



Grade 7–9
English Language Arts
And Social Studies

Developing
Self-Esteem

Living
Respectfully

Respecting
Diversity

Preventing
Prejudice

Unit 3 Giving a Forum to NGOs

Contributor

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Subjects and Level

This unit is developed for secondary students, specifically Grades 7–9 English language arts and social studies. It is recommended that the lessons be taught in succession, even though the lessons can stand alone. The discretion of the teacher is emphasized.

Suggestion: The unit 2 Human Rights; Human Freedoms gives students the opportunity to gather information about nongovernmental organizations, and present their findings to their peers. It may be favourable to complete the unit before beginning this one.

Unit Objective

As a continuation from the introduction to NGOs, the school will invite representatives from local NGOs to share with the students their current projects or efforts. NGO representatives can outline how students become involved to make a difference in the lives of people in developing nations. Students will gain experience interacting with people/organizations in the field and working toward the betterment of our global populace and the natural world.

Time

This unit will take approximately two weeks to complete. The culmination is a schoolwide panel discussion with representatives of local nongovernmental organizations and relies on the availability and schedules of the invited NGO representatives.

Lesson 2: Invitations Please

Objective

After focusing on self-directed learning and teaching their peers about five nongovernmental organizations, students will work cooperatively to write letters of invitation to representatives of the organizations. By following the rubric designed by Alberta Education for evaluating functional writing, students will revise and edit using the comments and suggestions made by their peers.

Time

This lesson will take approximately two or three classes.

✂ **Materials**

- Literature from NGOs
- Computers/Internet access
- Envelopes and stamps

Getting Started

Knowledge Now

Activity—Inside-Outside Circle

- Reviewing information gathered from NGO findings from Lesson 1.
 - Divide the class in two. Have students form two circles of the same number of students. One group forms a circle facing outward; the other group forms a circle around these students facing inward. (If the class is large, do two Inside-Outside circles.) Each student should now be facing a partner.
 - At the teacher's signal, the student on the outside shares with his or her partner a response to the teacher's question: *What NGO did you and your partner research? Share three interesting findings that you believe are important when addressing global issues.* (30 seconds)
 - Switch—now the student on the inside shares.
 - At the teacher's signal, the outside circle rotates one person in a clockwise direction and then students share with the new partner. Do this about three times.

Engaging Interest

Tell students that they will be planning and organizing a schoolwide panel discussion with five representatives from nongovernmental organizations.

Learning Activities

Jigsaw Activity—Five NGOs

- This is a more advanced cooperative learning strategy; however, when properly executed it produces significant results. In a jigsaw, students are members of two different groups: a home group and an expert group.
- The home group consists of three to five students (numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5). Each person in the home group is ultimately responsible for learning and teaching about a different nongovernmental organization to other members of that group. An example might include the following NGOs: Ainembabazi Children's Project, Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations, The John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, Change for Children Association, UNICEF Canada. The list of NGOs will be decided by the students in Lesson 1.
- Expert groups comprise three or four students who are responsible for the same NGO. Each person in the home group will choose one of the identified NGOs.
- The first step is for students to become individually familiar with their own NGO.
- Second, they meet with the expert group to double check their understandings and to create a plan for teaching their home groups. After meeting and planning with the expert group, students return expert to take turns teaching each other the material. All "expert" input is required to successfully complete the group project.

Activity – Writing a Letter of Invitation (Business Letter)

- The teacher will review the correct business letter format with students.
 - Effective letter writing boils down to knowing *why* you are writing a letter, understanding your reader's needs, and then *clearly* writing what you need to say.

- Every letter should be clear, human, helpful and as friendly as the topic allows. The best letters have a conversational tone and read as if you were talking to your reader. In brief then, discover the Seven-Cs of letter writing. You should be: *clear, concise, correct, courteous, conversational, convincing and complete.*
- Be sure to include in your letter of invitation:
 - Name of the person or organization sponsoring the event (your school and your class)
 - Description/purpose of the event (answers the *Who, What, Why and How*)
 - Date, location and time of the event (answers the *Where and When*)
 - Contact information: phone number
 - Deadline to reply
- Proper letter format:
 - Heading (your address, city, province, postal code)
 - Date
 - Inside address (first and last names of the person to whom you are writing, address, city, province, postal code)
 - Greeting
 - Body paragraphs (no indentation, two spaces between paragraphs, left alignment)
 - Closing

Note: A suggestion would be to include examples of well-written business letters. If you do not have any in your files, go to the Alberta Education website and get writing samples in the section on Provincial Achievement Tests. Modelling, as a teaching strategy, is an excellent opportunity to ensure that students understand the process and format.

Assessment/Analysis

- After letters of invitation have been written for each of the five nongovernmental organizations and before they are sent to the contact people, the students will complete a peer evaluation (or group evaluation in this instance). Members of each group will evaluate the letters of the other groups using Alberta Education’s functional writing rubric for Provincial Achievement Exams. This will give students the opportunity to dialogue about the content and content management of the letters.
- After evaluations are complete, each group will have an opportunity to revise and/or edit in response to the feedback received from peers.

Note: Letters of invitation should include date, time and location for the event. Specifics, such as length of oration and questions/statements that will form their focus, will be sent to representatives at a later date—once they have committed themselves to taking part in the discussion. This should be noted in the initial letter.

Application

Letters of invitation are delivered (via mail or hand delivered depending on time constraints) to the appropriate nongovernmental organizations.

Activities for Extension and/or Integration

Once NGOs have replied to the invitation, students may want to invite other local VIPs (such as their MLA or mayor) to listen to the panel discussion.

An open invitation via a school newsletter may encourage other community members to join the event. This should also be planned and organized by the students.

Subject and Level Learner Outcomes for Subject and Level

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1.1 Discover and Explore

- Extend understanding by taking different points of view when rereading and reflecting on oral, print and other media texts
- Develop and extend understanding by expressing and responding to ideas on the same topic, in a variety of forms of oral, print and other media texts

1.2 Clarify and Extend

- Integrate own perspectives and interpretations with new understandings developed through discussing and through experiencing a variety of oral, print and other media texts

2.2 Respond to Texts

- Relate the themes, emotions and experiences portrayed in oral, print and other media texts to issues of personal interest or significance

3.1 Plan and Focus

- Synthesize ideas and information from a variety of sources to develop own opinions, points of view and general impressions

3.3 Organize, Record and Evaluate

- Reflect on new understanding and its value to self and others

5.2 Work within a Group

- Contribute to group efforts to reach consensus or conclusions, by engaging in dialogue to understand the ideas and viewpoints of others

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Values and Attitudes

9.1.3 Appreciate how emerging issues impact quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada

Knowledge and Understanding

9.1.5 Analyze the role that citizens and organizations play in Canada's justice system by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions:

- How do citizens and organizations participate in Canada's justice system (jury duty, knowing the law, advocacy, John Howard Society, Elizabeth Fry Society)?

Research for Deliberative Inquiry

9.S.7 Apply the research process:

- Reflect on changes of perspective or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted
- Draw conclusions based upon research and evidence
- Organize and synthesize researched information
- Include and organize references as part of research.
- Analyze and synthesize information to create a product

Safe and Caring Topics and Concepts

Living Respectfully

- Examining methods that help us deal with conflicts and problem solving
- Working cooperatively in groups
- Helping others learn or attain a goal
- Developing positive interdependence and relying on each other to complete tasks
- Giving and receiving help
- Respecting and appreciating others' ideas, insights, solutions and contributions

Developing Self-Esteem

- Striving for competency builds self-esteem
- Taking responsibility for our actions
- Communicating thoughts and feelings

Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice

- Respecting human rights
- Examining the meaning of respect for the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, sex, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, dress, age, ancestry or place of origin

Teaching Strategies

	Cooperative Learning	Inquiry Learning	Direct Instruction
Go to www.sacsc.ca Click on Resources, Strategies for strategy descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inside-Outside Circle–review • Jigsaw Activity– five chosen NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem Solving re: five NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture–Business Letters

Generalization and Transfer	Peer Teaching	Empathy/Affective Education	General Teaching Activities/Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing letters of invitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-grade peer teaching–letter evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming

Supplementary Resources

Nongovernmental Organizations

- Ainembabazi Children’s Project www.ainembabazi.org/index.html
- CAUSE Canada www.cause.ca
- Change for Children Association (CFCA) (www.changeforchildren.org)
- Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) (www.devp.org)
- Foster Parents Plan (www.fosterparentsplan.ca)
- Ghost River Rediscovery (www.ghostriverrediscovery.com/home.htm)
- The John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights (www.johnhumphreycentre.org)
- Save the Children Canada (www.savethechildren.ca)
- CODE Canada (www.codecan.org)
- Amnesty International Canada (www.amnesty.ca)
- Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (www.ceci.ca)
- Canadian Coalition for the Rights of the Children (www.rightsofchildren.ca)
- Canadian Human Rights Foundation (www.equitas.org)
- Canadian Race Relations Foundation (www.crr.ca)
- Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations (www.naarr.org)
- National Action Committee on the Status of Women (www.nac-cca.ca)
- Oxfam Canada (www.oxfam.ca)
- United Nations Association in Canada (www.unac.org)
- UNICEF Canada (www.unicef.ca)