



Primary (grades 4 – 6)
Can also be adapted for grades 6, 7, 8.
Social Studies
English Language Arts

Respecting
Diversity

Preventing
Prejudice

Living
Respectfully

Lesson 2 of 6

Unit 5: Current Events Scavenger Hunt–Linking the Classroom and the World

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Unit Plan Objective

This unit will encourage students to develop a sense of world events and issues. Media awareness will be introduced with a focus on understanding the role played by the media in influencing students' attitudes and perceptions about developing nations and development issues. Areas of the world that are experiencing continual and episodic difficulties will be highlighted. The involvement of Canada through CIDA activities will also be highlighted. Students will share their knowledge with their peers.

Time

This unit comprises six lessons. It will take 18 hours to complete, depending on the extension activities chosen. It is recommended that this unit be taught on a weekly basis (one lesson each week for five weeks) as each lesson covers a two-to-three hour block of time.

Lesson Plan 2: Looking at the World Through Our Lens Part II Objective

Students will become further familiarized with the issues and challenges surrounding representation of other countries and cultures by the media. This includes an exploration of how people can form inaccurate perceptions of the world around them, particularly if they rely entirely on the mass media for information. This lesson has been adapted from UNICEF Canada's "Media Literacy for Development & Children's Rights" for young people. This lesson, available through the Media Awareness Network (see Supplemental Resources for Website address), has been copyright-cleared for classroom use.

Time

This lesson will cover approximately two to three hours of class time; it is recommended that the lesson be completed over an afternoon or back-to-back classes if possible.

✂ **Materials**

- Two copies of the same day's newspaper, enough for each group
- Media materials: variety of newspapers and magazines, travel catalogues, development/relief agency flyers
- Student Handout "True or False—Looking through the Lenses"
- Large sheets of blank paper
- Journals

Getting Started

Knowledge Now

- As a large group, review the findings and learnings from Lesson 1. What kinds of things do we need to be aware of when we look or watch media? What problems in particular are present when we read or watch news items about events occurring in developing countries? What kinds of things can we remember to look for when we are reading about or watching current events that take place in developing countries?
 - This is an excellent opportunity to expand students' understanding of perception and bias and any additional concepts that emerged from Lesson 1. Things to look out for include the readers' (and media's) perspective and how that might change our view of current events; any bias that might influence our view of current events, including political, social or cultural bias; and language used to portray current events and how it influences the audience.

Engaging Interest

- Look at a world map and locate some of the richer/more affluent countries and locate what you think are developing countries (where a large proportion of the population lacks access to essential basic services, economic security and full participation in civil society). How do you think developing countries are different from Canada? How do you think children's daily lives, at home, school and work are different from yours? How are they similar?
- Post a sign that reads TRUE on one side of the classroom and a sign that reads FALSE on the other side. Clear the floor in the middle of the room and paste a line down the middle (to demarcate the TRUE side from the FALSE side) with masking tape. Invite students to stand in this space. Explain that you will be reading a series of statements (see attached handout). After each statement, students should move to the side of the line (TRUE or FALSE) in accordance with how they view the statement. Read the first statement, and give students a few moments to consider it and then move to a side. When the students have chosen a side (or are indeterminately standing in the middle of the room), give the correct answer. Engage in a brief discussion about where the inaccurate guesses might have originated. Repeat the process for as many of the statements as you wish.
- Discuss the following as a large group, and then have students document their answers in their journals.
 - Generally, how accurate were your guesses?
 - Why do you think this is?
 - How have your media experiences (watching television and movies, reading the newspaper, going through Lesson 1) affected your responses?

Learning Activities

- It is important for students to look at how personal experience affects the way people perceive the world. Ask students to name some of the problems/issues facing Canada (or their local area). List these on the chalkboard or chart paper. Note: This is an excellent opportunity for the students to increase awareness of the notion of perception; not all people see things in the same way.
- Students are asked to imagine that they come from another country—that they are natives of a different country. Their only knowledge and understanding of Canada is second hand – they trust what they read. Using the list resulting from the brainstorming activity (refer to first bullet) and keeping true to their new immigrant status/character, what would be their first impression of Canada? Discuss. Ask students how they would feel if the unpleasant aspects listed were the only information others had about Canada.
 - Would it matter? Why?
 - Why do they have differing viewpoints even though they live in relative close proximity?
 - What would students want others to know about Canada (or their local area)?
- List ideas students associate with the term *developing world* or *third world*. Discuss these in light of Step One.
 - Where do these ideas come from?
 - What kind of information might be missing from your ideas? Why?
 - How might your ideas be different if your class had more or fewer students who have lived in a developing country?
 - How do students think some people from developing countries would feel after hearing the students' opinions of their region?
 - To what extent do students think that the most common impressions of developing countries are the exception and not the norm?
 - How do you think your “filters” or “lenses” (your family, your personality, your experiences, your beliefs and the media) affect the way you see the world?

Assessment/Analysis

- Students should journal the following responses:
 - In what ways might people from developing countries come into contact with outsiders' views of them (for example, films, international news shows produced in the West, advertisements, Internet, aid agencies)?
 - How might they feel about how they are portrayed?
- Students should describe orally or in journals any similar experiences where they or their group, or any aspect of their identity, has been viewed in terms of a stereotype.
 - What is a stereotype? When do we see stereotypes?
 - What can we do to see through stereotypes?
 - What can we do to discourage stereotypes?

Application

- Log on to www.onlinenewspapers.com. This site will provide the students with links to hundreds of newspapers from around the world. Ask them, in groups of two or three, to find an article on a current event in a newspaper from a more developed country and another article on the same event from a less developed country, and compare them (with written analysis in their journals). Ask students to focus on aspects of bias or stereotypes.

Activities for Extension and/or Integration

- Math extension: Take a look at the front page of the local newspaper each day. Plot on the map the location of each of the news stories on that page. Invite students to use the scale of kilometres on the map to figure out how far each place in the news is from your community. If longitude and latitude is a skill your students are expected to master, students might plot each location's longitude and latitude to the nearest degree.
- Invite students to look at the stories that have made the front page of a local newspaper during the last few days and to talk about why each of those stories made headlines. Among the reasons students might come up with are these:
 - Timeliness—News that is happening right now, news of interest to readers right now.
 - Relevance—The story happened nearby or is about a concern of local interest.
 - Magnitude—The story is great in size or number; for example, a tornado that destroys a couple houses might not make the news, but a story about a tornado that devastates a community would be very newsworthy.
 - Unexpectedness—Something unusual, or something that occurs without warning.
 - Impact—News that will affect a large number of readers.
 - Reference to someone famous or important—News about a prominent person or personality.
 - Oddity—A unique or unusual situation.
 - Conflict—A major struggle in the news.
 - Reference to something negative—Bad news often "sells" better than good news.
 - Continuity—A follow-up or continuation to a story that has been in the news or is familiar.
 - Emotions—Emotions (such as fear, jealousy, love, or hate) increase interest in a story.
 - Progress—News of new hope, new achievement, new improvements.
- Difference between local and national news: Students write in advance to newspapers across the country for copies of their paper on a given date. When the papers arrive (usually within a week or so after the date), students compare the contents of the newspapers' front pages.

Subject and Level Learner Outcomes for Subject and Level

Grade 4 Social Studies

Students will:

4.S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking

- evaluate significant local and current affairs, distinguishing between fact and opinion
- critically evaluate ideas, information and positions from multiple perspectives
- re-evaluate opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue

4.S.9 develop skills of media literacy:

- compare information on the same issue or topic from print media, television, photographs and the Internet
- examine diverse perspectives regarding an issue presented in the media

Grade 5 Social Studies

Students will:

5.S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking

- critically evaluate ideas, information and positions from multiple perspectives
- re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
- generate original ideas or strategies in situations of individual and group activities

5.S.9 develop skills of media literacy:

- examine how various people might interpret a media message differently

- examine diverse perspectives regarding an issue presented in the media

Grade 6 Social Studies

Students will:

6.S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking

- assess significant local and current affairs from a variety of sources, with a focus on examining bias and distinguishing fact from opinion
- critically evaluate ideas, information and positions
- re-evaluate personal opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue

6.S.9 develop skills of media literacy:

- detect bias present in the media
- examine and assess diverse perspectives regarding an issue presented in the media
- analyze significant current affairs

Grade 4 English Language Arts

1.1 Discover and Explore

Express ideas and develop understanding

- compare new ideas, information and experience to prior knowledge and experiences
- ask questions, paraphrase and discuss to explore ideas and understand new concepts
- discuss and compare the ways similar topics are developed in different forms of oral, print and other media texts

1.2 Clarify and Extend

Consider the ideas of others

- identify other perspectives by exploring a variety of ideas, opinions, responses and oral, print and other media texts

2.2 Respond to Texts

Construct meaning from texts

- develop own opinions based on ideas encountered in oral, print and other media texts

5.1 Respect Others and Strengthen Community

Appreciate diversity

- describe similarities and differences between personal experiences and the experiences of people or characters from various cultures portrayed in oral, print and other media texts

Grade 5 English Language Arts

1.1 Discover and Explore

Express ideas and develop understanding

- use appropriate prior knowledge and experiences to make sense of new ideas and information
- read, write, represent and talk to explore personal understandings of new ideas and information
- use own experiences as a basis for exploring and expressing opinions and understanding
- select from provided forms of oral, print and other media texts those that best organize ideas and information and develop understanding of topics

1.2 Clarify and Extend

Consider the ideas of others

- seek the viewpoints of others to build on personal responses and understanding

2.2 Respond to Texts

Construct meaning from texts

- support own interpretations of oral, print and other media texts, using evidence from personal experiences and the texts

5.1 Respect Others and Strengthen Community

Appreciate diversity

- discuss personal understanding of the lives of people or characters in various communities, cultural traditions, places and times portrayed in oral, print and other media texts

Grade 6 English Language Arts

1.3 Discover and Explore

Express ideas and develop understanding

- use prior experiences with oral, print and other media texts to choose new texts that meet learning needs and interests
- read, write, represent and talk to explore and explain connections between prior knowledge and new information in oral, print and other media texts
- experiment with a variety of forms of oral, print and other media texts to discover those best suited for exploring, organizing and sharing ideas, information and experiences

1.2 Clarify and Extend

Consider the ideas of others

- select from the ideas and observations of others to expand personal understanding

2.2 Respond to Texts

Construct meaning from texts

- comment on the credibility of events in oral, print and other media texts, using evidence from personal experiences and the texts

5.1 Respect Others and Strengthen Community

Relate texts to culture

- identify ways in which oral, print and other media texts from diverse cultures and communities explore similar ideas

Safe and Caring Topics and Concepts

Living Respectfully

- Examining ways that injustice affects people
- Respecting and appreciating others' ideas, insights, solutions and contributions

Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice

- Respecting different points of view builds community and helps to prevent or resolve conflict
- Studying different cultures, religions and lifestyles in society and in the school

Teaching Strategies

	Cooperative Learning	Inquiry Learning	Direct Instruction
<p>Go to www.sacsc.ca Click on Resources, Strategies for strategy descriptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large and small group discussions; brainstorming activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem solving; asking questions; analyzing perceptions 	

Generalization and Transfer	Peer Teaching	Empathy/Affective Education	General Teaching Activities/Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting current events, self, home, media, technology; examining different perspectives and where they originate 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journalling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming

Supplementary Resources

- Media Awareness Network (www.media-awareness.ca): A website full of interesting and age-appropriate activities for your classroom, copyright-cleared for classroom use.
- ICYouSee: T is for Thinking (www.ithaca.edu/library/training/think.html): simple rules for effective and safe web research.
- Internet Detective (www.vts.intute.acuk/detective/): An interactive website instructing proper Internet search techniques.

True or False? Looking Through the Lenses

1. The leading cause of child death in developing countries is famine.

FALSE: Diarrhea (dehydration) and immunization-preventable diseases account for over half of all deaths.

2. Canada provides about 10 cents per tax dollar as foreign aid.

FALSE: About 2 cents per dollar is contributed to Official Development Assistance.

3. 2 per cent of the world's children are starving (visibly malnourished).

TRUE: Invisible malnutrition is more widespread, affecting about 40 per cent of children in developing countries.

4. 90 per cent of the world's children go to primary school.

TRUE: About 130 million children do not have access to school; two-thirds are girls.

5. Half of the budget of a developing country comes from overseas aid.

FALSE: About 1 per cent of the national budget of a developing country, on average, is from development assistance, and almost half is transferred from developing countries to affluent countries in the form of interest payments on debt.

6. Children are malnourished because they don't get enough food to eat.

FALSE AND TRUE: Not having enough food is one cause of malnutrition, but more common is a lack of enough types of nutritious foods and important micronutrients (such as vitamin A, iron and iodine), combined with lack of clean drinking water and chronic diarrhea and illness.

7. The rate of population growth in the developing world is decreasing.

TRUE: While in some places, the absolute number of people is growing, the rate of growth is declining; in time, the absolute number will also begin to decline.

8. There is enough money and resources in the world to meet everyone's basic needs.

TRUE: UNICEF estimates it would cost about \$4 billion to meet basic human needs (clean water and sanitation, adequate nutrition, health care and education). This amount is equivalent to less than half of the amount affluent countries spend on sport shoes in a year. It can be recovered if 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of national budgets in developing countries were spent on basic human needs.