

SENIOR 4: WORLD ISSUES (OPTIONAL)

Senior 4 World Issues is intended to help students:

- develop a greater understanding of world issues
- examine the historical, current, and future implications of world issues
- analyze the effects of world issues on quality of life within different political, social, and economic systems
- explore various perspectives on world issues
- gain informed opinions on world issues

The Senior 4 World Issues curriculum includes five units:

Unit I	The Role of Media in World Issues (3 weeks)
Unit II	Global Organization: East-West and North-South (4 weeks)
Unit III	Quality of Life Perceptions (4 weeks)
Unit IV	World Issues (6 weeks)
Unit V	The World of the Future (2 weeks)

The major goals of the Senior 4 World Issues curriculum are to help students gain a better understanding of quality of life in various parts of the world in terms of:

- the interdependence of societies that subscribe to different political and social systems (e.g., east-west) and societies that are at different levels of development (e.g., north-south)
- the major geo-political organizations of the world and the potential of major conflict among them
- the relationship of nations to international organizations promoting cooperation and peaceful solutions
- the role of the media in shaping the perceptions of people
- the differing perceptions of basic human rights in various parts of the world
- the conflict between the struggle for peace and the threat of war resulting from the growth of militarism and the presence of nuclear weapons in the world
- the use of terrorism by groups to achieve certain goals
- the conflicts that nationalism and imperialism create in the struggle for world unity and peace
- the role and effect of major religions on world issues
- the effect of an increasing world population on adequate diet, demography, governments, and individuals in various parts of the world
- the ever-increasing demand for resources and energy and the resulting pressures on the environment and the economy in all parts of the world
- the increasing pressures that industrialization and urbanization place on governments, groups, and individuals to meet the demands for an adequate quality of life
- the conflicts challenging the nations of the world in establishing management and ownership of the seas and of space
- the effect of world trade, foreign aid, and international organizations on the economic and social gap between the rich and poor countries of the world

- the effect of technological changes on the way people live
- the implications for the future if present trends continue (sustainability)
- alternatives to present trends

The suggested time periods are intended to coincide with the rhythms of the 20-week semester system, 19 weeks to cover the curriculum, and one week for review and final examination. The suggested times can be flexible.

Unit I - The Role of Media in World Issues

Time suggested: 3 weeks

Unit I Topics and Focusing Questions

Media – electronic and print – have become a dominant force in Western society. An understanding of the power of media in the shaping of perceptions and creation of attitudes is fundamental in a world-issues course. To reach this understanding, students need opportunities to:

- identify and analyze the various electronic and print forms of media, including their purpose, effect, and effectiveness
- explore and analyze communication techniques used in various media forms
- analyze the intended audiences of media messages
- differentiate between news, entertainment, info-tainment, and advertising
- analyze connections between marketing/consumerism and media (e.g., How does advertising affect purchasing decisions? How does consumerism affect the sustainability of natural resources? Child labour practices in developing countries?)
- analyze connections between politics and media (e.g., How does ownership of a newspaper chain or television network affect editorial content and public opinions? How do the media influence political views and public elections? How has the presence of video cameras in the House of Commons and City Hall affected politics?)
- analyze the media and the portrayal of stereotypes (e.g., gender, race, age, physical characteristics)
- analyze how the media shape their own and others' perceptions and attitudes
- become critically minded and aware of the effect of media upon their daily lives, and make conscious decisions regarding the messages presented to them by media

Unit I is designed to help students understand the way in which the media shape people's attitudes and perceptions of world issues.

Unit II – Global Organization: East-West and North-South

Time suggested: 4 weeks

Unit II Topics and Focusing Questions

Unit II is designed to help students develop a greater awareness and understanding of the relationships that exist among nations in terms of both East-West and North-South orientations.

1. The Geo-Political Organizations of the World
 - What do the concepts *East-West* and *North-South* mean? Which nations belong to the East, West, North, and South?
 - What conflicts and cooperation exist in the East-West relationship? In the North-South relationship? In other relationships?
2. Promoting and Protecting Quality of Life
 - Why do nations choose to cooperate or enter into conflict with each other? Within their own jurisdictions?
 - What actions are taken by countries to enhance, promote, and protect their quality of life?
 - Which current world events could potentially lead to a major world conflict?
 - What would be the implications of a major world conflict?
 - What course of action should be pursued to prevent a major world conflict?

Unit III – Quality of Life Perceptions

Time suggested: 4 weeks

Unit III Topics and Focusing Questions

Unit III is designed to help students develop a greater awareness and understanding of the various ways in which societies organize themselves politically, economically, and socially.

1. Quality of Life in Canada
 - What are the essential features for a reasonable or adequate quality of life? To which features do you give priority?
 - What institutions have been established in your community and in Canada to enhance quality of life? Why are some institutions interdependent with those in other communities and countries? How successful is your community and Canada in achieving an adequate quality of life?
 - What are the strengths of a society that is organized like Canada's? The weaknesses? What is life like in a society such as Canada's?
 - What historical factors have led to the establishment society in Canada?
2. Quality of Life in Russia
 - How is society in Russia organized differently from that in Canada?
 - What institutions have been established to enhance the quality of life in a society such as Russia's?
 - To what extent has Russia been able to achieve an adequate quality of life for its inhabitants?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of a society organized like Russia's?

- What would life be like in such a society?
- What historical factors have led to the establishment of a society such as Russia?

3. Quality of Life in Developing Countries

- What are some differences in quality of life between developed and developing nations?
- How do the institutions of a society in a developed nation compare with those in a developing nation?
- To what extent has the developing society been able to achieve an adequate quality of life? What would life be like in a developing nation?
- What historic factors have led to the present situation in the developing nations?
- What alternatives are there for enhancing the quality of life in a developing society?

Unit IV – World Issues

Time suggested: 6 weeks

Unit IV Topics and Focusing Questions

Approach A: Explore a particular issue from both a historical and a geographical perspective, using the following questions:

- Why is it (the issue chosen by teacher) an issue? Is it a local issue? Is it a world issue?
- How does this issue differ in various parts of the world?
- How did the issue evolve (historical review)?
- How is this issue related to technology? To other world issues?
- How is the issue perceived by various groups within a nation?
- How are people affected by the issue?
- How do developed and developing nations address the issue?
- How does the action of one nation affect another nation?
- How do the media affect our view of the issue?
- How does this issue affect individuals? How does it affect Canada?
- What can individuals do to affect/change the issue? What can nations do?
- What is being done to solve the issue? How is the issue being addressed in various parts of the world? In Canada?
- To what extent is this a world issue? Why?

Approach B: Select a minimum of three representative regions or countries from the following list and examine the relevant issues from Approach A.

- Central America
- South America
- China or India
- Southeast Asia
- North Africa or Southwest Asia
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- any other significant region

- a country or region representing one of the following types of organization: totalitarian, authoritarian, democratic, theocratic

The following questions are suggested for examining a specific region:

- Why was the region selected as an area of study?
- Which issues (from Approach A) are evident in this region? Which are the major issues?
- How did these issues evolve (historical review)?
- How are the issues perceived by various groups within the region? From outside the region?
- How are the people of the region affected by the issues? How are people from outside the region affected?
- How has the region addressed the issues?
- How does the action of the region affect other nations?
- How do the media affect our view of the issues?
- What is being done within this region to solve problems? What can Canada do to help solve problems in other regions? What can other nations do? What can you as an individual do?

Special Topics (Optional)

- The Holocaust (World War II)
- The famine in Ukraine (1932-33)
- The peace movement

Teachers should review the criteria for examining the special topics in Section 2 above.

Unit V – The World of the Future

Time suggested: 2 weeks

Unit V is designed to help students speculate about the future if current trends continue.

Unit V Topics and Focusing Questions

1. The East-West Relationship
 - What would the future be like if present trends in East-West relations continue? What are the alternatives?
2. The North-South Economic and Social Gap
 - What would the future be like if present trends of an ever-increasing gap between the North and South continue? What are the alternatives?
3. World Issues
 - What would the future be like if present trends continue in the world issues that have been examined? What are the alternatives?