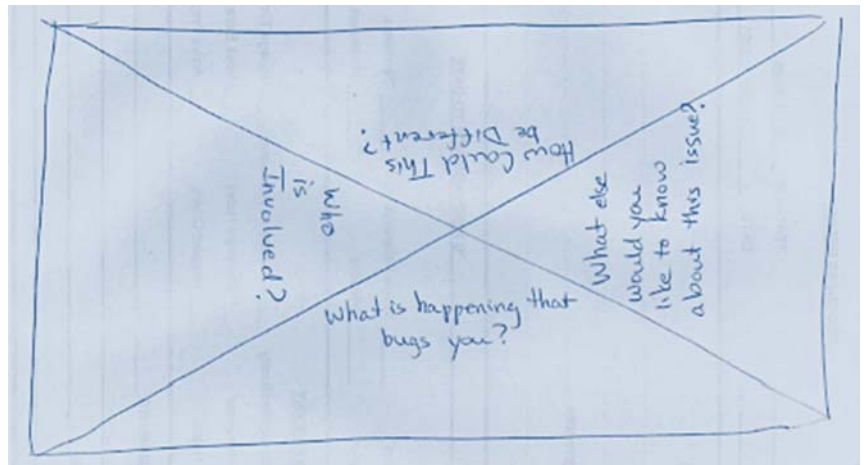
4. Put a square in the middle of the page with the title: "issue" and a place for students to write the issue that they are concerned about.

5. Make one sample placemat. For example, **concerning disposal of old medications down the toilet**, I could write (see right):

What is happening that bugs you? Describe the problem. Write details and examples.
- People flush their expired or unused medicines down the toilet.

- Even very good treatment plants don't remove many medicines from the water so the medicines go into the lake. These medicines can harm animals.

Who is involved in this problem? Name as many people or organizations as possible.
- All people of all ages who use medicine

- People who sell medicine

- People who work at water treatment plants

- All people of all ages who like to eat animals from our lakes

- Health Canada

- People who are not yet born

- Elders

- Animals

- Plants

- Creator

- Mother Earth

How could this be different? What are alternatives?
- There could be a special depot for collecting unused or expired medicine.

- People could do a better job of using up all medicine so there is less waste.

What else do you want to know about this issue?
- Are companies that sell medicine at all involved in dealing with old/unused medicine?

- Are there places where we can take our old medicine?

- Would people make the effort to take old medicine to the proper place if there was a depot available?

- Are people trying to develop a process for removing medicines during the waste water treatment process?

- Why aren't people using up all of their medicines?

- Do expiry dates on medicine really matter?

6. Write the placemat focusing questions on the board or an easel so that you can model the answers and ask for suggestions to check for student understanding before they work on their own placemat.

7. Write the code used in step one (e.g. circle=…; square = …) on the easel/board.

Procedure

Part I

1. Have everyone get into groups of 2-4 people in which there is a shared interest in an issue (see *Choosing an Issue* activities in this guide).

2. Tell everyone that they are going to find out more about the issue they have chosen. Use the model (see preparation section below) to explain the four focusing questions. Provide and solicit examples.

3. In groups, have everyone sit around the placemat. ***At the same time***, each person writes ***one*** answer to the question that is directly in front of her/him. When they are ready (or when you say switch), people turn the paper around (OR people can get up and move to the chair to the right but leave the placemat in the same position) so that a new question is facing each person. Each person reads what the previous student wrote and then adds her/his own ideas—***as many as possible***. People repeat this until everyone in the group has had a chance to answer each question.

4. In their small group, have everyone review all of the responses. Do they have anything they want to add?

5. Collect the placemats. You may need time to review them before moving on to part B.

Part II

1. Depending on the age/ability of your participants, you may want to do this step for the participants or you may want to have them do it in groups. Review the participants' "What else do you want to know section".

2. Refer to (or write) the following code on the easel/board:
   a. Circle all of the questions that you think have answers that are accessible in books or on the internet. For example, how did the water get to my tap? This may be a good question for the water treatment facility website.
   b. Put a squiggly mark around questions that professional people would know the answer to, but the answer probably isn't easy to find on the internet or in a book. For example, *who is responsible for ensuring that local industries do not send polluted water back into the system?,* is a question that would be best addressed by a phone call or email to a government helpline.
   c. Put a square around all of the questions that you think would require a discussion among people or survey to find the answer to. For example, *what is an appropriate balance between the number of stores we have in our community and the amount of greenspace we protect for non-human habitat and human play areas?,* is a question that requires a deliberation or a survey.
   d. Put a star beside all questions that you think would be best asked of an Elder.

3. Provide young people with a stack of scrap paper. On each piece of paper, everyone should write only one of their research questions on the top of the page. Groups should staple all of their papers together. As people gather information, they should write notes, draw photos, note where relevant recordings are, etc. on the page with the question to which the new information applies. For each of their questions, they should follow the appropriate instructions below:

- **Circled Questions**: Help participants to identify possible internet sites or possible books.

- **Squiggly Mark Questions:** Have participants type up their question as well as a "who might know" list. Depending on the age of the participants, you may wish to compile and send the emails yourself or allow them to source the appropriate person and send the email.

- **Squared Questions**: participants may wish to host a community discussion or a discussion for local high school students. You may wish to:
  - Read Appendix B.
  - Check out the *Moderator's Guide for Public Deliberations,* Canadian Council for International Co–operation. www.ccic.ca
  - Construct an appropriate survey.
  - Ask an Elder to guide the discussion.

- **Starred Questions**: Help young people to articulate what they are asking. Help them to determine how they will ask an Elder for help.

ACTIVITY 3D: ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNINGS

What is Going On?

Students review their notes from their research and create a concept map with words and pictures.

Materials

- Chart paper
- Scrap paper of different colours
- Crayons/pencil crayons/markers/pencils/erasers

Alternatively try out COMPENDIUM= free software for creating concept maps that can be downloaded from the internet

Preparation

Prepare your own mind map to share with the students or build one together about a concept you are all familiar with. Many examples can be found online or see preparation section below for examples.

Procedure

1. Share and/or build a model mind map with the students (see preparation section below for examples). If possible, read about mind maps before you do this with your students. If that isn't possible, there are steps written below to get you started. Do steps two and three below in your model, but do not try to draw connections between the ideas (Step 6) at this point.

2. Give each student a piece of chart paper. Have them create a circle in the middle of the paper with a few words/pictures that describe their issue.

3. Ask students to write words and/or pictures around the circle that represent different things they learned about the issue and their own reflections on what they've learned. You might encourage them to use pencil at first. If they want to add details about the words or pictures, you might have them do it on scrap paper and tape them in the appropriate spot in case they want to move the ideas around.

4. Once students have had time to work on their ideas, use your model to discuss the idea of illustrating how the different concepts on the map are connected.

5. Encourage the students to think about and illustrate how the different ideas on the map are connected.

6. Have students pair up and explain to each other what their map represents. Encourage them to actively listen to suggestions from their partner.

7. Encourage students to revise their maps based on the feedback from their partners.

Rubrics

An example of a mind map rubric is provided below.

Example of a Mind Map Rubric

	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Student Assess-ment	Teacher Assess-ment
Knowledge Lines of thought away from the central image reflect an understanding of the ecological, health, economic, justice, etc. consequences of the issue.	Diagram shows a thorough understanding of the many consequences of the issue.	Diagram shows considerable understanding of the many consequences of the issue.	Diagram shows some understanding of the many consequences of the issue.	Diagram shows limited understanding of the many consequences of the issue.		
Thinking and Inquiry *Relationships* among the consequences of the issue are demonstrated .	Diagram indicates a thorough understanding of relationships.	Diagram indicates considerable understanding of relationships.	Diagram indicates some understanding of relationships.	Diagram indicates limited understanding of relationships.		
Communication - Spelling - Colour - Neatness - Graphics enhance the message	Information is communicated with thorough effectiveness.	Information is communicated with considerable effectiveness.	Information is communicated with some effectiveness.	Information is communicated with limited effectiveness.		

ACTIVITY 4A: CLASSIFYING PROJECT IDEAS[5]

Purpose of the Activity:

- To begin thinking about opportunities for taking action

Materials:

For each group of students (3-5 students)
- Small "Types of Action" Title cards (on white paper)
- 7-10 action project examples, cut apart (on coloured paper)

Procedure:

1. Introduce different types of action by writing possibilities on the board and **briefly** describing each one (e.g. political action, eco-management, education – see attached sheet for a complete list).

2. In small groups (3-5 participants) have participants lay out their own "types of action" title cards then read through the sample project cards and categorize them under the appropriate headings.

3. If any participant has been involved in an action project, she or he should create a card for her/himself and add it to her/his sorted pile.

4. Ask students to pick the project that seems most interesting to her/him and be ready to share it and describe why she/he chose it.

5. When small groups are done, have participants share their most interesting action project and explain why it is interesting. You may also want them to post their cards under the appropriate heading on a piece of chart paper to create a permanent display of possible projects.

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[5] Adapted by Teri Burgess and MJ Barrett from Project Wild. (1995). *Taking Action: An educator's guide to involving students in environmental action projects.* Bethesda, MD: Western Region Environmental Education Council, Inc. Order from Council for Environmental Education. www.projectwild.org Ph. (713) 520-1936.

Educate & Inform

This can involve educating peers, younger students, community members through: community education programs, newspaper articles, plays, poems, posters, advertisements, workshops, and songs.

Make Consumer Choices

Personal decisions like refusing to buy items with more than one layer of packaging, buying Canadian made and locally grown products, buying organic, boycotting products produced by known operators of sweatshops, buying used, reducing consumption etc.

Persuade Others To…

Similar to educate and inform, this approach attempts to convince people to make changes. Letters to the editor, PA announcements, advertisements (or anti-ads – see Adbusters' website), pamphlets, street theatre etc. are all useful persuasion tools).

Raise Funds

This can refer either to fundraising for an external cause or raising funds to implement your own project.

Engage in Political Action

This has some crossover with legal action and can include meeting with elected officials, speaking at public meetings and hearings, circulating petitions, supporting political candidates, writing letters to the editor etc.

Initiate Legislative Action

This approach is important and usually involves a longer term process. Short term contributions, such as making a presentation to city hall or town council can help initiate or support a legislative change – e.g. making a presentation to support the creation of a law about dumping mine waste in bodies of water or a law to reduce pesticide use in the community.

Eco-management Projects

These projects make physical changes to the environment including schoolyard naturalization, tree planting, river bank stabilization etc. Be careful to distinguish their ecological value from projects that are simply for "beautification".

Make Lifestyle Choices

In addition to consumer choices, this also includes such decisions as: being intentional about forming relationships with Elders, going for walks with Traditional Teachers, learning a traditional language, choosing alternatives to a car whenever possible, and generally conducting one's life in ways which have less impact on the planet and are more sustainable in the long term.

Peaceful Dissent

Peaceful Dissent involves opposition to a rule or to the usual way of doing things, but it does not involve breaking the law. Examples of peaceful dissent include: parades with protest signs, gatherings in public places (with a permit), wearing gym clothing inside out to protest the use of sweatshop labour, etc.

Other…

Your call – anything that doesn't fit into the above categories.

Students were concerned when they learned that 2/3 of the world's population will not have access to clean water as of 2025. Students created a compelling audio/visual presentation to play over-and-over again in the foyer of the school during events in which the community was already invited to the school (holiday concert). In addition, students identified several non-profit organizations that work to help people throughout the world gain access to clean water. The students printed information from the non-profit organizations to have available for members of the public to take home if they wanted to learn more after seeing/hearing the students' presentation.

Several families at this local school were dealing with low water levels in their household wells. Students began to ask questions about where the local beverage company was getting the water to make the bottled beverages. Students explored these questions with the local municipal government and conservation authority. Then the students wrote an article about what they learned and their concerns. They searched for diverse venues in which to share the article, including: the local newspaper, the school website, the community bulletin board at the library, etc.

Students learned that 75% of India's surface water and 80% of China's surface water has become too contaminated to drink. The students decided to find out what chemicals in their own homes were contaminating their local bodies of water. When students learned that many cleaning products were the culprits, they decided to lead a campaign in their own homes to reduce the use of commercial cleaning products. The students promised that for three weeks, they would offer to clean anything appropriate with baking soda and vinegar instead of the cleaning product their family usually used. At the end of the campaign, students shared stories about which tasks could continue to be done using baking soda and vinegar and which tasks their families were opting to switch back to the commercial cleaner.

When researching water issues on the internet, students learned about peoples' concerns in India related to a particular pop company's practices at their bottling plants in India (for example, the pop company is accused of using up ground water supplies in drought-stricken areas, making beverages from water that has high levels of pesticides in it, producing hazardous waste and not disposing of it properly, etc.). Students decided that they wanted to find out which products in their local stores were sold by the particular pop company they were studying. Then, the students made individual personal pledges to reduce or eliminate their own consumption of the pop products for a two week period. Many of the students decided to continue their personal avoidance of the specific pop products indefinitely.

At a local conference, some students learned about a non-profit organization that supports park and 'turf' managers to manage lawns and gardens without the use of pesticides (organiclandscape.org). The students were concerned when they learned about the persistence of pesticide chemicals in the water system. The students decided to contact the parks manager for their municipality and the greens keepers for two local golf courses. They prepared a list of questions to ask the managers via email concerning their use of pesticides. Once the students ascertained that pesticides were indeed being used, they requested a meeting at which they tried to persuade the managers to seek the support of the non-profit organic greens- keeping organization. When one of the managers agreed to do this, the students wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper thanking the manager for her openness and forward-thinking approach (and reporting the lack of action by the other two managers).

A group of students designed an audit that they used to analyse the litter found in a local river. They identified the types of litter they found most frequently and the probable sources of the litter. The students then did research to pinpoint some of the potential negative consequences of having the most populous types of litter in the river. Once equipped with compelling and specific information about the litter, the students wrote letters to the businesses that were originally responsible for the litter to ask them to consider alternative types of packaging for their products (eg. biodegradable packaging, reusable containers, etc.). The students learned how to identify the person at the companies that would be most likely to constructively respond to their requests. They also experimented with contacting more than one department at a particular company to see what types of responses they would get from the different employees.

A guest speaker visited a grade eight class and told them about a number of countries in the world where the countries are being forced to sell their household tap water distribution systems to private companies (the International Monetary Fund often stipulates that certain public services must be privatized in order for the country to qualify for financial loans). Students were angered by the difficult and often tragic position in which this puts financially poor families in cities like La Paz, Bolivia. The students were also moved to try to protect their own municipal water supply. In an effort to try to get members of their community to better appreciate tap water and to reduce the waste associated with plastic water bottles, the students sold stainless steel water bottles at school sporting events and gave away free fill-ups of tap water to people who bought the water bottles. The profits that they made were donated to a nonprofit organization that promotes the protection of public rights to water (http://www.canadians.org/).

While on a field trip to a brand new municipal swimming pool, students were concerned about the amount of water being wasted in the change rooms of the new facility. They felt that the facility should have low-flow taps, showers and toilets and that the showers should automatically turn off after a certain period of time. The students created a list of questions to send to the municipal recreation department about some of the decisions made in planning the new facility. Unsatisfied with the answers, and aware that a new arena was in the planning stages, the students requested a meeting with the Mayor of the town. They went to the meeting prepared to ask questions about the future direction of by-laws related to municipal buildings and to request that there be strict parameters about water usage in future buildings if these were not already in place.

For a geography project, students studied aerial photos of their local area that were taken in 1956. They noticed that there was a stream running right through their community that they were not aware of because the stream had been paved over. The students asked their teacher for support to learn more about their local stream and they wondered if other streams in their community had also been paved over as the town grew. They contacted the local government and the provincial government to learn more about the rules related to paving over streams and wetlands. Unsatisfied with the current regulations, the students wrote letters to both the municipal and the provincial government to request stricter rules to protect waterways, especially in areas experiencing new construction.

Students tested the quality of water in a local river for a science and geography unit of study. When they discovered that the quality of water was too poor to support many of the species that had originally lived there, the students contacted a number of local non-profit organizations via email to ask questions about potential sources of contamination and potential actions to remediate the problem. Students learned that a number of native plants act as natural water cleaners, but that these plants are often removed when home and business owners landscape their properties that abut the river. As a result, there is not as much natural cleaning of the waterways as there should be. Students engaged in a partnership project with one of the nonprofit organizations to replant native plants along the river bank.

On a field trip to a local waterway, students learned that one of the abundant plants on the waterway was an invasive species that had been imported from Europe for ornamental gardens and had spread to 'wild' areas. They learned that the plant was not a good food source for the birds and insects in their area, but that its presence pushed out the native plant species that were a good food source. In this way, the presence of the invasive species disrupted the entire food web at the waterway. When the students learned that the only viable remedy for this problem was to pull out the plant by hand, they offered to help. The students planned a second trip to the waterway. They discussed methods for removing the invasive species that would involve as little disruption of the native species as possible. They also contacted a local naturalist organization to ask about the best way to destroy the invasive plants. Then they went to work pulling out the invasive species!

When studying natural resource use, students were alarmed and surprised to learn about the massive impacts on rivers caused by large-scale hydro-electric projects and about the amount of water involved in mining oil from the Alberta oil sands. The students became interested in searching for ways to reduce the use of electricity at school so as to reduce their indirect impact on Canadian rivers. The students created an audit to determine all of the ways electricity was wasted at the school. Then the students broke up into small groups; each group took on two electricity-wasting practices in the school and generated ideas about methods to reduce electricity use. As a class, the students brainstormed criteria for choosing the best reduction methods. Each group chose one electricity-reduction strategy (eg. rewards for classes with lights off at recess time) and monitored the impact of their strategy for four weeks after implementation.

Students visited their local drinking water treatment plant and sewage treatment plant. When they became aware of the amount of electricity, chemicals and money that were involved in treating the water that comes to their taps and goes down their drains, many of the students wanted to learn ways in which they could reduce their personal water use. Students were challenged to identify three things that they could do in their own lives and to keep a log for two weeks of every opportunity they had to make a change in their own personal behaviour. For each opportunity, the students were asked to report whether they took the opportunity to do things in a water-saving manner or whether they did things in the conventional, water-wasting way and to explain their choice. At the end of two weeks, students reflected on what, if any, new practices they would continue and how the change (or lack of change) felt.

After watching a video about the resources that go into producing a disposable water bottle (http://www.storyofstuff.org/movies-all/story-of-bottled-water/) , some students decided to reduce their own personal use of disposable plastic water bottles. The students estimated how many plastic water bottles they were usually consuming in a week. The students challenged one another to have the best percentage decrease and/or the fewest number used in a week. The students posted a chart to record the number of bottles used per student per day. At the end of each week, they checked in to see how they were doing. The students continued this for three weeks and then reflected on their personal choices going forward.

Some students noticed that their local school yard was being treated with pesticides. They contacted the department responsible for school ground maintenance and learned that there was no plan in place to eliminate the use of pesticides on school grounds. To protest the use of pesticides in their school yards, students created fake 'gas masks' and wore them during recesses, lunch breaks and outdoor gym periods. The students refused to participate in outdoor gym activities on the grassy area of the schoolyard. The students created a flyer which outlined their concerns and which referred to a web page where students provided more information about their

concerns about the impact of pesticides on local waterways and links to other, pesticide-related websites. The students offered gas masks to other students, teachers and visitors to the school.

A group of high school students learned that over 90 First Nations communities in Canada have no access to clean tap water and are on 'boil-water' advisories. After learning that despite many letters, meetings, etc., many of the communities have been living with boil-water advisories for many years, the students wanted to do something to draw attention to the issue. The students planned an event. They gathered camping stoves, reusable mugs, and other necessary equipment. They contacted the media and invited key people, including the local MP and MPP, to the event. They created information flyers and a webpage with more information and other webpage links. On the day of the event, the students gathered on the lawn of the school during the busy period at the end of the school day in which students are leaving the school and many parents have come to the school to pick up their children. They boiled water for drinking and distributed the water and the flyers to as many passers-by as possible.

Since 1992, high school students have been studying current patterns and "fingerprinting" the debris that washes up on their shores. They've written more than 100 letters to sources they were able to "fingerprint" and have received 30 responses indicating that companies will change their products and practices to reduce litter. Inspired by their initiative, various organizations have donated resources and funding to support the students' work. (Texas)

Grade 8 students lobbied the Senate Governmental Organization Committee for approval of their resolution urging the state to use drought-resistant plants in landscaping around new buildings. In their presentations, the students demonstrated that landscaping with drought-resistant plants not only saves water, but also money, energy, labour, and fertilizer. As a result of the students' lobbying and educational effort, legislation passed in 1988 and is still in effect. (California)

As a way to inform residents that what flows into the storm sewers goes directly into local streams, high school students painted yellow fish beside storm sewer entrances and hung yellow fish-shaped information pamphlets on neighbourhood door handles. (Woodbridge)

> **Read the Resources for Rethinking (R4R) review of the Yellow Fish Road guide that supports this program at http://www.r4r.ca/en/resource/yellow-fish-road-elementarymiddle**

Concerned about the lack of environmental education in the schools, high school students prepared a series of workshops highlighting local environmental concerns, and then delivered them to a grade 5 class. (Woodbridge) [see www.ecoMentors.ca for help with this type of project]

Students collect litter from their local body of water. Students inventory the different types of litter they find. Determined to see less litter there in the following year, they choose one type of litter and identify an action that they can do to reduce that particular type of litter. Download the complete free Quest for Clean Shorelines guide at www.resourcesforrethinking.ca

Facts from speech by Maude Barlow, Senior Advisor on Water Issues to the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations http://video.google.ca/videoplay?docid=-2452563840429862970 viewed January 3rd, 2009.

Step 5: Choose Action and Make a Plan

ACTIVITY 5A: PROJECT PLANNING TEMPLATE
(Next page)

Project Planning Worksheet

Date: _____   Name:_____

Team Members:_____

1. What is the issue/problem that you want to work on? _____

2. What would you like to see happen? How would you like this to be different?

    _____
    _____

3. Explore the root causes of the problem.

What are possible symptoms of this problem?

What are possible root causes of the problem?

What are possible remedies for the *symptoms*?

What are possible remedies for the *root causes*?

4. Examples of actions you could take to deal with this issue:

Type of Action	Examples of Action Someone could Take about the Issue (Be as specific as possible!)
Educate & Inform This can involve educating community members, peers or younger students through: community education programs, newspaper articles, plays, advertisements, workshops or songs.	
Persuade Others To… Similar to educate and inform, this approach attempts to convince people to make changes.	
Raise Funds This can refer either to fundraising for an external charity/'cause' or raising funds to implement your own project.	
Engage in Political Action Trying to persuade people with political power to …	
Make Personal Lifestyle Choices Personal decisions that do **not** involve buying things, like: • Bringing reusable bags to the grocery store • Riding your bike or walking instead of asking for a ride • Choosing to leave and/or express disapproval when people tell racist/sexist jokes	

Make Consumer Choices 　　Personal decisions that **do** involve buying things, like: refusing to buy items with more than one layer of packaging, buying Canadian made and locally grown products, buying organic, boycotting products produced by known operators of sweatshops, buying used clothing, buying less stuff, etc.	
Get Your Hands Dirty Projects These projects make physical changes to the environment includingremoving litter from a local waterway,, stabilizing a river bank, pulling out plants that are not natural to the area. They also include things like: building a school or play structures for children in need, etc.	
Peaceful Dissent *Peaceful Dissent* involves opposition to a rule or to the usual way of doing things, but it does not involve breaking the law (when breaking the law, the term is 'civil disobedience'). Examples of peaceful dissent include: parades with protest signs, gatherings in public places (with a permit where necessary), refusing to attend an event sponsored by a local employer if the local employer does things that damage the water, etc.,etc.	

5.　What criteria should you use to choose an action?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Choose 3 potential actions. Write a brief description in the top row of the chart. Write the criteria you listed above on the left side of the chart (a few examples are provided for you). For each possible action, put a check, an "x" or a question mark beside each criterion.

Criteria	Possible Action #1 is: _____ _____	Possible Action #2 is: _____ _____	Possible Action #3 is: _____ _____
1. Will the action address the root cause of the problem (not just a symptom)?			
2. Will this action be effective in making the change we hope for?			
3. Will the results of the action last for a reasonable amount of time?			
4. Is this action suited to the number of people we have working on this project?			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

9.			
10.			
11.			

6. What action would you like to take to try to improve this issue? Be specific.

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Why did you choose this particular action?

_____

_____

_____

8. What is the goal of your project?

_____

_____

_____

9. Who is the target audience for your project?

_____

_____

10. What questions do you need answered? Keep a running list here.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. For each of your questions above, indicate how the answer to the question can be found:
    a. Regular Research (e.g. books, internet, etc.).
       Write 'RR' beside the question.
    b. Find An Expert (e.g. find the appropriate non-profit organization, counsellor, Friendship Centre, government department, etc. and phone and/or email a person there to ask your question).
       Write "FAE".
    c. Survey (e.g. survey people in your school or community and ask them the question.)
       Write "S" beside the question.

Use the workplan sheet at the end of this template to help your group to make a plan to find the answers to these questions.

12. Think of EVERYONE who is affected by this issue. Complete the chart.

STAKEHOLDER (person, plant, animal, place, group, etc. who is affected by your issue)	Likely to *oppose* your action *or* to have *concerns* about your action? Yes, no or maybe?

13. How can you engage the supporters so that they can help you?

_____

_____

_____

14. How can you address the concerns of the people who might be resistant to your project

_____

_____

15. How will you know if you are successful?

EVIDENCE THAT WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS TOWARD OUR GOAL	TOOL THAT WE CAN USE TO MEASURE OUR SUCCESS	SPECIFIC MEASUREMENT THAT WE WOULD BE HAPPY WITH	STATUS ON: _____ (Date)	STATUS ON: _____ (Date)
E.g. If the project goal is to get one school day per year committed to activities which raise awareness about water-related issues for the whole community, one piece of evidence that we have been successful is community support for the project.	E.g. Count signatures on a petition.	E.g. 100 signatures		

Workplan: Who is doing what?

(Include details about: who is researching the answers to the questions identified in step 5, who is approaching potential supporters, who is addressing potential resistance/concerns with your project, who is buying _____, who is writing_____, who is…)

WHAT?	WHO?	WHEN?	STATUS on _____ (date) (Is it done? Is it in progress…)	STATUS on _____ (date) (Is it done? Is it in progress…)

We prefer to think about barriers and supports as being along a continuum rather than a binary, either/or choice. Check out Appendix C to find out why.

ACTIVITY 8A: FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS – BARRIERS AND SUPPORTERS[6]

Purpose

- To identify stakeholders who may be involved in an issue
- To analyze the perspective and concerns of each stakeholder
- To develop a list of questions for further research

Materials

- Large chart paper (two pieces side-by-side lengthwise works well)
- Thick markers
- Small squares of paper; enough for 1-2 squares per stakeholder (approx 8cm X8cm)
- Masking tape

Procedure

1. Set up the chart paper by writing the following headings across the top:
   Very supportive ↔ supportive ↔ neutral ↔ some resistance ↔ blocking

2. Set aside one section on the paper to put stakeholders' names if your group is very uncertain about the stakeholder's likely position on the issue. Set up another section of the paper to record questions as they arise.

3. After selecting an issue, name the stakeholders who may be involved and write their names on the small squares of paper provided (one stakeholder per piece of paper). Consider both individuals and organizations, as well as differing layers of power and scope of influence (local, regional, provincial, national and global). You may want to write some stakeholders down more than once since they may fit under two or more different headings.
   e.g. A class wants to implement a no-idling request/bylaw in front of the school building. The force field may include: the participating class members, other students, school staff (teachers, administration, custodians, office staff etc.), the school board, community members and parents, environmental groups, municipal officials, and possibly the provincial government or other communities who have attempted a similar project.

4. Using masking tape, place the paper under the appropriate heading on the chart (this should require some discussion, highlighting possible stereotypes and areas where further research is needed).

5. As a group, discuss the following questions:
   a. Are there stakeholders you could meet with/appeal to in order to get them to support your efforts in some way?
   b. Is there enough support (and/or few enough barriers) to go ahead with a project?

---

[6] Adapted from an activity by MJ Barrett

ACTIVITY 9A: CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING

What's Going On?

Participants learn and practice the process for consensus decision-making. Working in groups, participants discuss a scenario and come up with a solution/response that everyone can agree upon.

Materials/Preparation:

- An overhead or poster stating what consensus decision making is (see Box in Consensus Appendix below)
- Groups of 5-6 participants

Time Required:

60 minutes

Procedure:

1. Post and review the **what and why** of consensus decision making with the students (see below).

2. Post and review the **tips for building consensus** (see below).

3. Choose 4 participants to come to the front of the group. The 4 participants and you (a group of 5) will model the consensus building process for the whole group. Tell everyone that in the model, the group will be trying to make a decision about … (choose one scenario from the examples below [see below] or make one of your own.)

4. As a group, briefly model steps one, two and three in the *Consensus Building Process Steps* below (see below).

5. Tell everyone that the issue that they will be discussing in their own groups is: (choose one scenario from the examples below or make one of your own).Assign the groups (5-6 participants). Ask the groups to go ahead with steps one to three only.

6. Circulate among the groups. Get a sense of what their questions are. How much time (if any) will you give them to find the answers to the questions?

7. Adjourn to find answers to the questions.

8. Have your group of 5 (including you) briefly model steps 5-8 for everyone.

9. Remind your participants of the tips for consensus building.

10. Write reflections.

11. Group share.

Consensus Appendix A: Why Use Consensus Decision Making?

A decision made by consensus means:
- The discussion continues until all members reach a plan that they can agree upon.

- The decision is not necessarily everyone's first choice, but everyone can live with it.

Why Use Consensus Decision-Making?

By using consensus decision-making, the opinions of each person in the group are given equal value, which allows each individual to voice her or his opinion and have a sense of ownership over the final outcome. This is in contrast to majority decision-making (e.g. why not just vote?) because if the majority always wins, then the minority always loses! With the consensus model, group members work towards a decision or outcome that *everyone* can support. This is important because the more people that support a decision, for example on what kind of action project to do, the more likely they will participate in the project. This will likely contribute to the strength and success of the project as a whole.

Consensus Appendix B: Tips for Achieving Consensus

- *Openness* – checking our own beliefs regularly and changing them if new ideas make us feel different

- *Creativity* – coming up with new ideas

- *Patience* –consensus building seems very inefficient in the short-run. In the long-run it helps to improve everyone's participation.

- *Respect* – recognizing that everyone has rights, whether they agree with us or not

- *No winners (or losers):* Let go of the idea that someone will be right and win and someone will be wrong and lose. The idea is to see if the group can be creative and patient enough to create a solution that everyone supports (even if not everyone loves it!)

- *No steamrolling.* Do not nag people to support your idea. Give good reasons to support it. If there is no movement, it is equally everyone's obligation to find new suggestions/compromises.

- *Changing your mind:* Don't change your mind just to make the group happy. Treat the decision as important and instead work hard to find a good solution that everyone can live with.

- *It is okay to disagree!* Differences of opinion are expected.

- *Call a time out:* Know when you need to take a break. Suggest a break if people seem frustrated.

- *Separate ideas from personalities*. Don't agree or disagree based on whether or not you like someone. Agree or disagree based on whether or not the ideas is good/sound.

- *Listen to find Agreement*. Challenge yourself to listen to find what is right with what someone said, not what is wrong.

- *Be open to being wrong*.

- *Be conscious of how much airtime you are taking up*. Don't hog the floor! Ask other people for their opinion and listen.

- *Participate*. Even if it feels difficult, you must make your voice heard.

Consensus Appendix C: Sample Questions to be Decided Upon by Consensus

Solve one of the following scenarios using consensus decision-making.

A. Your facilitator decided that she or he will take you on a two-day field trip. Your group gets to decide where to go.

B. Your group receives a gift bag. In the bag are: 2 badminton racquets and 2 birdies, 2 basketballs, a volleyball, 2 pairs of binoculars and a skateboard. Your group must decide what to do with them.

C. A fairy comes to your neighbourhood. She tells you that she will grant your group one wish about something you could change about your neighbourhood. She will grant you the wish only if you can make a decision by consensus.

Consensus Appendix D: Steps to Consensus-Building

1. The question or issue at hand is read aloud.

2. Clarifying questions: Create a four-column chart on big paper. The four columns should read as follows:

Questions	Who Might Know?	Who is Responsible for Finding Out?	Answers

   The group brainstorms all of the questions they would like to know the answer to before they make this decision. The group does not suggest answers at this time.

3. The group reviews the questions. Group members offer answers where appropriate. Unanswered questions are assigned to group members to seek the answers to. Date/Time (if applicable) is set for group to reconvene to move on to Step 4 once questions are answered

4. Group Discussion. Information learned is shared with the group. Suggestions are given. Group works toward a response to the question/scenario that everyone is comfortable with.

5. Group Pulse: Go around the circle. Have everyone state where she/he stands on the issue.

6. Summarizing the Pulse: Ask one person in the group to summarize where the group stands on the issue. For example, on the issue of _____ "many people seem to feel that _____. However, one person feels that _____ another person feels that _____.

7. Is there agreement? If yes, congratulations. If no, the group goes back to discussion mode. Is there a compromise that can be reached? Is there a new alternative that hasn't been suggested yet that everyone might support?

8.   Repeat steps 5 to 8 as necessary.

Consensus Appendix E: The Role of the Facilitator

As a mentor, you have additional skills, knowledge and experience to bring to the group. We suggest that you:

- Carefully choose which decisions you can allow the young people to decide by consensus.

- Indicate that you will not be part of the consensus decision-making process so that you can maintain veto power if absolutely necessary and still allow the participants to have an authentic consensus-building experience.

- Provide very clear parameters before the consensus deliberation begins so that the participants can be successful in making a decision that the group is comfortable with and that you are comfortable with. Although it may seem counterintuitive, it is better to have too many parameters than too few. If the group comes up with a decision that does not adhere to a parameter that you thought was implicit but that the group members were not aware of, they will not trust that they have the authority to make decisions.

ACTIVITY 9B: DEVELOPING TELEPHONE SKILLS

Purpose

- To identify and develop skills while preparing for, and making, phone calls
- To practice making phone calls to build confidence

Materials

- Copies of telephone tips and scenarios (below)
- Old telephone receiver(s) – optional

Procedure

1. Read through the "Phone Tips" below.

2. Model a simulation (see simulations at end of lesson) using the steps below and then put participants into groups of three to have them practice the different roles: one person telephoning, one person receiving the call, and one observer. Callers should sit back-to-back; observer should write notes.

3. Take a few minutes for each person to prepare statements, questions and potential responses.

4. After everyone has had a chance to try all three roles, in small groups, participants should identify strong and weak points, areas of confusion or misunderstandings, and ways to improve.

5. As a large group, discuss the most common strengths, weaknesses, possibilities for improvement

Phone Tips

Before Calling
- Know why you are calling.
- Know why you were calling this particular person or office.
- Know about the person being called: level of knowledge, opinion on subject at hand, past concerns, past statements, etc.
- Do your homework; explore the organization's website if they have one, so that you are not asking questions that are answered on the website.
- Know what you need.
- Make notes about what you want to ask.
- Make notes about what you want to say.
- Have a paper and pencil ready to take notes; start with the date, time, name of person called, and phone number used.
- Prepare yourself to answer questions.
- Gather and organize whatever information you may need to help you answer questions.
- Know how far you can go in making commitments and promises.

Starting the Call
- Identify yourself by first and last name
- Briefly identify your association: A member of _____(class or group?)
- Quickly state your needs:
- I would like to speak with _____
- I would like to speak with someone about _____
- I would like some information about _____

Prepare For Roadblocks
- "Could you suggest a time I might call back?"
- "Could you suggest someone else who might be able to help me?"
- Be ready to leave a clear message, should you be directed to a voice mailbox.

Ending the Call
- Wrap up by repeating and summarizing any commitments either of you have made.
- Be sure to say 'miigwetch'
- If you don't reach the person you need to speak to:
- Leave a message.
- Find out when you should call back.

After Calling
- Edit, revise and expand your notes.
- Initiate your next action steps
- Honour any commitments made.
- Make a plan to call back if necessary.

Sample Simulations
- *Simulation 1:* Call the community band office and/or city/town bylaw officer to see if there are any regulations for idling vehicles.
- *Simulation 2:* Call the police department to discuss ideas for working together to reduce littering and vandalism in the river.
- *Simulation 3:* Call the water treatment plant to discuss your findings based on water quality tests you completed. (The tests suggest there is a high level of organic matter coming from the water treatment plant).

ACTIVITY 9C: LOBBYING

Purpose

- To introduce the concept of lobbying and to practice basic lobbying skills

Materials

- Lobbying simulations (attached)

Background Information

Though the term may evoke a sense of heading into risky territory, we are lobbyists every day. Teachers lobby their principal or department head for support to take on a new project; students lobby their parents for permission to use the car, a new cell phone, or permission to host a party.
Lobbying is a very sophisticated form of communication fundamental to how things get done in a democratic system of governance. Lobbying gets its name from the fact that this form of communication often takes place in the halls of government buildings.

Lobbying can have three main purposes:

1. **Making a connection:** In "introductory lobbying," a team of participants meets with a public official just to introduce themselves and seek out any ideas or advice that the public official may have on projects students might be interested in engaging in.

2. **Seeking advice:** This follow-up lobbying session is about "building a relationship and conducting reconnaissance" with an elected or public official. Participants are interested in informing the official and seeking advice on a project they are considering. It is also a time to find out who the official thinks might be able to provide expertise to help the students with their work.

3. **Seeking commitment and support:** This request usually occurs on a return visit after the groundwork has been thoroughly completed.

Guidelines for Action

A lobbying team is made up of three team members, each with a specific responsibility.

Lobbyist Role 1: The Recorder
This person's responsibility is to plan the lobbying session with the other two team members and then to observe and record all that occurs during the lobbying session. This person usually leads the lobbying debriefing session with the rest of the team members, right after the lobbying session.

Lobbyist Role 2: The Listener-Support Speaker
This person's responsibility is to co-plan the lobbying session and then to carefully listen to everything each person says during the lobbying session. This person should be ready to assist the primary speaker noting key points that they may have missed or to add additional information if it seems helpful to the session. They must fully know the objectives for the lobbying session and be sure the primary speaker covers them all. He or she must participate in the debriefing session right after the lobbying session is completed.

Lobbyist Role 3: The Primary Speaker – Presenter

This person's responsibility is to co-plan the lobbying session and then be prepared to be the primary communicator for the lobbying team during the lobbying session. The presenter is also responsible for participating in the lobbying debriefing session right after the lobbying session is completed.

The sequence for lobbying action

1. Do your homework and planning.

2. Make arrangements/appointments for the lobbying session.

3. Make effective introductions.

4. Communicate your purpose and plan.

5. Clarify understand and commitments.

6. Summarize the key points of understanding and action follow-ups.

7. Say miigwetch and remind of follow-ups or commitments to be acted upon.

8. Conduct debriefing session with your lobbying team to verify what each person observed and to review commitments and follow-up promises.

9. Make thank you note and follow-up with any pertinent information or affirmations of commitments.

10. Write a written summary of your lobbying team's experience.

Simulations

Prepare enough lobbyist simulation cards so that each lobbying team has an opportunity to present their lobbying task before a "mock" person of authority in a realistic simulation. The group will then critique each lobbying team for their effectiveness in accomplishing their assigned task. A variation is to ask the recorder/observer to publicly debrief the lobby team or even let the lobbying triad team publicly debrief in front of the remainder of the class and then get class feedback.

Strategies of the Person in Authority to Undermine the Lobbyists' Efforts

- distract the lobbyists from their task by asking about their families, interests, talking about current events etc.

- avoid making any commitment of any kind. Reassure them that they have a good idea, but…

- allow yourself to be interrupted by a phone call or other visitor

- be late

- claim poverty, overwork, other demands

- claim you have no power

Sample Lobbying Simulations

Simulation 1: You are to seek the School Board Chair's support to establish a composting program for all school lunchrooms.

Simulation 2: You are to meet with your school principal Mrs. Iam Green to move your interest in creating a wilderness adventure trip opportunity for students closer to reality.

Simulation 3: You are to meet with the town council chair Mr. Buildembig to seek the support of the council to create a community garden.

Simulation 4: You are to meet with town councillor Ione Tonnes who is a well known community leader. Your task is to convince the councillor that the community needs to establish a food bank and community re-use center that would support people bringing in goods that are still functional that other people could come and pick up for their use.

Simulation 5: You are to meet with school superintendent Dr. JJ. Growum to establish a school system community plan for creating a young naturalists mentoring program. The program would match high school students and retirees working with young primary students to help them develop a 'sense of place' with the natural systems in your community.

ACTIVITY 9D: LETTER WRITING

Materials

- Band, Municipal, Provincial and House of Commons web sites for local councilors, Chief, MPP and MP addresses
- Paper, envelopes, stamps or email access

Procedure

1. Read through the "letter writing tips" below.

2. Identify the most appropriate person/people to write your letter to.

3. Make sure you have done your research.

4. Write the letter, using proper business letter format.

5. Have it reviewed and proofread by peers and your facilitator.

6. Mail the letter.

Letter Writing Tips

A good letter requires background research to identify to whom you need to write, and to be able to present an informed opinion. Be sure to use appropriate business letter format and consider including 3 paragraphs:

Paragraph 1: The introductory paragraph identifies you, your relationship to the recipient (e.g. concerned student, child of residents in the riding, future voter.) and identifies the purpose of the letter.

Paragraph 2: The body paragraph clearly states your position on the issue and explains your rationale for taking that position. This is where you include some of your supporting evidence and explain how it backs up your position as well as explaining how the issue affects you.

Paragraph 3: The concluding paragraph identifies what you are requesting and asks for a reply.

Consider the following advice for writing a letter to your MP, adapted from the Canadian Psychological association's website: http://www.cpa.ca/documents/advocacy_p5.htm

- ✓ **Be direct.** State the subject of your letter clearly, keep it brief and address only one issue in each letter.

- ✓ **Be accurate.** Beware of false or misleading information. Always double-check if you are not sure.

- ✓ **Be informative.** State your own views, support them with your expert knowledge, and cite the bill number (Bill C-###) of relevant legislation, if appropriate. Your personally written letter is more highly regarded than pre-printed materials or postcards.

- ✓ **Be courteous.** A cordial relationship keeps the door open.

- ✓ **Be constructive.** Rely on the facts.

- ✓ **Personalize your message.** Cite examples from your own experience to support your position. Give personal examples of how the issue will impact your community.

- ✓ **Be political**. Explain the hometown or school relevance of this issue. Use your institution's stationery, if authorized.

- ✓ **Be inquiring.** Ask questions. Expect a reply, even if it's only a form letter.

REMEMBER, no postage is required to mail a letter to your MP in Canada.

Follow-up to Your Letter

If you don't hear from the person after three or four weeks, follow up with a phone call, or with another letter that references the first one.

- If the reply you receive asks specific questions about the issue, make sure you respond with the answers.

- If your representative votes or takes a public stand that reflects your position, send a miigwetch. It's just as important to let your representatives know you support a position as it is to let them know you oppose one.

- If you are lobbying as part of a larger movement, make sure you send copies of all your correspondence with elected officials to the (local organizing committee). This allows groups to track grassroots communications and determine where they might need to get more people involved.

ACTIVITY 12A: INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

We suggest that the last 15 minutes of every session together be reserved for individual reflection. The responses to these questions should be compiled in the project log/diary (see assessment tools below). We strongly suggest that you provide meaningful formative feedback early on in the process so that participants understand what is expected.
Examples of Questions:

DAY ONE:

1. What did you do today?
2. What happened that was positive?
3. What happened that was negative?
4. What did you learn today?
5. What questions do you still have?
6. What do you hope to accomplish tomorrow?

DAY THREE:

1. I am concerned about the problem we are trying to work on because… (Describe the consequences of the problem in as detail as possible).
2. Some of the ways we were successful today are…
3. Some of the frustrations/problems we have encountered are…
4. This is how we hope to address the things that frustrated us today…
5. One thing that I can change/do differently tomorrow to be even more successful is…
6. Do you think this action plan will result in a positive change to the situation? Why or why not?

DAY FIVE:

1. Something that has frustrated me about this project is… (may be more than one thing)

2. Some ways that I have tried to solve these issues are…

3. Some things that I have learned about trying to make change are…

4. What levels of government are involved in your issue? Which levels of government are not involved? Do you think this division of responsibilities is appropriate (i.e. is the appropriate level of government dealing with the issue?)

5. Rate the quality of your work today. Explain.

DAY EIGHT:

1. Who exerts power in terms of your issue (company, government, person etc.)? Who has the power to make the decisions? Who has the power to make the rules? Who has the power to make the changes?. Explain.

2. Create a graphic organizer and list the positive and negative aspects of each of the following processes of decision making: a) **consensus model** b) **majority wins model** c) **dictatorship model**.

Consensus Building
   A conversational style of decision making whereby issues and opinions are discussed across a range of perspectives with the objective of reaching a shared opinion or compromise agreement amongst a group of participants.

Majority Wins (vote)
   In a group of 30 people, everyone gets to vote on where to go for an end-of-year celebration. 16 people choose a canoe trip and 14 people choose a trip to a science museum. The 16 people win the vote so all 30 people go on the canoe trip.

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3. How do decisions seem to be made in your group? Did you use any of the three models mentioned above?

4. Do you feel that using this method worked for your group? Why or why not? Would you change this next time?

FINAL INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

1. What did you learn about planning a project?

2. Take a look at your group's action plan. A) What steps in the plan really helped you with the project? Explain. B) What steps did not seem to matter to the project? Explain.

3. What steps, if any, will you use when planning another project? Explain why you chose those steps.

4. What skills would you like to develop before taking on another big project? Explain.

ACTIVITY 12B: GROUP REFLECTION[7]

Purpose

- To reflect on the group's progress thus far and plan for future action
- To identify barriers to the action process
- To identify things the group has going for them
- To identify opportunities and resources to overcome barriers

Materials

- Chart paper- (two pieces side-by-side lengthwise to make a large chart)
- Thick markers (1 per group of 2-5 students)
- Coloured paper cut out in the shapes of boulders (beige), fish (pink), stream invertebrates (blue) and humans (yellow); simply using different colours of paper will also work.

Procedure

1. Individually, participants should quietly reflect on the following questions:

   - What are the challenges/barriers you have encountered in moving forward in your action project thus far (e.g. lack of time, current political climate, etc.)?

   - What strengths do you have going for you that have helped you move this far along?

   - What resources (human and non-human) are available to assist? (e.g. local expertise, organization, sources of funding, meeting space, water quality test kits, etc.)

   - Where are the "windows of opportunity" you can draw on to help you? (e.g. an upcoming event – spirit week or community election campaign, an unused ravine etc.)

     a. Create a visual metaphor to illustrate the action project journey thus far. For example, your group could use a stream metaphor – the start of your journey (perhaps your group is traveling on a kite board, a surf board, in a canoe, a kayak…) on your action project is at one end of the large paper; the successful completion of the journey is at the other end. On the way the group will encounter boulders (barriers) that you need to navigate around as well as food (resources) that help you. You will have had small successes (fancy tricks in your water craft) as well as some problems (dents and scratches in your boat?).

     b. Use the metaphor to create shapes that represent the barriers (e.g. rocks) and resources (e.g. food plants). Write one barrier per rock ("e.g. too many other commitments") and one resource per picture of food until all barriers and resources are listed.

     c. Discuss the visual. Any surprises? Any cautions about the journey ahead?

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[7] Activity by MJ Barrett

ACTIVITY 12C: REFLECTING AT THE END - KEEPERS/CHANGERS[8]

Purpose

- To reflect on what worked and what didn't when taking action

Materials

- Blackboard or chart paper and thick markers
- 8 1/2 X 11 sheets of paper (for option 2)

Procedure

Option 1

1. On the board or chart paper, create a chart:

Keepers (things that you would do again)	Changers (things you would do differently)

1. In small groups, have participants brainstorm what things they would do the same or differently, if you were to take on a similar action project again.

2. Discuss as a large group.

Option 2

1. Brainstorm categories for reflection (e.g. public relations, letter writing campaign, communication with community partners, class teamwork etc.), whatever makes sense based on the components of your project.

2. Put the title of each category on an 8 1/2 by 11 sheet of paper, with the keepers/changers chart below the title.

3. Post these pages around the room and have students move from one sheet to the next, adding their input. If they agree with something someone else has already written down, they can put a checkmark beside that comment.

4. Bring ideas together and discuss.

Note: If possible, involve community partners or school administration in at least some part of the reflection process.

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[8] Activity by MJ Barrett

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Goals of the Project

The class identified an issue/problem that is important to the large group. You are expected to do two main things in response to this issue/problem:

1. Develop an understanding of a process for taking action and demonstrate your understanding of this process.

2. Actually do something real that could make a positive change in our community regarding the problem/issue.

Goals 1 and 2 above are equally as important; therefore, you will be assessed based on the work you do throughout the process as well as the final product.

Draft Action Plan (1 Copy per Group)

- Use the Action Planning Sheets (see page 40 of facilitator guide).
- Keep a copy of your plan (hard copy or electronic) and label it: "***Draft 1***".
- Each time you revise the plan, make the changes and give it a new title, e.g. "Draft 2" (for electronic versions) or write the date of the change that you made on the original hard copy.
- Keep a copy of all drafts in your folder. You will want to reflect on these to help you with the assignments below.

Project Assessment/Evaluation:

1. OVERALL- Learning Skills Assessment

2. DIARY/SCRAPBOOK- Rubric attached

Assignment One--Project Portfolio/Scrapbook (1 per Person)

The Project portfolio/scrapbook is your record of what actually happened from the very beginning to the very end of the project. It will be made up of at least 4 main components:

1. Your individual reflections that you write/create at the end of each period. You will be given guiding questions for these reflections.
2. The 'story' of what actually happened. This story should be clear enough that someone who was not in the class can pick up your log and understand what you did, what happened when, etc. You can use any combination of the following things to tell the story.
   - Words
   - Pictures (drawn, photos)
   - Videos
   - Examples of documents about your issue and/or that you developed for your project (brochures, posters, etc.)
   - Interviews with people involved
   - Notes/photos of activities done throughout the process (e.g. so what chart, force field analysis chart, etc.)
3. *Your own completed assessment of the PROJECT ITSELF (Learning Skills) using the rubric below.*
4. *Your own completed assessment of your PROJECT PORTFOLIO/SCRAPBOOK using the rubric below.*

SAMPLE RUBRIC USING GRADE 10 CIVICS CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS: PROJECT PORTFOLIO

	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Self Assessment	Teacher Assessment
KNOWLEDGE/ UNDERSTANDING Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of an issue related to local citizenship (issue, process, positive change, level of government)	Thorough knowledge and understanding …	Considerable knowledge and understanding …	Some Knowledge and understanding	Limited knowledge and understanding		
THINKING/ INQUIRY Demonstrates the use of critical and creative thinking skills to use an active process to achieve a goal of citizenship (questions raised, problem solving, decision making, research, reflection).	Demonstrates **exemplary** critical and creative thinking skills...	Demonstrates **considerable** critical and creative thinking skills...	Demonstrates **some** critical and creative thinking skills...	Demonstrates **limited** critical and creative thinking skills...		
APPLICATION Demonstrates the use of the suggested project planning process to carry out a plan to make a positive change in the community.	Demonstrates **exemplary** use of the suggested project planning process	Demonstrates **considerable** use of the suggested project planning process	Demonstrates **some** use of the suggested project planning process	Demonstrates **limited** use of the suggested project planning process		
COMMUNICATION Communicates through Project Log.(spelling, grammar, organization, layout, thoroughness, clarity, terminology etc.)	**Exemplary** use of communication tools and conventions	**Considerable** use of communication tools and conventions	**Some** use of communication tools and conventions	**Limited** use of communication tools and conventions		

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DEALING WITH SENSITIVE ISSUES

When addressing sensitive issues and/or exposing young people to alternative perspectives, we suggest the steps below.

1. **Be proactive**. Work out a plan and communicate that plan to: parents, administrators, community leaders, and students. Emphasize why you think exposing youth to alternative perspectives (or any other sensitive issue) is important. For example, exposure to alternative perspectives:

- Contributes to developing open-mindedness

- Provides more options for solving problems

- Helps develop "intellectual empathy"

- Provides emotionally safer places in which young people can grow

- Addresses concerns of bias and indoctrination

- Makes young people more aware of their own values and biases

We believe it is difficult to disagree with a well-thought out, balanced approach to including alternative perspectives.

2. Think about the young people you deal with. **Is there anyone for whom the particular issue and/or perspective may be uncomfortable?** For the benefit of this student and/or her/his family, is there sufficient reason to choose a different issue/perspective to use with this group of young people?

3. There are many different roles the facilitator may take. **We suggest a position of 'Declared Interest'**. With the students, declare your own view point and then present as many differing viewpoints as objectively as possible. We believe that declaring one's own point of view is helpful for at least four reasons.

- It provides the facilitator with an opportunity to model for young people the act of holding a considered opinion.

- It provides the facilitator with an opportunity to explain to young people how she/he came up with the opinion. Explaining the "thinking behind the thinking" is a rich teaching tool.

- It may provide the facilitator with an opportunity to model the act of changing one's position.

- It helps young people and facilitators to look for bias in the facilitator's instruction/coaching.

4. Plan activities which **explicitly teach students the skills they need to participate in sophisticated discussions.** For example, create role plays which teach students what active listening looks like/sounds like and what it does not look like/sound like.

5. Ask an Elder for guidance.

6. **Establish ground rules** for all discussions in the classroom. Be meticulous about encouraging behaviour consistent with these ground rules and discouraging behaviour inconsistent with these ground rules.

Examples of ground rules may include:

a. Act in ways that you think will encourage other people to share their thoughts.

b. Be careful not to take up more than your own share of air time.

c. Challenge ideas but not people.

d. Use language that respects people's rights.

e. Only one person speaks at a time.

f. Remember that there are many different positions people can hold on various issues. Thoughtful, smart people may have viewpoints different from your own and continue to be thoughtful, smart people.

g. Ask for clarification when you don't understand someone's viewpoint.

h. Accept that requests for clarification are not necessarily challenges to your own viewpoint.

i. Record things that have been agreed upon or points about which people agree to disagree so as to refrain from spending too much time stuck in a particular dimension of the discussion.

j. If people are upset, the whole group may take a break.

k. Push yourself to participate even when it feels difficult. Everyone will benefit.

When examining the issue itself:

- Help young people to identify as many diverse positions on an issue as possible.

- Help young people to examine underlying tenets for diverse positions which may need to be questioned.

Some helpful resources for dealing with controversial issues in the classroom can be found here:
http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/frame_found_sr2/tns/tn-34.pdf
http://bctf.ca/GlobalEd/TeachingResources/ClarkePat/TeachingControversialIssues.html
http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/cpd/controversial/files/teaching_controversial_issues.pdf
http://www.queensu.ca/ctl/goodpractice/help/discussion_controversial.html

APPENDIX B: MORE THAN TWO PERSPECTIVES

The dominant culture has a habit of painting things as either this or that. We believe that this dichotomization forces people to choose between absolutes when we know that in the real world there are, in fact, many shades of gray. For this reason, when we propose viewpoints that seem to be in opposition, we try to present them as being along a continuum. This helps people to feel less like they belong to a particular 'camp'. Perhaps if one's position is along a continuum (rather than in a camp), it is a little easier to slide in one direction or another (rather than changing camps completely). Presenting at least three (or more) 'positions' on an issue, helps people to move toward *dialogue* rather than debate. The characteristics of dialogue are presented nicely below in an excerpt from work by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation.

The Dialogue/Debate Continuum

Deliberative dialogue	Debate
Collaborative	Oppositional
Common ground	Points of divergence
Listening to find meaning	Listening to find flaws
Listening for possible agreement	Listening to find points to argue
Openness to being wrong	Determination to be right
Weighing alternatives	Winning
Assumes that others have pieces of the answer and all can find it together	Assumes there is a right answer and someone has it

http://www.ccic.ca/resources/archives_public_deliberation_2003_overview_e.php viewed April 11, 2011

APPENDIX C: STORY SUGGESTIONS

Stories that Inspire us about the Importance of Water

- Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan (2009) *The Secret River*. <u>Atheneum Books</u>

- Morrison, Gordon (2006) *A Drop of Water.* Houghton Mifflin.

- Strauss, Rochelle (2007) *One Well*. Kids Can Press.

- Lichtenheld, Tom (2011) *Cloudette*. Henry Holt & Co.

Stories that Help Students to Practise Exploring Different Perspectives

The True story of the Three Little Pigs as told to Jon Scieszka
From Amazon.com: ``Did the story of the three little pigs ever seem slightly biased to you? All that huffing and puffing--could one wolf really be so unequivocally evil? Finally, we get to hear the rest of the story, "as told to author Jon Scieszka," straight from the wolf's mouth. As Alexander T. Wolf explains it, the whole Big Bad Wolf thing was just a big misunderstanding. Al Wolf was minding his own business, making his granny a cake, when he realized he was out of a key ingredient. He innocently went from house to house to house (one made of straw, one of sticks, and one of bricks) asking to borrow a cup of sugar. Could he help it if he had a bad cold, causing him to sneeze gigantic, gale-force sneezes? Could he help it if pigs these days use shabby construction materials? And after the pigs had been ever-so-accidentally killed, well, who can blame him for having a snack?"

Two Bad Ants by Chris van Allsburg
From Publishers Weekly: "In this new book by Van Allsburg, twice a winner of the Caldecott Medal, the theme of an outsider's point-of-view (touched upon most recently in his The Stranger) is expanded. Accustomed to the orderly and uneventful life in the ant hole, all the ants enter the bizarre world of a kitchen in the search for sugar crystals for the queen. Two greedy ants stay behind in the sugar bowl, eating their fill and then falling asleep. Their slumbers end when a giant scoop drops them into a sea of boiling brown coffee. Further mishaps include a heated stay in the toaster, a hazardous swirl in the garbage disposal and a zap in an electrical outlet. When the ant troops return, the two bad ants gladly rejoin their friends and head for the safety of home. In this work, the hazards of nonconformity are clear. The narration has the feel of early newsreels where the broadcaster described unknown phenomena in clipped, clinical language: "A strange force passed through the wet ants. They were stunned senseless and blown out of the holes like bullets from a gun." The resilient ants and the eerie landscapes are portrayed in strong black-and-white images, enriched by deep brown, purple, slate, gold and steely blue colors; Van Allsburg, playing with perspective, creates marvelous contrasts and images. But although Two Bad Ants is visually different from its predecessors, it shares the same strong style, dazzling artwork and whimsy that characterizes all of the artist's work. Ages 3-8." Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"The Vacuum Cleaner's Revenge" by Patricia Hubbell from Dirty Laundry Pile: Poems in Different Voices

From School Library Journal: "Grade 3-6-Janeczko's collection of "persona" or "mask" poems-poems written in voices of nonhuman things-is varied in topic, mood, and quality. The selector has included many crackerjack poets, such as Karla Kuskin, Bobbi Katz, Lillian Moore, and Douglas Florian, and a few whose names are not as familiar. Most of the selections have been taken from other anthologies. Whether thoughtful or humorous in nature, many of them are on-target descriptions of a variety of unrelated objects-a kite, roots, a sky-blue crayon, a vacuum cleaner, a pair of red gloves, the winter wind. The cleverness of the best of these descriptions voiced by inanimate narrators might entice young people to try to create some similar verses of their own. Sweet's bright, colorful watercolors in a flat cartoon style depict full- and double-page scenes and borders that feature critters and objects from the poems. Consider this one for classroom read-alouds." *Susan Scheps, Shaker Heights Public Library, OH* Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Yours Truly, Goldilocks by Alma Flor Ada

From School Library Journal Kindergarten-Grade 3: "Like Dear Peter Rabbit (Atheneum, 1994), this charming book tells its story through an exchange of letters. Here Ada chronicles the attempt of the three little pigs to plan a housewarming party. Meanwhile the villains from the previous title are still up to no good, spying on the residents of the forest and planning an attack on the homeward-bound guests. Fortunately, the surprise is on them and the two wolves lose both their pride and their fur. This is fairy-tale fun at its best. Following these well-loved characters on a new adventure tickles the imagination with fanciful "what ifs." Tryon's wonderfully intricate colored [sic] drawings, with their delightful details and carefully wrought scenarios, bring the action to life. Perspective plays an important role in many of the pictures, from the wolf's telescope-lens view of his victims, to an interior scene of Peter Rabbit's den. Warm colors and sharp details pull readers right into the Hidden Forest. The climactic scenes are on wordless double-page spreads that perfectly convey a sense of frivolity and fear, while the final letter leaves readers hoping for yet another instalment [sic]. Get on the mailing list for these letters. Beth Tegart, Oneida City Schools, NY". Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I am the Dog/ I am the Cat by Donald Hall

From School Library Journal "A free-verse poem that alternates the animals' voices. A Rottweiler lists its likes and dislikes making declarations with strong verbs. Its actions are forthright and positive, for it is a dog. A tabby's speeches take a more leisurely tone, conveyed by longer, rambling sentences and softer sounds. It exhibits contradictory and more emotional behaviors, for it is a cat. Moser's full-page watercolor portraits are naturalistic. His use of close perspectives, mostly from the animals'-eye view, capture the immediacy and personality of each creature. Adults will recognize the truth of this book and be amused; children will enjoy the words and pictures and be amused, as well."
Karen K. Radtke, Milwaukee Public Library. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin (see also Diary of a Fly, Diary of a Spider, and Click Clack Moo)

From School Library Journal PreSchool-Grade 3- "A baseball-capped crawler gives readers an episodic glimpse into the vicissitudes of his life in these hilarious diary entries. Difficulties such as having no arms, having a head that looks a lot like your rear end, and facing the dangers imposed by people digging for bait are balanced by a loving family and good friends. The young protagonist describes playing with his friend Spider, engaging in a variety of activities at school, and interacting with his parents and sister. Packed into these droll slice-of-worm-life vignettes are a few facts about earthworms and their behavior, all rendered with a dry sense of humor. The full-color watercolor-and-ink illustrations sprawl across the pages in lush earth tones. Bliss's cartoons give the worms lots of personality without overly anthropomorphizing them. The use of multiple perspectives will have children eagerly looking at the pictures to identify objects and locales. Primary-grade youngsters will especially appreciate the classroom scenes. This quirky worm's-eye view of the world makes these ubiquitous invertebrates a little more understandable and a lot more fun." *Marge Loch-Wouters, Menasha's Public Library, WI*
Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Fly Away Home by Eve Bunting

From School Library Journal: "'My dad and I live in an airport . . . the airport is better than the streets.'" As they did in The Wall (Clarion, 1990), Bunting and Himler successfully present a difficult subject in picture book format. A small child narrates the facts of his homeless existence--sleeping sitting up, washing in the restroom, and above all, avoiding being noticed. The brief text runs through all his emotions from a matter-of-fact acceptance to a fierce longing that makes him angry at those who have homes. Using subdued watercolors, Himler conveys the vast, impersonal spaces through which father and son move. He often places them at the back or edge of the pictures, underscoring their need to go unnoticed. This is a serious story but not an overpoweringly grim one. There is a reassuring togetherness between father and son and although there isn't an easy, happy ending, it does conclude on a poignant yet believable note of hope. Both illustrator and author focus on giving the child's-eye view of the problem, and their skill makes this a first-rate picture book that deserves a place in all collections." -- Karen James, Louisville Free Public Library, KY. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --*This text refers to the [Hardcover](#) edition.*

Novels Written From Different/Unique Perspectives

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night by Mark Haddon

From Publishers Weekly

"Christopher Boone, the autistic 15-year-old narrator of this revelatory novel, relaxes by groaning and doing math problems in his head, eats red-but not yellow or brown-foods and screams when he is touched. Strange as he may seem, other people are far more of a conundrum to him, for he lacks the intuitive "theory of mind" by which most of us sense what's going on in other people's heads. When his neighbor's poodle is killed and Christopher is falsely accused of the crime, he decides that he will take a page from Sherlock Holmes (one of his favorite characters) and track down the killer. As the mystery leads him to the secrets of his parents' broken marriage and then into an odyssey to find his place in the world, he must fall back on deductive logic to navigate the emotional complexities of a social world that remains a closed book to him. In the hands of first-time novelist Haddon, Christopher is a fascinating case study and, above all, a sympathetic boy: not closed off, as the stereotype would have it, but too open-overwhelmed by sensations, bereft of the filters through which normal people screen their surroundings. Christopher can only make sense of the chaos of stimuli by imposing arbitrary patterns ("4 yellow cars in a row made it a Black Day, which is a day when I don't speak to anyone and sit on my own reading books and don't eat my lunch and Take No Risks"). His literal-minded observations make for a kind of poetic sensibility and a poignant evocation of character. Though Christopher insists, "This will not be a funny book. I cannot tell jokes because I do not understand them," the novel brims with touching, ironic humor. The result is an eye-opening work in a unique and compelling literary voice."

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Happenstance by Carol Shields

From Library Journal

This "is actually two novels in one ("The Wife's Story" and "The Husband's Story") published in a back-to-back format. Over the period of one particularly eventful week, the husband and wife each experience midlife crises. Brenda, a quilt-maker, travels to Philadelphia for a craft convention and a journey of self-discovery. Jack, a historian, who remains behind to look after the children, wrestles with his own set of problems--troubled friends and the long-delayed completion of his book on Great Lakes Indian trading practices. The two stories were originally published as separate novels, and the unique format of the current publication forces the reader to choose whose story to read first. Ultimately, it makes little difference since the parts form such a well-meshed whole that you will leave this couple and their stories with reluctance." - *Barbara Love, St. Lawrence Coll., Kingston, Ontario*

Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Yo! by Julia Alvarez

Amazon.com Review: "The heroine of Julia Alvarez's *Yo!* is an author who writes what she knows--much to the chagrin of her close-knit immigrant family. During the first chapter, one of Yolanda (Yo) Garcia's sisters explains the basic problem: "I always was a reader, but now, whenever I open a book, even if it's something by someone dead, all I can do is shake my head and think oh my god, I wonder what their family thought of this story." Yo's friends and family members, many of whom appeared in Alvarez's earlier novel, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, take turns n.arrating this book. They draw a vivid portrait of the writer, describing her big mouth and high-strung nature as well as the details of her youth in the Dominican Republic. They're often more keenly aware of class, gender, and racial divisions than is Yo herself. When Yo returns to the Dominican Republic to spend a summer reconnecting with her roots, for instance, the servants at the family estate regard her as a very strange (but likeable) foreigner. In another segment, Yo's landlord, whose husband beats her, describes the writer's efforts to save her from the abusive relationship. In these episodes and others, Yo comes across as a woman who doesn't quite fathom the complexity of the events going on around her but has so much good will and verve that people forgive her small transgressions. It is a pleasure to hear all these diverse voices; some are funny, some wistful, but all of them seem to think Yolanda Garcia is the bee's knees. *Yo!* is a thoughtful, entertaining novel about the immigrant experience and the impact writers have on the lives of their peers."--*Jill Marquis*

APPENDIX D: RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Books

Bennet, Doug and Tim Tiner (1997) *Up North Again.* McClelland and Stewart, Inc.
This book contains an almanac that is perfect for creating a bulletin board to help students to learn about what is going on in their own backyard. This book is focused on *Ontario* wildlife.

Bennett, Barrie and Carol Rolheiser (2001) *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration*. Toronto: Bookation Inc.

Bigelow, Bill and Bob Peterson (2002) *Rethinking Globalization Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World*. Rethinking Schools Press

Gatto, John Taylor (2002) *Dumbing Us Down*. Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers.
This is a very slim book with some extremely down–to–earth and thought provoking essays about the implicit curriculum in schools.

Mark and Craig Kielburger (2002)*Take Action! A Guide to Active Citizenship*. Toronto: Gage Learning.

Mark Kielburger, Craig Kielburger, Deepa Shankaran (2004)*Take More Action*! Thomson Nelson.

Pike, Graham and David Selby (1988) *Global Teacher Global Learner.* London: Hodder & Stoughton
The introduction to this book of activities contains an excellent discussion of the following issues: interconnectedness, integration, the implicit curriculum, the development of the inner self.

Schniedewind, Nancy and Ellen Davidson (1998) *Open Minds to Equality A Sourcebook of Learning Activities to Affirm Diversity and Promote Equity*. Second Edition. Toronto: Allyn and Bacon.
This book is overflowing with classroom–ready activities that help people to confront and understand the "isms" in our society (racism, ableism, sexism, classism, etc.). The introduction provides a user–friendly overview of the issues. There is an annotated bibliography of additional materials.

Sobel, David (2004) Place-Based Education Connecting Classrooms and Communities. Barrington, Maine: The Orion Society.

Weber, Larry (1996) *Backyard Almanac A 365-day guide to the plants and critters that live in your backyard.*
Duluth: Pfeifer-Hamilton Publishers

Magazines

Alternatives Journal

For thirty years, Alternatives Journal has reported on *Canadian* and international environmental and social justice issues. The format is easy to read with a good balance of easy–to–digest shorter pieces and more in–depth articles. Websites for follow–up/further information are consistently provided. www.alternativesjournal.ca 1–866–437–2587

Green Teacher Magazine

You will notice that many of the articles provided in the workshop were published in Green Teacher magazine. Green Teacher publishes helpful, classroom–ready articles with reference lists that can lead to deeper exploration if desired. The events listings and resource reviews are extremely helpful. To order *Green Teacher* magazine, call (416) 960–1244 or fax (416) 925–3474. $30/yr

New Internationalist Magazine

New Internationalist magazine reports on international global justice issues. Articles illuminate the people and the organizations involved in issues such as pesticide use, fair trade, the debt crisis, etc. "The Facts" feature is a two–page spread of nifty graphics and statistics. The final page features a profile of a different country each month. Literacy, income distribution, self–reliance, freedom, position of women, and life expectancy are rated. Back copies are available (almost) in full on the net. www.newint.org/ $38.50/yr

Websites

Economics for All

This FREE Grade Eight Geography Unit specifically covers one third of the Ontario geography curriculum. The FREE unit includes: a day–by–day unit overview, an assessment overview, 18 step–by–step lesson plans, photocopier–ready student worksheets, appendices with additional information about the issues raised in the unit, cross–curricular lesson suggestions. Many of the activities and issues in the guide are perfect for expanding into an action project. Contact teriburgess@hotmail.com

www.rethinkingschools.org/ Rethinking Schools began as a local effort to address problems such as basal readers, standardized testing, and textbook-dominated curriculum. Since its founding, it has grown into a nationally prominent publisher of educational materials, with subscribers in all 50 states, all 10 Canadian provinces, and many other countries.

Water and Migration

This FREE grade eight integrated unit addresses a major portion of both the geography and science courses. The FREE unit includes a day–by–day unit overview, an assessment overview, 18 step–by–step lesson plans, photocopier–ready student worksheets, appendices with additional information about the issues raised in the unit, cross–curricular lesson suggestions. Many of the activities and issues in the guide are perfect for expanding into an action project. Contact teriburgess@hotmail.com

www.earthday.ca The *ecoaction Team Guides are great resources that outline simple actions that can be taken regarding waste, transportation, water use and gardening. These guides would be useful to your group and would work as effective educational tools for educating others.*

www.yorku.ca/fes/envedu/ecoschools.asp The Ecoschools guides are available for free in PDF form. The Celebrating Ecoschools: Festival Ideas and the 20/20 Planner: A practical guide to Reduce Home Energy Use are particularly useful.

Green Teacher Magazine – Action related Articles

Green Teacher publishes helpful, classroom–ready articles with reference lists that can lead to deeper exploration if desired. The events listings and resource reviews are extremely helpful. To order *Green Teacher* magazine, call (416) 960–1244 or fax (416) 925–3474. $30/yr. The articles below appeared in the Green teacher Issue indicated by the number.

Schoolyard Rehabilitation & Environmental Restoration

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Exploring Wetlands: A Six-Step Model for Wetlands Monitoring and Stewardship at the High School Level. 47
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Identifying a Local Issue and Taking Action

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Getting the Lead Out. 48
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Compiled by MJ Barrett

REFLECTING ON THE WORKSHOP

The following questions are meant to guide personal reflection on the workshop. Please take some time to complete them.

1)   Some important things that I will take away from this experience are…

2)   I would like to learn more about …

3)   In the short term I would like to… …

4)   In the longer term I would like to…

5)   The thing that would be most helpful in moving my course along the action project continuum is…

6)   And another thing…