

Teaching Resources for Social Action Issues

Bringing Activism into your School, Centre or Classroom

QPAT Teachers' Convention Workshop 2014
Julie Montpetit (QPAT) and Gail Klinck (ATA)

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.
~ Nelson Mandela

As teachers, we know that education is more than just learning the curriculum. We know that the educational experience should also open the doors to the wider world, and that knowledge is a powerful seed for change. But sometimes it's hard to find the time to bring social action topics into the classroom, to find resources and make lesson plans – hence this resource. We hope you will find it helpful.

Human Rights

Elementary

The Human Rights Warrior – a blog written by a human rights lawyer has lots of activities to do with your kids on Human Rights Day (December 10). Mostly for younger kids, but a few things for older kids, too. There are also some very thoughtful posts around human rights themes.

<http://humanrightswarrior.com/2011/12/07/10-things-to-do-with-your-kids-on-human-rights-day-dec-10th-2/>

equitas educate. empower. change.

Equitas' "Play it Fair" Human Rights Education Toolkit – a 178-page PDF primer on everything to do with human rights. The toolkit is divided into two parts. The first part is a reference section and the second has 63 activities that are divided by age, value, and issue. If you've heard of the Exclusion by Numbers game, these are the people that created it. You can also visit the main website at www.equitas.org for more info on different topics and to watch Equitas' videos.

http://equitas.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/2008-Play-it-Fair-Toolkit_En.pdf

All Levels



CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS

Canadian Museum for Human Rights – Canada’s brand new museum is located in Winnipeg. The museum partnered with the Canadian Teacher’s Federation to build the Canadian Human Rights Toolkit, a searchable database of Canadian English and French resources on human rights. Many of the topics include teaching units and lesson plans, and it’s a growing resource as people add on to it. Well worth a visit.

<https://humanrights.ca/search/site/ctfdb>



HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCE CENTER

The University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Resource Center – a fabulous treasury of activities and lesson plans on the many aspects of human rights, as well as links to other sites. Tons of ideas and how-to’s.

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/activities.shtm>



Youth for Human Rights International – this site is for the educator who has a serious interest in bringing human rights into the classroom. You can order an educator’s toolkit for free (in return you must provide feedback). There are also 30 public service announcement videos on human rights, a PDF download with activities, and ways you can get involved to promote human rights.

www.youthforhumanrights.org



Human Rights Watch’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights - a PDF with 10 links to sites with human rights activities for the classroom, along with descriptions of each site. Take a look at the main Human Rights Watch website, too. There is tons of information on many different human rights issues such as arms, free speech, child soldiers, child labour and international justice.

http://hrwstf.org/education/Ten_UDHR_Lesson_Plans.pdf

Aboriginal Issues



Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation – this unit plan helps students understand the complexity of the issues facing Canada's Aboriginal peoples. The unit focuses on access to health care, access to education, substance abuse, teen pregnancy and suicide, poverty and low living standards and limited economic opportunity. Includes lesson plans, assessment tasks and a PowerPoint presentation. Suitable for Sec. III and up.

<http://www.osstf.on.ca/en-CA/resource-centre/curricular-materials-and-classroom-supports/socially-based-curriculum-units/aboriginal-issues-in-canada>



Promising Practices in Aboriginal Education – This amazing site is a collection of links to organizations concerned with Aboriginal culture, history and issues. Lesson plans galore for all levels. You will find everything from exploring an Iroquoian longhouse to dealing with tough contemporary topics such as Truth and Reconciliation. Prepare to spend some time exploring.

http://www.maei-ppw.ca/exemplary_classroom_practice.html



Indian Residential School Resources – a set of lesson plans that tackle the topic of residential schools. Most suitable for LA or ERC as students will undertake research to produce a multimedia project. Includes a guideline for how to deal with sensitive topics. The plans are divided into two sections: researching residential schools and moving toward reconciliation. Secondary III and up.

<http://irsr.ca/lesson-plan-2/>

LGBT

SAFE@SCHOOL

Safe@School – has an exhaustive listing of sites with lesson plans, resources and toolkits for educators. Includes EGALE Canada, Advocates for Youth, and It Gets Better. This is truly a “one-stop shopping” site.

Bonus – it also covers the topics of racism and sexism.

<http://safeatschool.ca/resources/resources-on-equity-and-inclusion/homophobia/resources-for-youth>

Child Soldiers

Reference



The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative – this website doesn't have any lesson plans, but it sure is an important tool for learning about the many dimensions of the issue of child soldiers. Retired Senator General Dallaire is an important force in the fight to end child soldiers worldwide. You can download the reports that interest you.

www.childsoldiers.org

Elementary



War Child – a set of 7 PDF lesson plans, 1 extension plan, downloadable posters / postcards. For students aged 9 to 11. There's also a Canadian War Child site, although there are no lesson plans: www.warchild.ca

<http://www.warchild.org.uk/get-involved/schools/schools-resources>

All Levels



TES Global – an award winning lesson plan for learning about child soldiers. Includes two downloadable videos, and an activity with worksheet. You need to join (it's free) to access the lesson plan. Check out the main website for lots more multi-disciplinary lesson plans and resources.

<https://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Child-Soldiers-6063803/>



Unicef – a set of lesson plans on armed conflict and the impact it has on peoples' lives. Age identified and downloadable.

Bonus – the main website has information and lesson plans on a wide variety of topics from child rights to poverty.

<http://teachunicef.org/explore/topic/armed-conflict>

Secondary



The Advocates for Human Rights – for students in Sec. III and up. This is a PDF long-term plan based on the book *A Long Time Gone: Memoirs of a Child Soldier* written by Ishmael Beah, who chronicled his experiences as a child soldier in Sierra Leone. It's a very powerful story and one sure to provoke thoughtfulness. Perfect for a LA or ERC class. You will need to purchase the book as well as an audio copy, which is read by Ishmael himself. While not included in these lesson plans, you can find a number of youtube video interviews with Ishmael that are well worth watching.

Bonus – there are lesson plans for other human rights topics at the same website.

http://discoverhumanrights.org/uploads/issue_13_-_child_soldiers_for_pdf_2.pdf



Discovery Education: Children of War – while not about child soldiers in specific, this lesson plan explores the impact of war through children's war diaries. This plan is intended for a language arts class, and Internet links are provided for all needed materials. Be prepared to spend some time here!

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/activities/childrenofwar/>



University of Iowa Center for Human Rights – a 56 page PDF download containing a 5 lesson unit on child soldiers. Very graphic and powerful, suitable only for older students – Sec. IV and V.

http://www.hrea.org/erc/Library/display_doc.php?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.hrea.org%2Ferc%2FLibrary%2Fchild-soldier-uichr04.pdf&external=N

Child Poverty

Reference



Canadian Teachers' Federation
Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants

Canadian Teachers' Federation – learn about the Canadian context and what the CTF proposed as it met with

politicians on the Hill in 2009. Concise 7 page PDF download.

http://www.ctf-fce.ca/Research-Library/FINAL_Hilldayleavebehind_eng.pdf



Campaign 2000 – a report card on the state of poverty in Canada in 2012. A PDF download.

<http://www.campaign2000.ca/reportCards/national/C2000ReportCardNov2012.pdf>

Elementary



Free the Children – a downloadable PDF lesson plan for teaching about child poverty. Includes activities and worksheets.

<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/education/current/system/files/Poverty.pdf>

All Levels



World Vision partners with **Taking it Global** to produce background information and teaching resources, including activities and handouts, on a wide variety of topics.

<http://ourworldclass.tigweb.org/resources/>



Public Health Agency of Canada – a comprehensive, descriptive listing of Internet resources for teachers on many topics, including poverty. Includes lesson plans, games and activities.

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncd-jne/educators-links-eng.php>



We Day – a searchable database of 367 lesson plans on a wide variety of social action topics, including poverty. **We Day** is part of the **Me to We** family, along with **Free the Children**. There are some very powerful lesson plans here. Prepare to spend some time looking around.

<http://www.weday.com/we-act/classroom-resources-and-lesson-plans/educator-resources/>

Environmental Issues

Elementary

Teaching Ideas – ideas and resources for teaching about recycling and the environment.



Bonus – get some math games, too!

<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/themes/theenvironment/>



Environment and Sustainable
Resource Development

Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resources - an interesting site with about 80 mostly downloadable resources for teachers. Resources are divided into age ranges. Many of the topics focus on Alberta, but there are also lots of general topic resources on things such as groundwater.

<http://environment.gov.ab.ca/edu/listingEd.asp?page=1&audience=Teachers&id=10&head=ED>



Earth Day Network – interdisciplinary lesson plans and tools to bring the Earth Day movement alive and into your classroom and school. Lesson plans and projects on a variety of topics.

<http://www.earthday.org>

All Levels



The Water Project – covers everything about water, from bottled water to the diminishing availability of clean drinking water worldwide. Ideas, lesson plans, worksheets and more.

<http://thewaterproject.org/resources/lesson-plans/?gclid=CObu4aaZjMICFRE2aQodY7UATw>



United States Environmental Agency – A comprehensive site that houses information and hundreds of lesson plans and resources on a wide variety of topics. Resources are divided by topic and then identified by age and grade appropriateness. There are really great resources here! If you go to the student page, you'll find lots of fun games about the environment for kids to play.

<http://www.epa.gov/students/teachers.html>



Top Marks Education – **A major resource** that provides links to about 60 sites about environmental issues, including the **BBC’s Planet Under Pressure** site which explores the issues around food, water, biodiversity, climate change, pollution and energy, **ARKive Education**, which houses hundreds of downloadable videos and images for PowerPoint or other classroom use, the **World Wildlife Federation** site and many, many more. Age range and tablet “friendliness” are indicated for each site, as well as a little blurb about what you’ll find there.

Bonus – there are also piles of math and literacy games as well as resources for parents.

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/Search.aspx?Subject=10>



Canadian Geographic – has ready-to-use interdisciplinary lesson plans on diverse – and some unusual – topics including Arctic issues and immigration. Search the database by level and province.

http://www.cgeducation.ca/resources/learning_centre/lesson_plans.asp



It’s Easy to be Green – an exhaustive PDF listing of resources on the environment, many Canadian: sites, teacher resource publications, school initiatives and service projects, student-based resources and websites, and a very interesting section called Networks and Professional Development for Teachers.

http://www.developingaglobalperspective.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Easy_To_Be_Green.pdf

Animal Welfare

Elementary



Cochrane & Area
HUMANE SOCIETY

Cochrane and Area Humane Society – offers numerous lesson plans with downloads. The focus is on domestic animals and helping children understand the responsibilities of becoming a pet owner and why so many cats and dogs end up in shelters. Helps children see the bigger picture.

<http://www.cochranehumane.ca/education/volunteerism/index.html>



International Fund for Animal Welfare – lots of lesson plans and teaching resources, including videos, worksheets and crafts, on domestic and wild animals. Elementary and middle school levels. Recommended by Curriculum Services Canada

<http://www.ifaw.org/canada/our-work/education/welcome-teachers>

All Levels



Animal Mosaic – WOW! This site has compiled all the best animal welfare education tools, including lesson plans, videos and links to organizations. Searchable database by language, age and curricular area. Over 150 education packages, all free, attractive and PDF downloadable.

<http://www.animalmosaic.org/education/early-years-education/tools-for-teaching/resources/default.aspx?page=0&language=English,&agerange=&curriculararea=&date=&def=tcm:46-29316>



Humane Society of the United States – another site with lots of downloadable lesson plans. Some plans require that you buy a particular book, particularly at the lower elementary level. Tackles the topics of puppy mills and dogfighting at the upper secondary level.

http://www.humanesociety.org/parents_educators/lesson_plans_for_teachers.html

General



Do Something – want to undertake a meaningful activity to “do something” without tying it to a wider topic? Here’s the site for you. Lots of ideas for short campaigns that will raise awareness and make a difference. Many ideas can be adapted for different age levels.

<https://www.dosomething.org/campaigns>