

# Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability

## Learning to know

**Acquire knowledge and understanding, and think critically about our complex and changing world.**

- Develop ecological literacy through an understanding of the interdependence of society, the environment, and the economy.
- Be open to new ideas and divergent thinking.
- Seek knowledge from diverse sources and perspectives.
- Use creative, critical, and systems thinking to address complex questions.
- Conduct focused in-depth inquiry.
- Explore alternative approaches to issues without fear of challenging the status quo.
- Engage in long-term thinking, and articulate a vision for a sustainable future.



## Learning to do

**Learn to participate effectively in local, national, and global communities.**

- Act responsibly towards self, others, and the environment.
- Be willing to let go and give back, and to make changes so as to live sustainably.
- Be an empowered and committed agent of change, willing to take a stand and engage in action for a sustainable future.
- Cultivate and share personal skills, talents, and gifts.
- Practise helpfulness and share hopefulness.
- Demonstrate care and respect through language and actions.
- Apply intuitive and innovative thinking and decision-making skills.
- Plan informed courses of action.

## Enduring Understandings

## Take Action

Our ecological footprint is exceeding Earth's capacity to sustain biodiversity and human life.

Minimize your ecological footprint, and live more responsibly (e.g., use fewer non-renewable resources; reduce waste; limit dependence on petrochemicals; seek sustainable and ethical food choices...).

Our decisions and actions matter; they have social, environmental, economic, and political consequences.

Recognize the consequences of your decisions, and take action as a citizen for a sustainable and just future for all.

Individuals, groups, governments, and corporations have the power to effect change and the responsibility to contribute to a sustainable future.

Be an ethical decision-maker, take a stand to support quality of life for all, and challenge the unethical and the unsustainable.

The media do not provide neutral reflections of reality; they affect our decisions and actions.

Evaluate the purposes of media, critically question information sources and our responses to media, and make decisions accordingly.

A global economic system that depends upon and perpetuates unrestrained consumerism is unsustainable.

Make consumption decisions that follow ecological and ethical principles, and be respectful of nature, self, and society in your actions.

Economic and technological development has contributed greatly to society, but often with harmful human and environmental consequences.

Assess the relative value and sustainability of economic and technological developments in order to make informed decisions.

Indigenous knowledge and world views offer alternatives to prevailing assumptions about how to live with one another within the environment.

Explore indigenous perspectives to extend the boundaries of the familiar and to challenge assumptions and practices.

Political systems distribute power, privilege, and wealth in different ways, some more justly than others.

Support democratic citizenship and be vigilant about political decisions that affect social, economic, and environmental conditions.

A just society respects human diversity and recognizes universal, equal, and inalienable human rights.

Be committed to universal human rights, regardless of gender, age, physical ability, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, political beliefs, ethnicity, national or social origin, or status (e.g., property, birth, economic...).

There is no *them* or *over there*: we all belong to the human species, our concerns are interdependent, and we are part of the natural world.

Uphold the value of every person and strive to build community; act in ways that acknowledge human solidarity and the complexity and interrelatedness of all life.

## Learning to be

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

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



## Learning to live together

**Learn to live peacefully with others and to care for our common homeland.**

- Respect Earth as a shared commons made up of complex and interconnected systems.
- Recognize the solidarity of all human beings and their dependence upon the planet.
- Respect diversity and value equity.
- Engage in intercultural dialogue and cultivate a widening circle of empathy and concern.
- Respect the inherent, inalienable, and universal nature of human rights.
- Be willing to collaborate, lead, and support.
- Resolve conflicts peacefully.

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## INQUIRY APPROACH

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

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

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

## AREAS OF INQUIRY AND ISSUE SELECTION

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

## AREAS OF INQUIRY

*How many issues should be addressed in this course?*

Media	Oppression and Genocide
Consumerism	Health and Biotechnology
Environment	Gender Politics
Poverty, Wealth and Power	Social Justice and Human Rights
Indigenous Peoples	Peace and Conflict

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

## SUGGESTED GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR EXPLORING AN ISSUE

### SIGNIFICANCE and SCOPE

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

### EVIDENCE

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

### PERSPECTIVE

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

### IMPACT—ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC

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

### CONNECTIONS

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

### REFLECTION

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

### ACTION/PRAIX

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

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