



ask

Can a better understanding of sustainability motivate us to protect our earth?

acquire

- teacher and student handouts
- readings, audio and video files
- article

explore

- The Pale Blue Dot PowerPoint presentation
- The Earth: Our Home note and handout
- defining sustainability handout (definitions, models and videos)
- The inquiry process

analyze

- issue analysis

act

- exit card
- evaluate a local sustainability initiative and class presentation
- article analysis and sustainability model redesign

U1L1 | One Earth

This is an introductory lesson to establish a rationale for making societal change toward sustainability. Students will acquire a general overview of the earth systems and how humans are impacting the earth (Activity 1). They will then explore different materials that help them define the concept of sustainability (Activity 2 or Activity 3).

subjects: Geography, Science, Photography, Civics

timing: **Activity 1**

The Earth: Our Home | **60 minutes**

Note: follow up with Activity 4

Activity 2

Defining Sustainability | **75 minutes**

Note: follow up with Activity 5

Activity 3

The Inquiry Process | **10 minutes**

The Inquiry Process Asking Questions | **30 minutes**

The Inquiry Process Exploring Resources | **150 minutes**

The Inquiry Process Analysing Information | **75 minutes**

Note: follow up with Activity 6

Activity 4

Exit Card | **15 minutes**

Activity 5

Evaluating a Local Sustainability Initiative | **75 minutes**

Activity 6

The Inquiry Process Issue Analysis | **75 minutes**

learning goal

- To understand the Earth as a system and recognize the human impact.
- To understand the concept of sustainability and the factors that contribute to it.
- To participate in the inquiry process to understand the concept of sustainability and to develop a sustainability checklist.

success criteria

- Completion of an exit card on the earth as our home.
- Evaluate a local initiative for sustainability.
- To actively engage in the inquiry process and analyse a current initiative for its impact on sustainability in Canada.

U1L1 | One Earth

ask

- How can seeing the world from the perspective of astronauts and scientists help motivate us to make change toward sustainability for the earth?
- What is sustainability?
- What is the inquiry process, and how can it be used to understand the concept of sustainability?

acquire

Activity 1

Reading: Excerpts from the Blue Dot Tour

Powerpoint: The Pale Blue Dot

Audio file: Carl Sagan reading The Pale Blue Dot (link in PowerPoint)

Podcast: Quirks and Quarks, October 25: Chris Hadfield 'You are Here' (link in PowerPoint)

Note: The Earth: Our Home

Handout: The Earth: Our Home

Activity 2

Video: The Natural Step—Sustainability (link in handout)

Video: The Story of Solutions (link in handout)

Handout: Defining Sustainability

Handout: Sustainability Checklist

Activity 3

Video: The Natural Step—Sustainability (link in handout)

Video: The Story of Solutions (link in handout)

Handout: The Inquiry Process

Handout: The Inquiry Process Asking Questions

Handout: The Inquiry Process Exploring Resources

Handout: The Inquiry Process Analysing Information

Handout: The Inquiry Process A New Model for Sustainability

Article: Every Canadian's eco-rights need Charter protection

explore and analyze

Activity 1 | The Earth: Our Home

The following activities will help students understand the fragility of the earth and the impact of human development. It will also help students understand the perspective of scientists, in order to explore the concept of sustainability as it relates to protection of the earth's systems.

- A. Powerpoint: The Pale Blue Dot—teacher reads excerpts from David Suzuki's Blue Dot Tour speech while showing the first slide, then play the audio file of Carl Sagan for the second slide, then finish the Blue Dot tour while on the third slide
- B. Continue with remainder of PowerPoint of Chris Hadfield photos from the ISS while playing his interview with Bob MacDonald (Quirks and Quarks)
- C. Continue with PowerPoint of other images from earth—of human development and sustainable human activities
- D. Teach The Earth: Our Home

U1L1 | One Earth

Activity 2 | Defining Sustainability

Students gain an understanding of the concept of sustainability using teacher-led activities, including comparing sustainability definitions and models, and watching sustainability videos.

Note: follow up with Activity 5

Activity 3 | Using the Inquiry Process to Define Sustainability

Students develop a sustainability checklist by conducting a student-led inquiry. In this series of activities, students find a variety of sources of information on sustainability. In general, articles on sustainability break down into the components—economic, environmental, and social.

To support them in finding good sources, you may want to direct them toward some or all of the following:

- The textbook
- Atlases
- Municipal sustainability plans
- Ministry of Transportation
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Environment Canada
- The United Nations Environment Program
- Oxfam: A Safe and Just Space for Humanity
- Ted Talk: Doughnut Economics

Note to Teachers: In the Analysing Information activity, as a class, students develop criteria with which to build a ‘Sustainability Checklist.’ The intended result of this learning is that the sustainability checklist can be used throughout a course or cycle of learning as a framework for analysing issues. In Activity 6, they then use the checklist to evaluate David Suzuki’s initiative to add the right to a healthy environment to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Before they can do this, you, the teacher, need to collect their collective criteria and put it into checklist format. There is an example in Activity 6 for you to use as a guide, but it won’t reflect the unique criteria your students developed.

Note: follow up with Activity 6

act

Activity 4

Students will submit an exit card to demonstrate their understanding of the importance of the Earth and its natural systems.

Activity 5

Students apply their learning on sustainable solutions by evaluating a local initiative for its sustainability and present to the class.

Activity 6

Students apply a co-constructed sustainability checklist to a current issue in Canada and redesign the sustainability model to better reflect protection of the earth and its resources to better serve today’s needs.

references

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U1L1A1 | The Earth: Our Home | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

overview

In this activity you will learn about the earth as a complex system. You will hear the reflections of the astronauts who have seen the earth from space and learn how their unique perspective informs our understanding of sustainability. At the end, you can complete an exit card to demonstrate your learning (Activity 4).

learning goal

- To understand that the earth is a complex system categorized into 4 distinct but interconnected spheres.
- To understand that humans, as part of this system, exist within these spheres and change the earth through our activities.

success criteria

- I will correctly complete an exit card to demonstrate my understanding of these ideas

Inquiry Question

- How can seeing the world from the perspective of astronauts and scientists help motivate us to make change toward sustainability for the earth?

The Earth Spheres

The Earth is made up of four spheres:

- the atmosphere,
- the lithosphere,
- the hydrosphere,
- the biosphere

Understanding how these four spheres interact is essential to our efforts to minimize the negative impacts of our actions on the environment.

The Atmosphere

- the ‘air’ that surrounds the earth
- contains nitrogen, oxygen and carbon dioxide needed by living things
- protects us from sun’s radiation

The Lithosphere

- the outside crust of the Earth
- made up of 15 major plates
- forms the continents, the ocean floor and is the basis for terrestrial (land-based) ecosystems

The Hydrosphere

- all the earth’s water and ice (cryosphere)
- most found in oceans, some in glaciers, rivers, lakes and groundwater

The Biosphere

- all the earth’s living things
- humans are such a dominant species that some scientists have given us our own sphere name: the anthrosphere

U1L1A1 | The Earth: Our Home | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

Interaction of the Four Spheres

The four spheres of the earth are closely connected. Water (hydrosphere) flows through the soil (lithosphere) which also contains air (atmosphere) and is inundated with millions of microscopic and larger living organisms (biosphere).

A change in one sphere often results in a change in one or more of the other spheres.

The interaction of the 3 physical earth spheres allows for the cycling of energy, water and nutrients throughout the environment. These conditions allow for the survival of the components of the biosphere, including humans.



Moraine Lake, Alberta Canada (christophermartinphotography.com, 2014)

It is important for humans to understand the earth's complex systems, so that:

- we can understand the impacts of our activities on the earth systems
- we can mitigate the damage already done to the earth and its systems
- we can work to protect unique ecosystems and environments

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability | TEACHER ANSWER KEY

overview

In this activity you will explore a variety of materials that explain the concept of sustainability. You will compare definitions from different organizations, then evaluate three models of sustainability. Lastly, you will learn about taking action for sustainability by watching 'The Story of Solutions' and use the Sustainability Checklist to evaluate citizen action on an issue. After, you can evaluate a sustainability initiative in your local community (Activity 5).

learning goal

- To understand and participate in the inquiry process.
- To understand and apply the concept of sustainability.

success criteria

- I will complete a series of activities on sustainability
- I will evaluate a local sustainable solution and share it with the class

Inquiry Question

- What is sustainability?

Task 1: Comparing Sustainability Definitions

When examining the issue of sustainable management of national and global resources, one must first consider the definition of sustainable development.

According to 'Our Common Future,' or the Brundtland report (1987), one must always consider the environment when evaluating development:

"...the "environment" is where we all live; and "development" is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that abode. The two are inseparable." (Foreword, page 3, paragraph 2).

1. Watch the video at the following link to understand the concept of sustainable development:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNhDNjdgQE4>

a. What are the four 'care instructions' for the earth, according to this video?

- Reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and heavy metals
- Reduce our dependence on synthetic chemicals that persist in nature
- Reduce our destruction of nature
- Ensure we are not stopping people, globally, from meeting their needs

2. Read the following definition of sustainable development from the Brundtland Commission (1987), of the United Nations.

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- The concept of 'needs,' in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

3. How does the Brundtland definition compare with the ‘care instructions’ from the video? What are the similarities, and what are the differences?

Similarities

- Both address the need to care for the basic needs of people in poorer regions of the world
- Both prioritize care for the environment

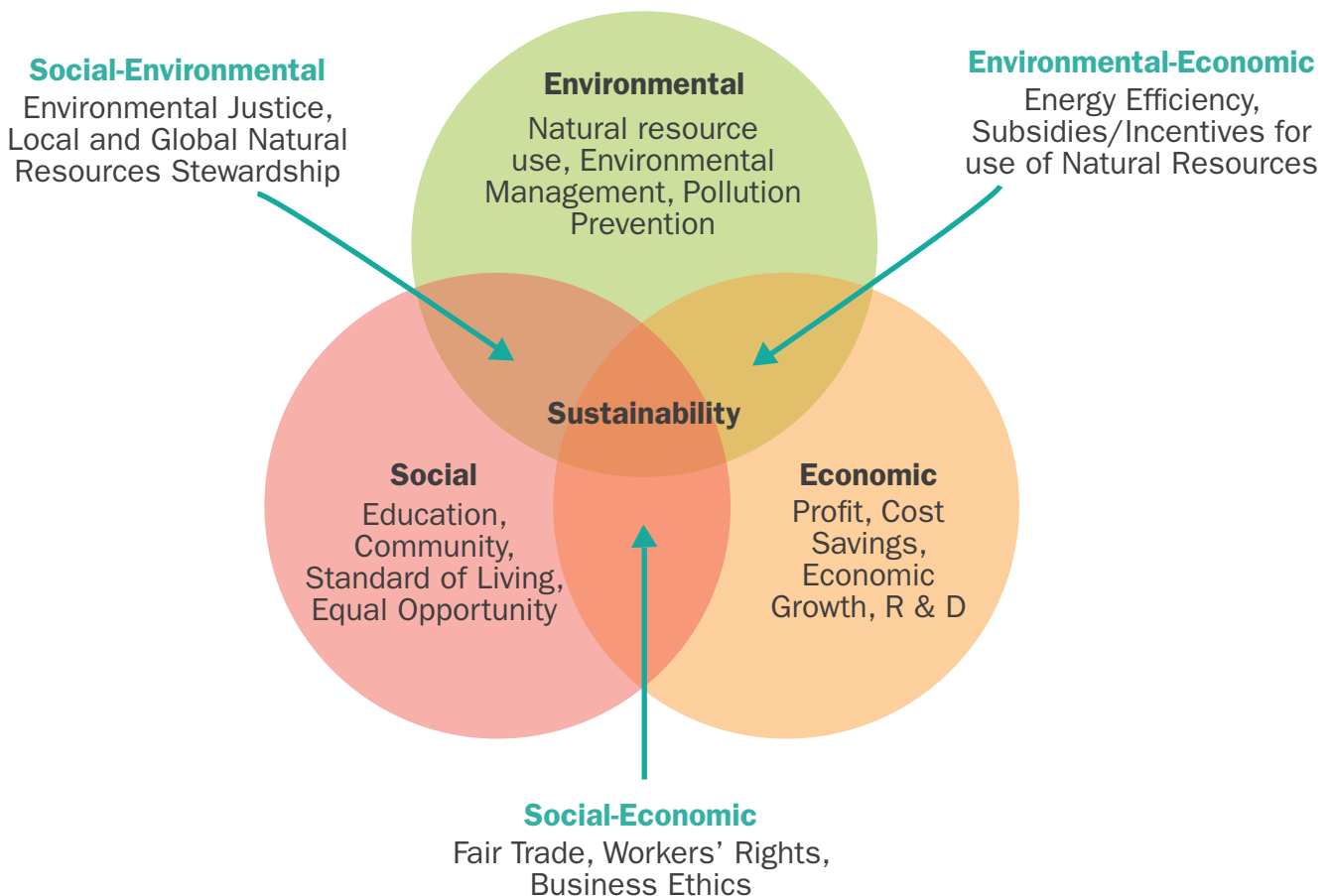
Differences

- The Brundtland definition recognizes specifically the role of technology and human activities placing strain on the limits of the natural world to meet our needs

Task 2: Comparing Sustainability Models

Using the models below, answer the questions that follow.

The Three-sphere Model
The Three Spheres of Sustainability



U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability | TEACHER ANSWER KEY

1. **What are the three factors that define sustainability according to this model? It may be helpful as you move forward to remember these factors as People, Profit, and Planet.**

The three factors or themes of sustainability are society, economy and the environment.

2. **Using one example from the model, explain the meaning of the area between the spheres.**

The overlapping areas between two spheres is the 'space' where separate themes interact with each other. The social-economic area addresses the needs of people within an economic system. For example, the idea of fair trade is a human activity within the global economic system that ensures the fair treatment of workers and producers while still providing a successful product.

The United Nations Model
Circles of Sustainability

ECONOMICS

Production & Resourcing
Exchange & Transfer
Accounting & Regulation
Consumption & Use
Labour & Welfare
Technology & Infrastructure
Wealth & Distribution

Organization & Governance
Law & Justice
Communication & Movement
Representation & Negotiation
Security & Accord
Dialogue & Reconciliation
Ethics & Accountability

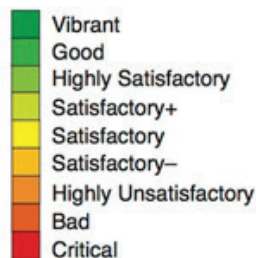
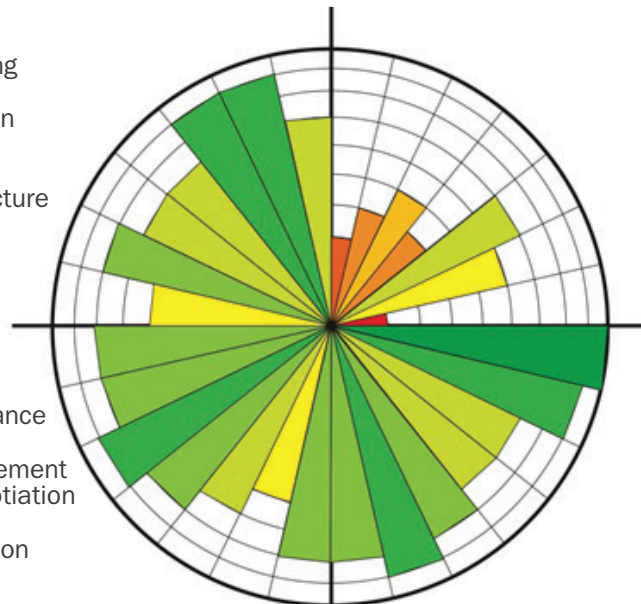
POLITICS

ECOLOGY

Materials & Energy
Water & Air
Flora & Fauna
Habitat & Food
Place & Space
Constructions & Settlements
Emission & Waste

Engagement & Identity
Recreation & Creativity
Memory & Projection
Belief & Meaning
Gender & Generations
Enquiry & Learning
Health & Wellbeing

CULTURE



U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability | TEACHER ANSWER KEY

3. What are the factors that define sustainability according to the United Nations?

The United Nations defines sustainability using four themes or factors—culture, ecology, politics and economy.

4. Using one example from the model, explain the coloured regions inside the circle.

The coloured regions show a sustainability measurement from vibrant to critical in each of 7 sub-themes for each overall theme. For example, Emissions and Waste are measuring 'critical' for their sustainability in the ecology theme, and is shown in red.

5. Which model is more effective at describing the concept of sustainability? Explain your answer using evidence from the models.

Answers will vary, as will examples from the models.

Task 3: Changing the Game

Watch the video at the following link and answer the questions that follow. If you have never seen 'The Story of Stuff,' it may be beneficial to watch that first, but it is not necessary.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpkRvc-sOKk

1. What is the difference between the old goal (MORE) and the new goal (BETTER)?

The goal of MORE reflects the current economic model that more is better. Growth is measured by the GDP, which accounts for growth in unsustainable activities as well as growth in sustainable activities. The new goal of BETTER focuses human economic activities toward more sustainable, game changing solutions that improve the quality of life and the environment as well as building the economy.

2. What symbols are shown on each of the 'goals' to help the viewer understand these differences?

The MORE goal is drawn in black and white, and the symbols around the word look like a landfill of cast-off 'stuff.' There is a skull and cross-bones in one corner of the image. The goal of BETTER is shown in green, and depicts deer grazing by a flowing river, with environmentally friendly symbols like bicycles, windmills, solar panels and a basket of fresh produce.

3. What does GOAL stand for?

- Gives people more power
- Opens people's eyes to the truth of happiness
- Accounts for all the costs
- Lessens the wealth gap

4. What are some of the solutions the narrator describes that demonstrate the 'game' changing? Provide three.

The narrator says that cooperatives are a good business solution because they are democratic, sustainable and equitable. Also, in Capanori, Italy, local citizens are working with government and businesses to reduce the quantity of waste going to landfills by finding creative solutions like increasing compost, and reusing and repurposing. Lastly, developing community sharing programs, like bike and car shares, or even local equipment sharing reduces the production and purpose of extra stuff.

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

5. Describe how the Ban the Bag campaign was a game changer. Apply the Sustainability Checklist and use it to support your answer.

The Ban the Bag solution was successful due to committed groups of people who decided to place the environment ahead of profit. They enlisted a local business to develop alternatives to the plastic bag, and they worked with government (the justice system) to fight companies that were trying to stop them. Strong communities involved in active citizenship to bring change to their society resulted in a successful campaign and a win for the environment.

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

sustainability checklist

Environmental Sustainability needs: Planet

- Healthy and intact ecosystems
- Government policy that puts the environment first
- Educated citizens who put the environment first
- Responsible business that puts the environment first
- A forward-thinking, long-term vision

Economic Sustainability needs: Profit

- A healthy environment
- Partnership between government, industry and communities
- Sustainable communities with a high level of social capital to attract and retain strong businesses
- A wide variety of meaningful employment for people
- Responsible, efficient use of natural resources
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

Social Sustainability needs: People

- A healthy environment
- Communities with secure and high quality housing, education, health care, food systems to encourage people to invest and engage in the social fabric of their communities
- Communities with a high level of social capital that allows people to fully participate in the following activities:
 - Cultural—arts, heritage, active citizenship, embrace diversity
 - Political—good governance, democratic engagement, social development
 - Economic—employment, economic development, tourism, infrastructure, agriculture
 - Environmental—protection, conservation, experiences, governance
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information | TEACHER ANSWER KEY

Now that you have learned about questioning, you need to acquire and explore some materials to help you find answers.

Activity 1: Evaluating a Source

1. As a class, brainstorm some possible sources of information that could answer the question ‘What is sustainability?’ Record them in the space below:

2. Select one and record it here _____

3. Complete the steps below to determine if it is useful.

Evaluating a Source of Information

- a. Who is the author?

- b. Is this a person or an organization? If it is a person, is she/he connected to an organization?

- c. What are the qualifications of the author? You may need to use Google for this. If you are satisfied that the author is a good source of information, you may continue to read. As you read, you need to keep the following questions in mind, and then answer them after you read.

- d. Is a particular bias or point of view evident?

- e. What kind of information is presented?
(definitions, examples, overviews, statistics, details of a case)

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

2. Record any diagrams or relevant figures (sketch them if necessary)

Good materials are not limited to text-based articles. Videos, infographics, graphics all contain information and are valuable in an inquiry.

Activity 3: Non-text sources

There are three additional sources you could consider in addition to the ones you have already determined as a class:

A. The Natural Step

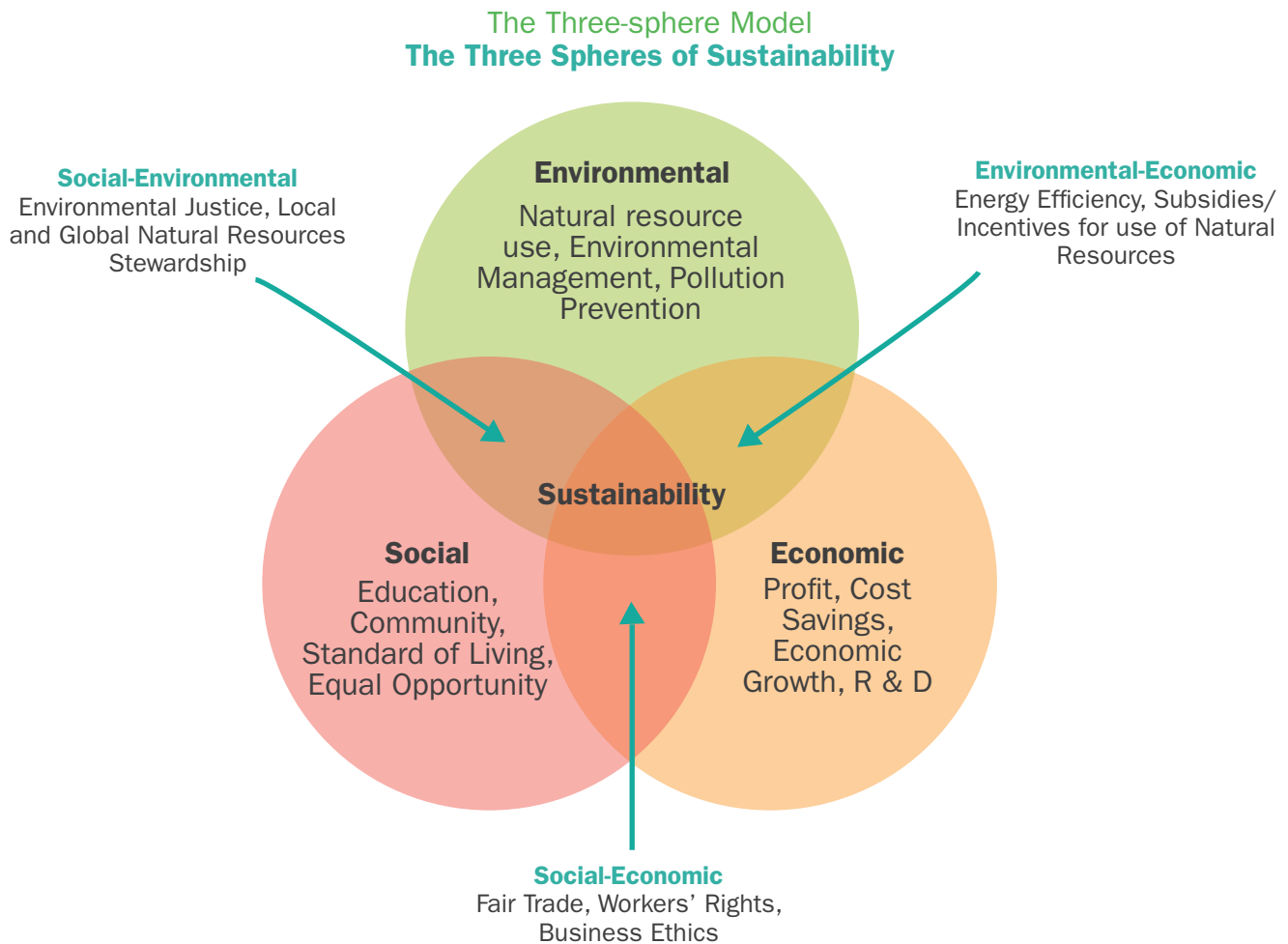
Watch the video from the Natural Step at the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFCNCQIeCuk>

- a. What are the 4 care instructions for the earth, according to the Natural Step?
 - i. Reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and heavy metals
 - ii. Reduce our dependence on synthetic chemicals that persist in nature
 - iii. Reduce our destruction of nature
 - iv. Ensure we are not stopping people, globally, from meeting their needs

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

B. 3-Sphere Sustainability Model

Below is the current, commonly referenced model for sustainability:



a. What are the primary factors of sustainability according to this model?

The three factors or themes of sustainability are society, economy and the environment.

b. Explain the purpose of the areas between two spheres. Use an example from the diagram to support your explanation.

The overlapping areas between two spheres is the 'space' where separate themes interact with each other. The social-economic area addresses the needs of people within an economic system. For example, the idea of fair trade is a human activity within the global economic system that ensures the fair treatment of workers and producers while still providing a successful product.

C. The United Nations Model on sustainability:

The United Nations Model
Circles of Sustainability

ECONOMICS

Production & Resourcing
Exchange & Transfer
Accounting & Regulation
Consumption & Use
Labour & Welfare
Technology & Infrastructure
Wealth & Distribution

Organization & Governance
Law & Justice
Communication & Movement
Representation & Negotiation
Security & Accord
Dialogue & Reconciliation
Ethics & Accountability

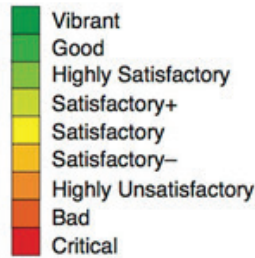
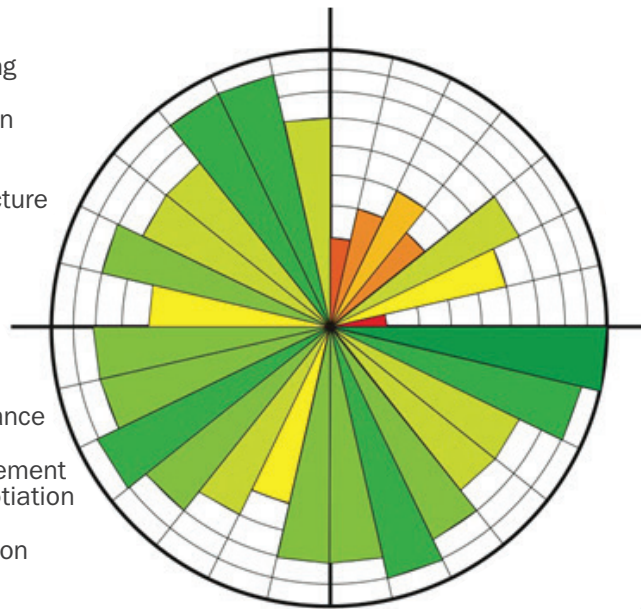
POLITICS

ECOLOGY

Materials & Energy
Water & Air
Flora & Fauna
Habitat & Food
Place & Space
Constructions & Settlements
Emission & Waste

Engagement & Identity
Recreation & Creativity
Memory & Projection
Belief & Meaning
Gender & Generations
Enquiry & Learning
Health & Wellbeing

CULTURE



- a. How does the three-sphere model compare with that of the United Nations? List two similarities and two differences.**

The United Nations model uses four pillars or themes of sustainability, instead of three. It separates society into culture and politics. In addition, the UN model shows a measurement of sustainability for each theme, by providing sub-themes and ranking them (using colour) according to their sustainability success globally. The two models are alike in that they both include the environment (ecology) and the economy as important aspects of sustainability.

Homework:

Watch the Story of Stuff <http://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/>

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

D. The Story of Solutions

Watch the movie at the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpkRvc-sOKk>

a. What is the difference between the old goal (MORE) and the new goal (BETTER)?

The goal of MORE reflects the current economic model that more is better. Growth is measured by the GDP, which accounts for growth in unsustainable activities as well as growth in sustainable activities. The new goal of BETTER focuses human economic activities toward more sustainable, game changing solutions that improve the quality of life and the environment as well as building the economy.

b. What symbols are shown on each of the ‘goals’ to help the viewer understand these differences?

The MORE goal is drawn in black and white, and the symbols around the word look like a landfill of cast-off ‘stuff.’ There is a skull and cross-bones in one corner of the image. The goal of BETTER is shown in green, and depicts deer grazing by a flowing river, with environmentally friendly symbols like bicycles, windmills, solar panels and a basket of fresh produce.

d. What does GOAL stand for?

- Gives people more power
- Opens people’s eyes to the truth of happiness
- Accounts for all the costs
- Lessens the wealth gap

e. What are some of the solutions the narrator describes that demonstrate the ‘game’ changing? Provide three.

The narrator says that cooperatives are a good business solution because they are democratic, sustainable and equitable. Also, in Cappanori, Italy, local citizens are working with government and businesses to reduce the quantity of waste going to landfills by finding creative solutions like increasing compost, and reusing and repurposing. Lastly, developing community sharing programs, like bike and car shares, or even local equipment sharing reduces the production and purpose of extra stuff.

f. Which of the above sources of information was most relevant and useful to your inquiry on sustainability? Explain why, providing examples.

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

overview

In this activity you will ACT on your learning about the inquiry process and sustainability from Activity 3 by analyzing a current initiative to effect societal change in Canada. Finally, you will use your learning to redesign the old sustainability model toward one that better represents the earth's need for protection.

learning goal

- To identify and understand the steps in the inquiry process
- To think critically about each stage, particularly with respect to evaluating sources of information
- To use the inquiry process to investigate the concept of sustainability
- To determine the key ideas for themes of sustainability

success criteria

- Analyse a current issue using sustainability criteria co-constructed by the class
- Create a new (and better!) model of sustainability

Inquiry Question

- What is the inquiry process, and how can it be used to understand the concept of sustainability?

Task

In this activity you will ACT on your learning about the inquiry process and sustainability from Activity 3 by analyzing a current initiative to effect societal change in Canada. Finally, you will use your learning to redesign the old sustainability model toward one that better represents the earth's need for protection.

sustainability checklist

Environmental Sustainability needs: Planet

- Healthy and intact ecosystems
- Government policy that puts the environment first
- Educated citizens who put the environment first
- Responsible business that puts the environment first
- A forward-thinking, long-term vision

Economic Sustainability needs: Profit

- A healthy environment
- Partnership between government, industry and communities
- Sustainable communities with a high level of social capital to attract and retain strong businesses
- A wide variety of meaningful employment for people
- Responsible, efficient use of natural resources
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

Social Sustainability needs: People

- A healthy environment
- Communities with secure and high quality housing, education, health care, food systems to encourage people to invest and engage in the social fabric of their communities
- Communities with a high level of social capital that allows people to fully participate in the following activities:
 - Cultural—arts, heritage, active citizenship, embrace diversity
 - Political—good governance, democratic engagement, social development
 - Economic—employment, economic development, tourism, infrastructure, agriculture
 - Environmental—protection, conservation, experiences, governance
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability | TEACHER ANSWER KEY

Part 1: Issue analysis

Read the article titled ‘Every Canadian’s eco-rights need Charter protection.’

If our right to a healthy environment was added to Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which of the criteria from the ‘Sustainability Checklist’ would be met by this action?

- 1. Complete the Sustainability Checklist by checking each box that would apply if the government were to make a law to add environmental protection to our Charter. When completing the checklist, try to think about how business and society might function differently as a result. See checklist for highlighted answers.**
- 2. Would making our right to a healthy environment a Charter Right be an activity that will improve sustainability in Canada? Explain, providing at least three reasons from the article to support your answer.**

Adding the right to a healthy environment to the Charter would improve sustainability in Canada. It would ensure that companies who are releasing waste into the environment would be required by law to ensure that waste was not harmful to human health (and by extension the environment), similar to the example in South America. Citizens impacted by pollution would have the legal right to sue the government and the business if was evident that laws were not followed. In addition, governments would be legally responsible for ensuring that drinking water was safe to avoid tragedies like Walkerton and Attawapiskat, and not take 12 years to make change in this area. If companies were legally responsible for dealing with their waste, they may start charging the true price of producing products as well, which could reduce the demand for unsustainable products.

Part 2: A new model for sustainability

Use your learning over the last week to design a new model for sustainability. Remember, the current models (from the United Nations and the 3-sphere model) are not working effectively in their current states. How could you rework (or completely redesign) them to help address your new learning reflected in the Sustainability checklist? Feel free to change:

- The size and shape of all or some of the spheres
- The number of themes they address
- Which themes you think are important
- How the spheres interact with each other
- Anything else that occurs to you!

Evaluation (for use in any Canadian and World Studies geography course)

Criteria	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
<p>Knowledge A1. Geographic Inquiry: use the geographic inquiry process and the concepts of geographic thinking when investigating issues relating to Canadian geography</p>	To a high degree	To a considerable degree	To a moderate degree	To a limited degree
<p>Did I complete the inquiry process on sustainability? Did my work demonstrate understanding of the 5 steps of this inquiry process? Does my model of sustainability reflect understanding of the factors that contribute to sustainability?</p>				
<p>Thinking A1. Geographic Inquiry: use the geographic inquiry process and the concepts of geographic thinking when investigating issues relating to Canadian geography</p>	To a high degree	To a considerable degree	To a moderate degree	To a limited degree
<p>Did I demonstrate thinking skills when applying the checklist to the issue of environmental protection in the Charter? Does my new model of sustainability reflect thinking on the topic of sustainability?</p>				
<p>Application A1. Geographic Inquiry: use the geographic inquiry process and the concepts of geographic thinking when investigating issues relating to Canadian geography</p>	To a high degree	To a considerable degree	To a moderate degree	To a limited degree
<p>Did I support my decision on the sustainability of enshrining rights to a healthy environment in the Charter with three relevant reasons using evidence from the checklist and the article?</p>				

U1L1A1 | The Earth: Our Home

Excerpts from *The Blue Dot Tour: It's all about us*

By David Suzuki with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Senior Editor Ian Hanington.

Slide 1: Apollo 17 'The Blue Marble'



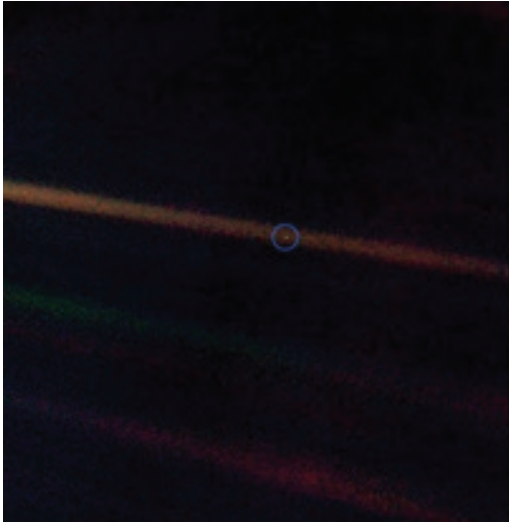
Figure 1. View of the Earth as seen by the Apollo 17 crew traveling toward the moon. This translunar coast photograph extends from the Mediterranean Sea area to the Antarctica south polar ice cap. This is the first time the Apollo trajectory made it possible to photograph the south polar ice cap. Note the heavy cloud cover in the Southern Hemisphere. Almost the entire coastline of Africa is clearly visible. The Arabian Peninsula can be seen at the northeastern edge of Africa. The large island off the coast of Africa is the Malagasy Republic. The Asian mainland is on the horizon toward the northeast.

A now-famous 1972 photo of Earth taken by Apollo 17 astronauts from 45,000 kilometres away became known as “the blue marble.”

Slide 2: The pale blue dot

The late scientist Carl Sagan described a 1990 picture taken from six billion kilometres away by the unmanned Voyager 1 as a “pale blue dot.”

Read text from photo, or use audio file to hear Carl Sagan read a version of this text.



Carl Sagan, Pale Blue Dot

We succeeded in taking that picture [from deep space], and, if you look at it, you see a dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever lived, lived out their lives. The aggregate of all our joys and sufferings, thousands of confident religions, ideologies and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilizations, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every hopeful child, every mother and father, every inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every superstar, every supreme leader, every saint and sinner in the history of our species, lived there on a mote of dust, suspended in a sunbeam.

The earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and in triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of the dot on scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner of the dot. How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds. Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity – in all this vastness – there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves. It is up to us. It's been said that astronomy is a humbling, and I might add, a character-building experience. To my mind, there is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly and compassionately with one another and to preserve and cherish that pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known.

U1L1A1 | The Earth: Our Home

Slide 3: The Atmosphere (stay on this slide for the remainder of this reading)

The vision of Earth from a distance has profoundly moved pretty much anyone who has ever seen it. “When we look down at the earth from space, we see this amazing, indescribably beautiful planet,” International Space Station astronaut Ron Garan said. “It looks like a living, breathing organism. But it also, at the same time, looks extremely fragile.” Referring to the atmosphere, Garan added “it’s really sobering... to realize that that little paper-thin layer is all that protects every living thing on Earth.”

Many astronauts report a deep feeling of connection that transcends borders and worldly conflict—referred to by some as the “overview effect.” Apollo 14’s Edgar Mitchell said, “You develop an instant global consciousness, a people orientation, an intense dissatisfaction with the state of the world, and a compulsion to do something about it. From out there on the moon, international politics look so petty.”

How can anyone who has even seen a photo of the Earth treat our small blue home with disdain and carelessness? How can anyone fail to recognize how precious and finite the resources, especially water, are—and that we must share and care for what we have?

The “blue marble” photo from Apollo 17, the last manned lunar mission, catalyzed the global environmental movement. Now, as people around the world compete for air, water and land—not just with each other, but with corporations bent on profit at any cost—we need a resurgence in action to care for our small blue planet.

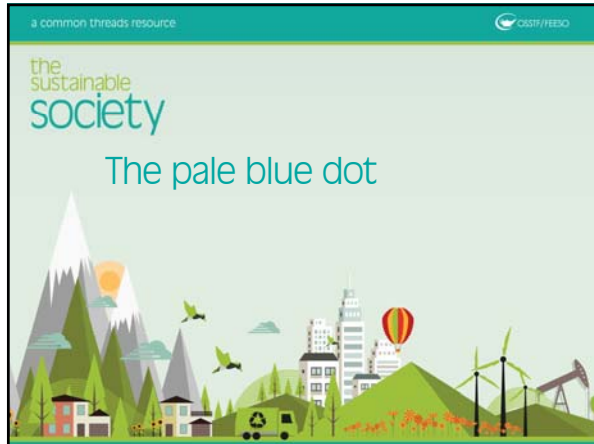
That’s why I’m about to embark on what will likely be my last national tour. From September 24 to November 9, I’m crossing the country, from St. John’s, Newfoundland, to Victoria, B.C., with 20 stops along the way. The plan is to work with Canadians from all walks of life to protect the people and places we love. It’s the most important thing I’ve ever done.

The goal of the Blue Dot Tour is to work with community leaders and groups, local governments, First Nations, musicians, writers, legal experts and—we hope—you on local, regional and national initiatives to ensure all Canadians have access to clean water, fresh air and healthy food. Ultimately, we’d like to see the right to a healthy environment enshrined in the Canadian Constitution’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

That may seem like a challenge, but it’s not unusual. More than half the world’s nations—at least 110—have environmental rights in their constitutions. Not having them is a strange oversight in a country like Canada, where our clean air and water, spectacular nature and abundant wildlife and resources instill a sense of pride and make us the envy of people around the world.

Maybe we take our good fortune for granted. But we shouldn’t. Already, environmental hazards contribute to about 36,000 premature deaths in Canada a year, and half of us live in areas where we’re exposed to unsafe air pollution levels. Pollution costs Canada about \$100 billion a year, and many people suffer from illnesses like asthma and heart disease because of environmental contamination.

As the rush to extract, transport and sell fossil fuels while there’s still a market heats up, it will only get worse—unless we all pitch in. It’s not about getting in the way of industry or progress; it’s about building a conversation about the kind of country we want. And it’s about ensuring that our economic activity creates more benefits than harm to people and the natural systems that keep us healthy and alive.



the sustainable society

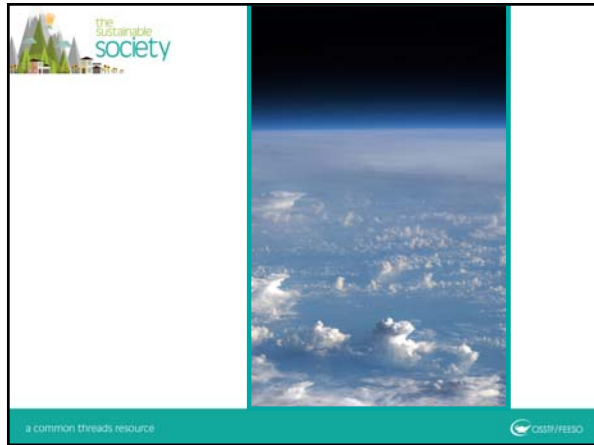
a common threads resource

[Audio File](#)

Carl Sagan, Pale Blue Dot

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the sustainable society

The pale blue dot

On Dec 19, 2012, a man started sharing with the world the beauty of the Earth system.

[Quirks and Quarks, October 25, 2014](#)

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the sustainable society

The pale blue dot




Longueuil, Quebec - Chris Hadfield speaking at a news conference, 2013


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The pale blue dot



Atmospheric clouds (Hadfield, 2013)

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the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Bahamas – the colours from space (Hadfield, 2013)

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OSST/PEESQ

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot




South America – cloud, ice and rock (Hadfield, 2013)

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OSST/PEESQ

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Volcanoes (Hadfield, 2013)

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OSST/PEESQ

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Saudi Arabia (Hadfield, 2013)

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OSST/PEESQ

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



The Rockies (Hadfield, 2012)

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OSST/PEESQ

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Australia – dry salt lake, in the Outback (Hadfield, 2013)

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OSST/PEESQ

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The pale blue dot




The Sahara Desert – ancient stone burnished by sand and wind (Hadfield, 2013)

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The pale blue dot



Moon rise over earth (Hadfield, 2013)

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The pale blue dot



The sun rising over the earth (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource



the sustainable society

The pale blue dot




Noctilucent Cloud – the Mesosphere (Hadfield, 2013)

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The pale blue dot



Andros Island, Bahamas (Hadfield, 2013)

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The pale blue dot



The Galapagos (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource



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The pale blue dot



Clouds over the Pacific (Hadfield, 2013)

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OSTR/PEBCO

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The pale blue dot



Andes Mountains - spot the fault line. (Hadfield, 2013)

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OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot


In this vast beauty, there is evidence of the impact of human activity on the natural environment.

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OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot




South Africa – serpentine river and centre-pivot irrigation (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot




Mount Vesuvius, Italy (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



The Mexico-US border (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



New York City, USA - spring. (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



The Amazon Forest, Brazil – forest clearing for terraforming (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Dubai, United Arab Emirates – palm island at the top of the photo (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Toronto (Hadfield, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot

Are we doing enough to protect the unique system that is our Earth?

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Sumatra, Indonesia – forest clearing for palm oil plantations (AFP/Getty Romeo Gacad/AFP/Getty Images, 2013)

a common threads resource

OSTR/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Alberta, Canada – forest clearing for oil sands development (Alberta Oil Sands Jobs, 2015)

a common threads resource

OSTP/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot




Alberta, Canada – Boreal Forest (Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, 2011)

a common threads resource

OSTP/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot




China – Landscape at the site of the Three Gorges Dam before (left) and after (right) construction (NASA, 2007)

a common threads resource

OSTP/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Urbanization (Environmental Change and Security Program, 2012)

a common threads resource

OSTP/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



New York City, USA – urbanization (Skyarov, 2012)

a common threads resource

OSTP/PEBCO

the sustainable society

The pale blue dot



Shipbreaking – India (gCaptain, 2012)

a common threads resource

OSTP/PEBCO


the sustainable society **The pale blue dot**




Industrial Agriculture (Underwood Gardens, 2011)

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the sustainable society **The pale blue dot**



Fracking wells, western United States (Greenpeace, 2015)

a common threads resource 

the sustainable society **The pale blue dot**


What should we be doing to preserve a healthy environment?

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the sustainable society **The pale blue dot**




Urban agriculture, Chicago City Farm, Chicago, USA (City Farmer, 2009)

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the sustainable society **The pale blue dot**



Alternative logging practices (McCreivy, TeAra, The Encyclopedia of New Zealand 2013)

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the sustainable society **The pale blue dot**



Rooftop solar panels, Australia. (Reneweconomy, 2014)

a common threads resource 

U1L1A1 | The Earth: Our Home

overview

In this activity you will learn about the earth as a complex system. You will hear the reflections of the astronauts who have seen the earth from space and learn how their unique perspective informs our understanding of sustainability. At the end, you can complete an exit card to demonstrate your learning (Activity 4).

learning goal

- To understand that the earth is a complex system categorized into 4 distinct but interconnected spheres.
- To understand that humans, as part of this system, exist within these spheres and change the earth through our activities.

success criteria

- I will correctly complete an exit card to demonstrate my understanding of these ideas

Inquiry Question

- How can seeing the world from the perspective of astronauts and scientists help motivate us to make change toward sustainability for the earth?

The Earth Spheres

The Earth is made up of four spheres:

- the _____
- the _____
- the _____
- the _____

Understanding how these four spheres interact is essential to our efforts to minimize the negative impacts of our actions on the environment.

The Atmosphere

- _____
- contains _____ needed by living things
- _____

U1L1A1 | The Earth: Our Home

The Lithosphere

- the _____
- made up of _____
- forms the _____, the _____ and is the basis for terrestrial (land-based) ecosystems

The Hydrosphere

- all the earth's _____ (cryosphere)
- most found in _____, some in _____,
- _____, _____ and _____

The Biosphere

- all the _____
- humans are such a dominant species that some scientists have given us our own sphere

name: _____

Interaction of the Four Spheres

The four spheres of the earth are closely connected. Water (hydrosphere) flows through the soil (lithosphere) which also contains air (atmosphere) and is inundated with millions of microscopic and larger living organisms (biosphere).

A change in one sphere often results in a change in one or more of the other spheres.

The interaction of the 3 physical earth spheres allows for the cycling of energy, water and nutrients throughout the environment. These conditions allow for the survival of the components of the biosphere, including humans.

U1L1A1 | The Earth: Our Home



Moraine Lake, Alberta Canada (christophermartinphotography.com, 2014)

It is important for humans to understand the earth's complex systems, so that:

- _____
- _____
- _____

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

overview

In this activity you will explore a variety of materials that explain the concept of sustainability. You will compare definitions from different organizations, then evaluate three models of sustainability. Lastly, you will learn about taking action for sustainability by watching ‘The Story of Solutions’ and use the Sustainability Checklist to evaluate citizen action on an issue. After, you can evaluate a sustainability initiative in your local community (Activity 5).

learning goal

- To understand and participate in the inquiry process.
- To understand and apply the concept of sustainability.

success criteria

- I will complete a series of activities on sustainability
- I will evaluate a local sustainable solution and share it with the class

Inquiry Question

- What is sustainability?

Task 1: Comparing Sustainability Definitions

When examining the issue of sustainable management of national and global resources, one must first consider the definition of sustainable development.

According to ‘Our Common Future,’ or the Brundtland report (1987), one must always consider the environment when evaluating development:

“...the “environment” is where we all live; and “development” is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that abode. The two are inseparable.” (Foreword, page 3, paragraph 2).

1. Watch the video at the following link to understand the concept of sustainable development:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNhDNjdgQE4>

- a. What are the four ‘care instructions’ for the earth, according to this video?

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

2. Read the following definition of sustainable development from the Brundtland Commission (1987), of the United Nations.

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- a. The concept of ‘needs,’ in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- b. The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs.”

3. How does the Brundtland definition compare with the ‘care instructions’ from the video? What are the similarities, and what are the differences?

Similarities

- ---
- ---

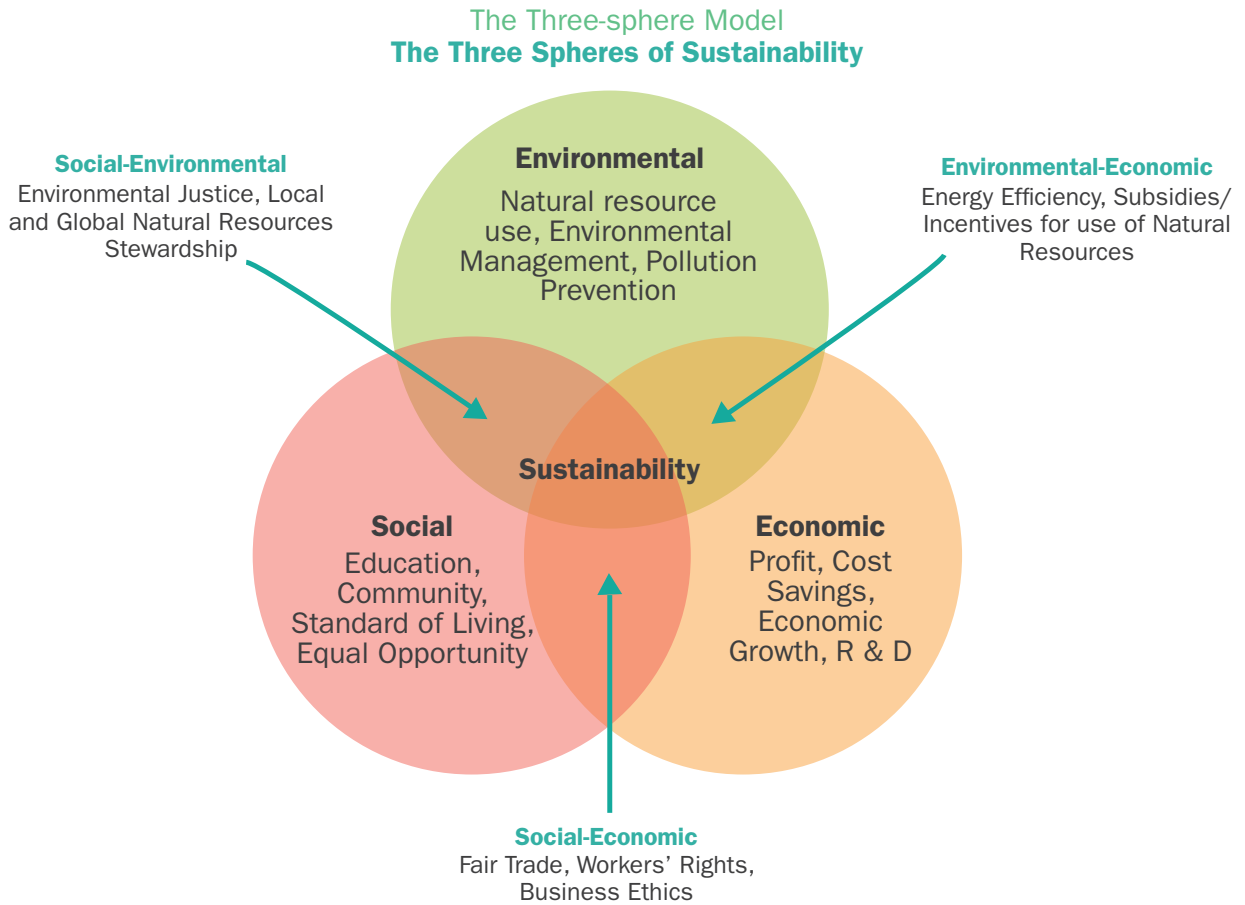
Differences

- ---

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

Task 2: Comparing Sustainability Models

Using the models below, answer the questions that follow.



1. What are the three factors that define sustainability according to this model? It may be helpful as you move forward to remember these factors as People, Profit, and Planet.

2. Using one example from the model, explain the meaning of the area between the spheres.

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

The United Nations Model
Circles of Sustainability

ECONOMICS

Production & Resourcing
 Exchange & Transfer
 Accounting & Regulation
 Consumption & Use
 Labour & Welfare
 Technology & Infrastructure
 Wealth & Distribution

Organization & Governance
 Law & Justice
 Communication & Movement
 Representation & Negotiation
 Security & Accord
 Dialogue & Reconciliation
 Ethics & Accountability

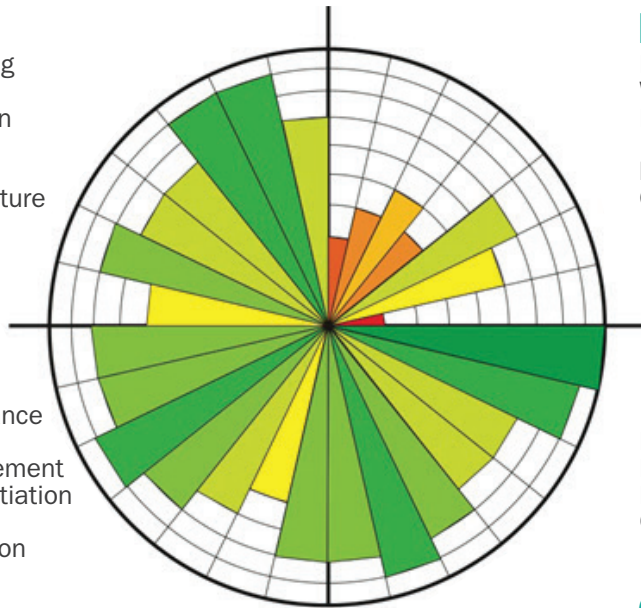
POLITICS

ECOLOGY

Materials & Energy
 Water & Air
 Flora & Fauna
 Habitat & Food
 Place & Space
 Constructions & Settlements
 Emission & Waste

Engagement & Identity
 Recreation & Creativity
 Memory & Projection
 Belief & Meaning
 Gender & Generations
 Enquiry & Learning
 Health & Wellbeing

CULTURE



3. What are the factors that define sustainability according to the United Nations?

4. Using one example from the model, explain the coloured regions inside the circle.

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

5. Which model is more effective at describing the concept of sustainability? Explain your answer using evidence from the models.

Task 3: Changing the Game

Watch the video at the following link and answer the questions that follow. If you have never seen 'The Story of Stuff,' it may be beneficial to watch that first, but it is not necessary.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpkRvc-sOKk

1. What is the difference between the old goal (MORE) and the new goal (BETTER)?

2. What symbols are shown on each of the 'goals' to help the viewer understand these differences?

3. What does GOAL stand for?

- ---
- ---
- ---
- ---

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

4. What are some of the solutions the narrator describes that demonstrate the 'game' changing? Provide three.

5. Describe how the Ban the Bag campaign was a game changer. Apply the Sustainability Checklist and use it to support your answer.

U1L1A2 | Defining Sustainability

sustainability checklist

Environmental Sustainability needs: Planet

- Healthy and intact ecosystems
- Government policy that puts the environment first
- Educated citizens who put the environment first
- Responsible business that puts the environment first
- A forward-thinking, long-term vision

Economic Sustainability needs: Profit

- A healthy environment
- Partnership between government, industry and communities
- Sustainable communities with a high level of social capital to attract and retain strong businesses
- A wide variety of meaningful employment for people
- Responsible, efficient use of natural resources
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

Social Sustainability needs: People

- A healthy environment
- Communities with secure and high quality housing, education, health care, food systems to encourage people to invest and engage in the social fabric of their communities
- Communities with a high level of social capital that allows people to fully participate in the following activities:
 - Cultural—arts, heritage, active citizenship, embrace diversity
 - Political—good governance, democratic engagement, social development
 - Economic—employment, economic development, tourism, infrastructure, agriculture
 - Environmental—protection, conservation, experiences, governance
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Analyzing Information

Once you have collected a variety of sources of information, you need to analyze the information for how it applies to your inquiry question:

What is sustainability?

Now that you have collected all your sustainability research, you will use it to determine our class' working definition of sustainability. To do this, there are five steps (i.e. the environment):

1. As a class, after reviewing your point-form notes and the notes from the models and videos, determine 3-4 'sustainability themes' that will help us organize our research, and record them below:

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____

2. Individually

- i. Choose one theme and record it here _____
- ii. Sort through all your point-form notes, looking for facts and ideas that fall into your chosen theme. Place an identifying symbol beside each fact (star, number, letter—just make sure you only choose one and use it for each fact)
- iii. Read through them carefully, and choose the three most important facts or ideas that describe sustainability for your theme and record them below (be sure you know which source they came from and record it in the brackets)

- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Analyzing Information

3. In partners:

- i. Share your top three ideas and compare with your partner
- ii. Decide on a new top three together

- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)

4. In Theme groups

- i. Share your top three with the group and debate the merits of each
- ii. Decide on the top 5 facts or ideas to present to the class as representative of sustainability for that theme

- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)
- _____
_____ (_____)

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Analyzing Information

5. Submit these to your teacher who will compile them as a sustainability checklist for our course.
6. Do the notes above relate back to your topic question?
 Yes No
7. Are the notes above in your own words (or the words of a classmate)?
 Yes No

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Asking Questions

The first step of the Inquiry Process is to ask a question. It seems straightforward but it can sometimes be a challenging task to develop a good question. Questions can have different levels of complexity. Usually at the beginning of an inquiry, questions are less complex than when examining an issue in depth.

The chart below was developed to help educators focus on different levels of questioning. It has value for this investigation to help you understand the structure of questions.

1. What is the category of complexity of our inquiry question? _____

What is sustainability?

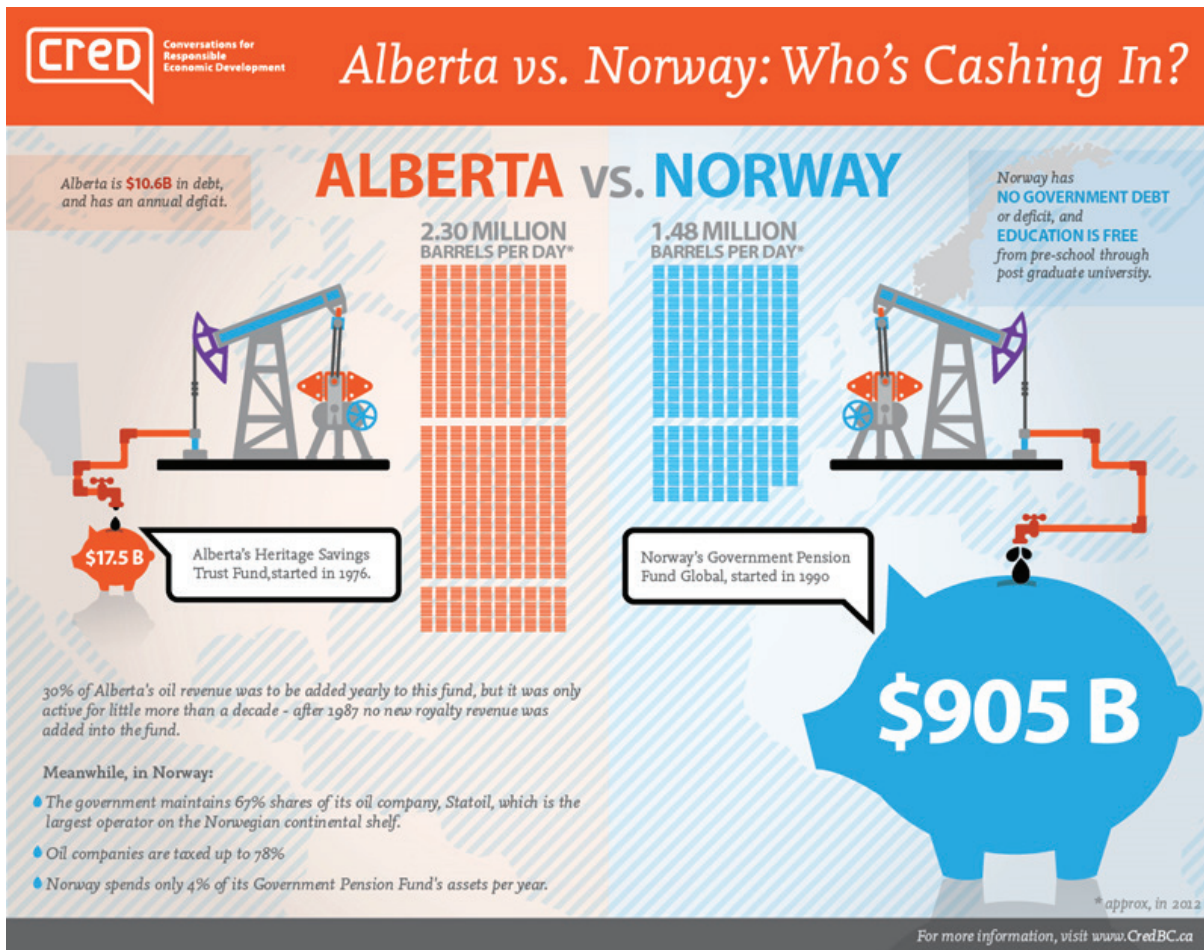
Asking Questions Based on Bloom's Taxonomy

Category	Definition	Question Words	Example
Evaluation	Judgement, making value decisions about issues	Judge, appraise, evaluate, assess	How successful will President's Bush's ownership society will be in addressing the concerns of the lower-income elderly?
Synthesis	Combining ideas, creating an original product	Compose, construct, examine, analyze	Design an experiment that will allow you to separate the components in this solution.
Analysis	Subdividing into component parts, determining motives	Compare, contrast, examine, analyze	Analyze the Supreme Court actions of the late nineteenth century in terms of Social Darwinism.
Application	Problem Solving, applying information	Interpret, apply, use, demonstrate	Apply the law of supply and demand to explain the current increase in fruit prices.
Comprehension	Interpreting, paraphrasing	Restate, discuss, describe, explain	Describe the major differences between modern and postmodern art.
Knowledge	Memorizing, recalling information	Who, what, when? Define, recall, list	What are the main theories used in discussing different learning styles?

Level of Complexity

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Asking Questions

- Read the following infographic on Alberta and Norway. Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide, design an inquiry question based on the information in the graphic. (Hint: What do you want to know as a result of reading this information?)



U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information

Now that you have learned about questioning, you need to acquire and explore some materials to help you find answers.

Activity 1: Evaluating a Source

- 1. As a class, brainstorm some possible sources of information that could answer the question ‘What is sustainability?’ Record them in the space below:

- 2. Select one and record it here _____

- 3. Complete the steps below to determine if it is useful.

Evaluating a Source of Information

- a. Who is the author?

- b. Is this a person or an organization? If it is a person, is she/he connected to an organization?

- c. What are the qualifications of the author? You may need to use Google for this. If you are satisfied that the author is a good source of information, you may continue to read. As you read, you need to keep the following questions in mind, and then answer them after you read.

- d. Is a particular bias or point of view evident?

- e. What kind of information is presented?
(definitions, examples, overviews, statistics, details of a case)

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information

2. Record any diagrams or relevant figures (sketch them if necessary)

Good materials are not limited to text-based articles. Videos, infographics, graphics all contain information and are valuable in an inquiry.

Activity 3: Non-text sources

There are three additional sources you could consider in addition to the ones you have already determined as a class:

A. The Natural Step

Watch the video from the Natural Step at the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFCNCQIeCuk>

a. What are the 4 care instructions for the earth, according to the Natural Step?

- ---

- ---

- ---

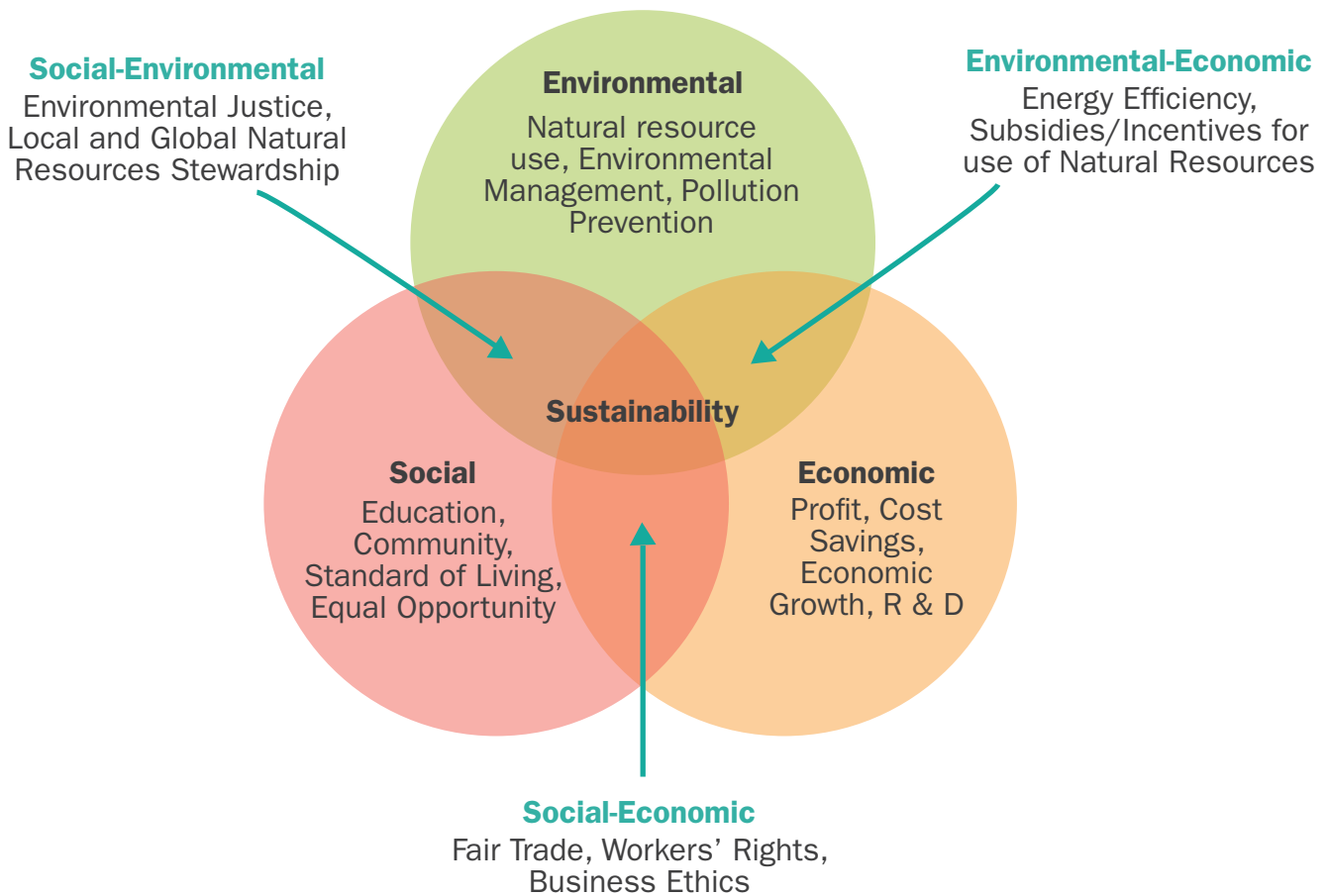
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U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information

B. 3-Sphere Sustainability Model

Below is the current, commonly referenced model for sustainability:

The Three-sphere Model
The Three Spheres of Sustainability



a. What are the primary factors of sustainability according to this model?

b. Explain the purpose of the areas between two spheres. Use an example from the diagram to support your explanation.

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information

C. The United Nations Model on sustainability:

The United Nations Model
Circles of Sustainability

ECONOMICS

- Production & Resourcing
- Exchange & Transfer
- Accounting & Regulation
- Consumption & Use
- Labour & Welfare
- Technology & Infrastructure
- Wealth & Distribution

- Organization & Governance
- Law & Justice
- Communication & Movement
- Representation & Negotiation
- Security & Accord
- Dialogue & Reconciliation
- Ethics & Accountability

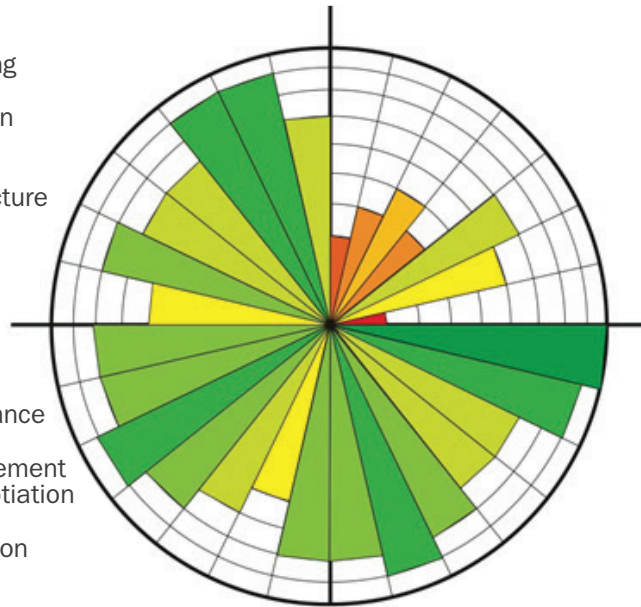
POLITICS

ECOLOGY

- Materials & Energy
- Water & Air
- Flora & Fauna
- Habitat & Food
- Place & Space
- Constructions & Settlements
- Emission & Waste

- Engagement & Identity
- Recreation & Creativity
- Memory & Projection
- Belief & Meaning
- Gender & Generations
- Enquiry & Learning
- Health & Wellbeing

CULTURE



a. How does the three-sphere model compare with that of the United Nations? List two similarities and two differences.

Homework:

Watch the Story of Stuff <http://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/>

U1L1A3 | The Inquiry Process: Exploring Sources of Information

D. The Story of Solutions

Watch the movie at the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpkRvc-sOKk>

- a. What is the difference between the old goal (MORE) and the new goal (BETTER)?

- b. What symbols are shown on each of the 'goals' to help the viewer understand these differences?

- c. What does GOAL stand for?

- d. What are some of the solutions the narrator describes that demonstrate the 'game' changing? Provide three.

- e. Which of the above sources of information was most relevant and useful to your inquiry on sustainability? Explain why, providing examples.

U1L1A3 | Using the Inquiry Process to Define Sustainability

overview

In this activity you will actively engage in the inquiry process by learning about each stage (ASK, ACQUIRE, EXPLORE, ANALYZE). You will use this process to investigate the concept of sustainability. After, you can demonstrate your understanding by completing Activity 6 (ACT).

learning goal

- To identify and understand the steps in the inquiry process
- To think critically about each stage, particularly with respect to evaluating sources of information
- To use the inquiry process to investigate the concept of sustainability
- To determine the key ideas for themes of sustainability

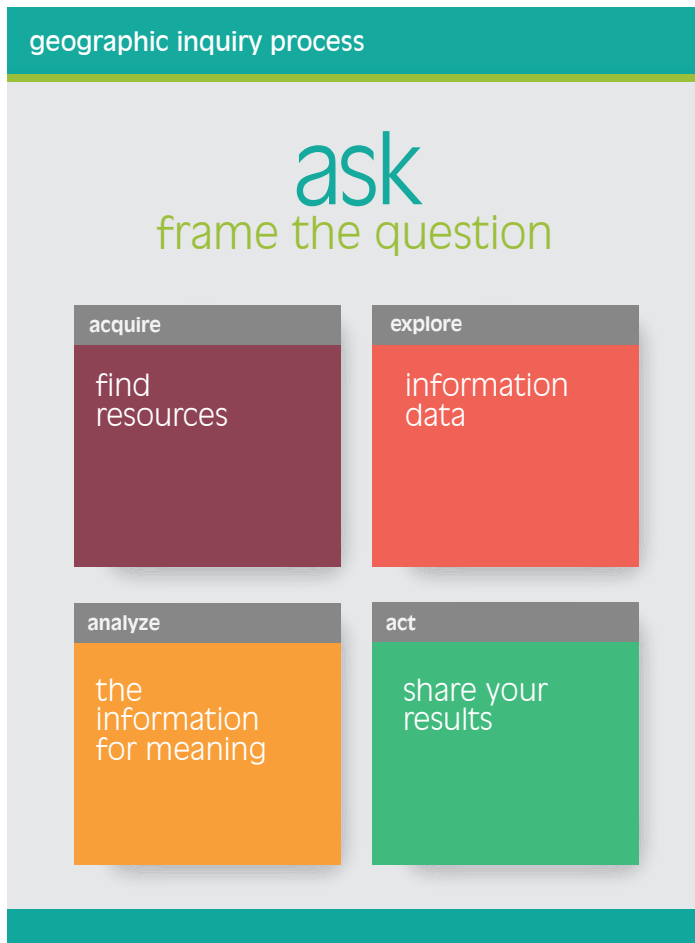
success criteria

- To produce 5 key ideas for a chosen theme of sustainability
- To analyse a current issue using sustainability criteria co-constructed by the class

Inquiry Question

- What is the inquiry process, and how can it be used to understand the concept of sustainability?

The inquiry process



U1L1A3 | Using the Inquiry Process to Define Sustainability

Ask: Frame the Question

Approaching a problem involves asking a question. What is the problem you are trying to solve or analyze, and where is it located? Why is it important? Being as specific as possible about the question you're trying to answer will help you with the later stages of the inquiry process. Understanding different levels of complexity when asking questions is important.

Acquire: (Find) Resources

After clearly defining the problem, it is necessary to locate information needed to answer your question. It is important to find sources that are reputable and recent. It is also helpful to use a wide variety of sources to gain different perspectives on an issue.

Explore: Information (Data)

You will not know for certain whether the information you have acquired is appropriate for your study until you thoroughly examine it. You could access video, articles, graphics, maps, interviews. There are many ways to explore resources prior to analyzing them for particular meaning.

Analyze: The Information for meaning

The information is grouped and analyzed based on the themes or parts of the question you are asking. In analysis, you read through all your point-form notes or activities and reorganize them into which part of the question they answer. At this stage as well, you can sometimes discard information that you find is not as relevant. You do not discard repetitive information, however. It is good inquiry practice to have multiple sources that confirm the same information. It is also at this stage that you may find you need more information to answer the inquiry question.

Act: Share Your Results

The results and presentation of the analysis are important parts of The Inquiry Process. The results can be shared through reports, maps, organizers, tables, and charts and delivered in printed form or digitally over a network or on the Web. You need to decide on the best means for presenting your analysis. In addition, taking action based on your results can be a way to make change toward greater sustainability.

U1L1A4 | Exit Card

overview

In this activity you learned about the earth as a complex system. You heard the reflections of the astronauts who have seen the earth from space and learned how their unique perspective informs our understanding of the earth as a fragile system. Demonstrate your understanding by completing the questions below.

learning goal

- To understand that the earth is a complex system categorized into 4 distinct but interconnected spheres
- To understand that humans, as part of this system, exist within these spheres and change the earth through our activities

success criteria

- I will correctly complete an exit card to demonstrate my understanding of these ideas

Inquiry Question

- How can seeing the world from the perspective of astronauts and scientists help motivate us to make change toward sustainability?

1. What are the four spheres of earth?

2. Humans are the most dominant species of which sphere?

U1L1A4 | Exit Card

3. Which human activities were present in the slideshow?

4. Finish this 'thought stem:'

When we look at issues about our earth, it is important to remember the perspective of astronauts like Carl Sagan because it helps remind us that the earth is...

U1L1A5 | Evaluating a Local Sustainability Initiative

overview

In this activity you will ACT on your learning from Activity 2. You compared definitions from different organizations, evaluated two models of sustainability and learned about taking action for sustainability using the Sustainability Checklist to evaluate citizen action on an issue. Now, you can evaluate a sustainability initiative in your local community using the same criteria in the checklist.

learning goal

- To understand and participate in the inquiry process.
- To understand and apply the concept of sustainability.

success criteria

- I will complete a series of activities on sustainability
- I will evaluate a local sustainable solution and share it with the class

Inquiry Question

- What is sustainability?

Now that you have explored the concept of sustainability, and have a better understanding of sustainable solutions, you will apply this learning to your own community.

1. Brainstorm local initiatives that could be considered sustainable, 'game changing' solutions.
2. Choose one initiative, and using the sustainability checklist provided, determine whether it is good for society (people), the economy (profit) and the environment (planet).
3. Prepare a 5 minute presentation to clearly outline how this initiative is a game changer. Include in your presentation examples of how it is a sustainable solution for people, profit and planet.

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability

overview

In this activity you will ACT on your learning about the inquiry process and sustainability from Activity 3 by analyzing a current initiative to effect societal change in Canada. Finally, you will use your learning to redesign the old sustainability model toward one that better represents the earth's need for protection.

learning goal

- To identify and understand the steps in the inquiry process
- To think critically about each stage, particularly with respect to evaluating sources of information
- To use the inquiry process to investigate the concept of sustainability
- To determine the key ideas for themes of sustainability

success criteria

- Analyze a current issue using sustainability criteria co-constructed by the class
- Create a new (and better!) model of sustainability

Inquiry Question

- What is the inquiry process, and how can it be used to understand the concept of sustainability?

Task

Understanding sustainability allows you to analyze current issues through a sustainability framework. Below is a summary of the research you conducted to determine the factors that lead to more sustainable society. The research has been reworded to allow it to be compiled into a checklist.

Use the checklist and the article that follows to evaluate a current sustainability initiative.

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability

sustainability checklist

Environmental Sustainability needs: Planet

- Healthy and intact ecosystems
- Government policy that puts the environment first
- Educated citizens who put the environment first
- Responsible business that puts the environment first
- A forward-thinking, long-term vision

Economic Sustainability needs: Profit

- A healthy environment
- Partnership between government, industry and communities
- Sustainable communities with a high level of social capital to attract and retain strong businesses
- A wide variety of meaningful employment for people
- Responsible, efficient use of natural resources
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

Social Sustainability needs: People

- A healthy environment
- Communities with secure and high quality housing, education, health care, food systems to encourage people to invest and engage in the social fabric of their communities
- Communities with a high level of social capital that allows people to fully participate in the following activities:
 - Cultural—arts, heritage, active citizenship, embrace diversity
 - Political—good governance, democratic engagement, social development
 - Economic—employment, economic development, tourism, infrastructure, agriculture
 - Environmental—protection, conservation, experiences, governance
- A forward thinking, long-term vision

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability

Part 1: Issue analysis

Read the article titled ‘Every Canadian’s eco-rights need Charter protection.’

If our right to a healthy environment was added to Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which of the criteria from the ‘Sustainability Checklist’ would be met by this action?

1. Complete the Sustainability Checklist by checking each box that would apply if the government were to make a law to add environmental protection to our Charter. When completing the checklist, try to think about how business and society might function differently as a result.
2. Would making our right to a healthy environment a Charter Right be an activity that will improve sustainability in Canada? Explain, providing at least three reasons from the article to support your answer.

Part 2: A new model for sustainability

Use your learning over the last week to design a new model for sustainability. Remember, the current models (from the United Nations and the 3-sphere model) are not working effectively in their current states. How could you rework (or completely redesign) them to help address your new learning reflected in the Sustainability checklist? Feel free to change:

- The size and shape of all or some of the spheres
- The number of themes they address
- Which themes you think are important
- How the spheres interact with each other
- Anything else that occurs to you!

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability | Article

Every Canadian's eco-rights need Charter protection

DEVON PAGE AND PETER ROBINSON

Contributed to *The Globe and Mail*

Published Wednesday, Apr. 18 2012, 2:00 AM EDT

Every Canadian should have the right to clean air, water, food and land. In fact, most of us think we do.

We don't.

Canadians enjoy freedom of expression, equal protection from discrimination and the right to life, liberty and security under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This makes the Charter, which turns 30 this week, one of Canada's most powerful laws for protecting our human rights and collective quality of life. But the Constitution is silent on safeguarding our air, water and food, which are the very elements of our survival.

In an era of global warming and mass industrial pollution, this means Canadians' rights – which are supposed to be guaranteed by the Charter – are increasingly threatened without recognition of our right to a healthy environment.

Many nations are grappling with the challenge. Canada stands in stark contrast to more than 140 countries that have added environmental protections to their constitutions. Ninety of these, including Norway and France, now explicitly recognize the right to a healthy environment. The result? These nations rank higher than others on environmental performance, leave smaller ecological footprints and have reduced toxic emissions that impact the health of their citizens.

For example, a million Argentines living near the Riachuelo-Matanza, one of South America's most polluted rivers, now have access to clean drinking water after citizens used their right to a healthy environment to sue laggard governments and polluting industries. Some companies have shut down their operations; the government has committed to monitoring water, air and soil quality.

With our abundant wilderness and fresh water, it's easy for Canadians to assume that we all have access to the things we need to survive. But in 2000, seven people died in Walkerton, Ont., after drinking water tainted by E. coli. Twelve years later, the federal government has yet to develop national water standards that would ensure access to clean drinking water for all Canadians. That's a problem for first nations such as Attawapiskat – and hundreds of other small and rural communities where government advisories warn residents to boil their water before drinking it.

Last fall, the World Health Organization found that the people of Sarnia, Ont., breathe the most polluted air in Canada. Sarnia is home to Chemical Valley, a place where a petrochemical company spews toxic pollutants across the street from where children play basketball. It's also home to Ron Plain and Ada Lockridge. Ron and Ada are suing the Ontario government for failing to consider the effects on their health before approving more pollution in their community.

Recognizing every Canadian's right to a healthy environment in the Charter would do several things to help protect us from these kinds of problems, according to David Boyd, one of Canada's leading experts on environmental rights. It would oblige our governments to respect this right by creating and enforcing stronger environmental laws. A constitutional right that applies to all Canadians equally and is enforceable by the courts also holds decision-makers accountable at the highest level for protecting human health and the

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability | Article

environment. This new right would dovetail with other Charter rights that promote a democratic society by empowering citizens and civil society to participate in decisions that affect our shared resources.

Our country and its abundant natural resources are like a village well. Government, industry, individuals and communities all draw from it. If pollutants poison the well and make one of us sick, we're all at risk.

In 2001, the Supreme Court reached the same conclusion about the bond between health and the environment. After upholding a municipality's right to restrict the use of harmful pesticides in Hudson, Que., the court said, "Our common future, and that of every Canadian community, depends on a healthy environment."

Devon Page is executive director of Ecojustice. Peter Robinson is CEO of the David Suzuki Foundation.

U1L1A6 | The Inquiry Process: A New Model For Sustainability

Evaluation (for use in any Canadian and World Studies geography course)

Criteria	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
<p>Knowledge A1. Geographic Inquiry: use the geographic inquiry process and the concepts of geographic thinking when investigating issues relating to Canadian geography</p>	To a high degree	To a considerable degree	To a moderate degree	To a limited degree
<p>Did I complete the inquiry process on sustainability? Did my work demonstrate understanding of the 5 steps of this inquiry process? Does my model of sustainability reflect understanding of the factors that contribute to sustainability?</p>				
<p>Thinking A1. Geographic Inquiry: use the geographic inquiry process and the concepts of geographic thinking when investigating issues relating to Canadian geography</p>	To a high degree	To a considerable degree	To a moderate degree	To a limited degree
<p>Did I demonstrate thinking skills when applying the checklist to the issue of environmental protection in the Charter? Does my new model of sustainability reflect thinking on the topic of sustainability?</p>				
<p>Application A1. Geographic Inquiry: use the geographic inquiry process and the concepts of geographic thinking when investigating issues relating to Canadian geography</p>	To a high degree	To a considerable degree	To a moderate degree	To a limited degree
<p>Did I support my decision on the sustainability of enshrining rights to a healthy environment in the Charter with three relevant reasons using evidence from the checklist and the article?</p>				



sustainability unit one



ask

How does oil impact my everyday life?

acquire

- Chart paper and markers OR laptops for students to collaborate using Google docs
- Student & teacher handouts
- Powerpoint presentation
- Newspaper articles

explore

- KWL chart
- Interactive PowerPoint presentation
- Collaborative brainstorm

analyze

- Article analysis
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Subsidy comparison

act

- Reflective paragraph
- Public service announcement
- Position paper

U1L2 | Oil Addiction

This is an introductory lesson on the topic of energy sustainability with a focus on oil. Students will engage in a range of independent and group activities to critically analyze the impacts of oil addiction.

subjects: Geography, Business, Economics, English, Civics

timing: **Activity 1**

KWL chart | **10–15 minutes**

Activity 2

Oil and my everyday life | **30–40 minutes**

Note: follow up with Activity 5 or 6

Activity 3

Cost-benefit analysis | **40–45 minutes**

Note: follow up with Activity 7

Activity 4

Subsidy comparison | **30–40 minutes**

Activity 5

Reflective paragraph | **75 minutes**

Activity 6

Public service announcement | **150 minutes**

Activity 7

Position Paper | **150 minutes**

learning goals

- To begin reflecting and contemplating the large role that oil, a non-renewable resource, plays in maintaining our current standards of living.
- To understand the crucial role oil plays in daily life.
- To understand that oil production and consumption are complex issues with many stakeholders; some winners and some losers.
- To understand how two of the world's biggest oil producing countries use subsidies to influence domestic demand for oil.
- To understand that simple changes in our daily lives can lesson our dependence on oil and have a positive environmental impact.
- To investigate and discover alternative choices people can make in their daily lives to reduce their oil footprint.
- To understand the problematic and far-reaching impacts of oil production and consumption on people, profit and planet.
- To effectively support an informed viewpoint on an issue.

U1L2 | Oil Addiction

success criteria

- Complete KWL chart.
- Complete 'Oil and my everyday life' organizer and share answers with the class.
- Complete cost vs benefit organizer and justify concluding opinion as to whether Costs > Benefits or Costs < Benefits.
- Complete subsidy comparison.
- Complete paragraph planner and reflective paragraph.
- Complete public service announcement.
- Complete position paper.

ask

Inquiry Questions

- What do I need to know about oil addiction?
- Could we live without oil in our everyday lives?
- What are the costs to society, environment and economy of our addiction to oil?
- How do governments influence consumer behaviour through subsidies?
- How can you personally reduce your oil consumption?
- How can we convince people to reduce their oil foot print?
- Do the costs of oil consumption outweigh the benefits?

acquire

'Oil Addiction' PowerPoint presentation

Activity 1

KWL chart

Activity 2

'Oil and my everyday life' student worksheet

'Oil and my everyday life' teacher answer key (appended to lesson plan)

Activity 3

Cost-benefit analysis organizer

- Huffington Post article 'The True Cost of our Oil Addiction'

Activity 4

Subsidy comparison worksheet

- Guardian article 'Venezuela nears end of the road for gasoline subsidy'
- Guardian article 'Norway has fallen in love with electric cars—but the affair is coming to an end'

Activity 5

Reflective paragraph planner

Activity 6

Public service announcement worksheet

Activity 7

Position Paper worksheet

U1L2 | Oil Addiction

explore

Activity 1 | KWL chart

In this activity students will begin thinking about the issue of oil addiction. They will reflect on their current level of knowledge and generate questions to guide their learning. After participating in the lesson activities students will summarize what they learned.

This is a ‘minds on’ activity for the topic of oil. Students will independently complete the ‘What I know’ and ‘What I want to know’ columns of their KWL chart. After participating in the subsequent lesson activities, students will come back to this chart and summarize their learning in the ‘What I learned’ column.

Teacher presents interactive *Oil Addiction* ppt

Activity 2 | ‘Oil and my everyday life’ collaborative organizer

In this activity students will work in a small group (3–4 students) to complete the ‘Oil and my everyday life’ organizer. For each activity they must determine if petroleum is needed (circle ‘yes’ or ‘no’) and justify their choice. Some activities will be easy for students to decide on, while others may require deeper contemplation.

Students share answers with the class and teacher provides any necessary clarification.

Note: follow up with Activity 5 or 6

analyze

Activity 3 | Oil: Costs vs Benefits Analysis

In this activity students will work collaboratively to identify costs and benefits associated with production and consumption of oil. They will gain insight into the challenges presented by multifaceted global issues.

Students independently read Huffington Post article ‘The True Cost of our Oil Addiction’

- Form groups of 3–4 students
- Each group works collaboratively to identify costs and benefits associated with production and consumption
- Each group uses chart paper and markers (or laptops and Google docs) to complete a Cost vs. Benefit analysis

Costs of Oil	Benefits of Oil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

- Each group informally shares findings with the class
- Each group justifies their concluding opinion as to whether Costs > Benefits or Costs < Benefits

Note: follow up with Activity 7

U1L2 | Oil Addiction

Activity 4 | Subsidy Comparison

In this activity students will learn about government subsidies by investigating two cases. They will discern that although Venezuela and Norway are both top oil producing countries, they have taken considerably different approaches regarding domestic demand for oil.

- In pairs, each student reads a different article ('Venezuela nears end of the road for gasoline subsidy,' or 'Norway has fallen in love with electric cars—but the affair is coming to an end').
- Both articles illustrate how government's use subsidies to influence consumer demand
- If students do not have prior knowledge of subsidies, teacher should provide explanation
- Students reflect on the fact that although Venezuela and Norway are both top oil producing countries, they have taken considerably different approaches regarding domestic demand for oil
- Students take turns summarizing their articles to each other, explaining:
 - Which industry is being subsidized and why
 - Successes and/or failures of the subsidy
 - Make recommendations to their respective country's government to improve the situation
- Students can record answers using pen and paper or Google docs
- Conclusions can be shared informally with the class, or in written form with the teacher

act

Activity 5 | Reflective Paragraph

In this activity students will individually write a reflective paragraph on how they can reduce their oil consumption.

- Students individually write a reflective paragraph on how they can personally reduce their oil consumption. Each student selects three activities from the Oil and my everyday life worksheet and suggests ways to reduce their oil footprint. For example, walking or biking to school instead of driving, eating local instead of imported food, using a refillable water bottle instead of plastic etc...

Activity 6 | Public Service Announcement

In this activity students will work with a partner to design a public service announcement which encourages people to reduce their oil footprint. They will gain experience as an activist by advocating for change in their school community.

- Students work in pairs to design a public service announcement (PSA) encouraging others to adopt less oil dependent habits (i.e. reduce/reuse/recycle, shop locally, support wind/solar energy projects etc...).

Activity 7 | Position paper

In this activity students will decide if the costs of oil consumption outweigh the benefits, or if the benefits outweigh the costs. Upon deciding, they will write a position paper justifying their view.

- Students write a position paper justifying their cost vs benefit conclusion.

U1L2 | Oil Addiction

U1L2A2 | Oil and my everyday life collaborative organizer | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

overview

In this activity you will work in a small group (3–4 students) to complete the below organizer. For each activity you must determine if petroleum is needed (circle ‘yes’ or ‘no’) and justify your choice. Some activities will be easy for you to decide on, while others may require deeper contemplation.

learning goal

- To understand the crucial role oil plays in daily life.

success criteria

- Complete organizer and share answers with the class.

Inquiry Questions

- Could we live without oil in our everyday lives?

Do the below activities require oil? Write “Y” for yes or “N” for no and explain your choice.

*Petroleum products are produced from the processing of crude oil

Activity	Requires Petroleum Y/N	Explain
Driving	Y	Gasoline is the most commonly used product by Americans for their day to day transportation needs. 45% of all oil used in the U.S. goes to gasoline, which means Americans consume in excess of 180 million gallons of gasoline a day.
Drinking coffee, eating bananas (using imports)	Y	Bunker fuel, which is also known as heavy oil, is used to power ships. It typically contains a high number of pollutants and contaminants. Use is increasing with the shipping associated with global commerce.
Washing Dishes/Laundry	Y	All soapless detergents used to wash clothes and dishes are derived from the petrochemical glycerin.
Drinking bottled water	Y	All plastic is made from petrochemicals. Every product made from or containing plastic is a product that exists only through the distillation of petroleum.
Heating my house/apartment	Y	Heating oil is a petroleum product used to fuel furnaces or boilers. In the U.S., most heating oil is consumed in the northeast.

U1L2 | Oil Addiction

U1L2A2 | Oil and my everyday life collaborative organizer | **TEACHER ANSWER KEY**

Activity	Requires Petroleum Y/N	Explain
Walking/running	Y	Synthetic rubber, derived from petrochemicals, is used for car tires and rubber soles on shoes. Crude oil is the principal raw material
Garbage/ recycling collection	Y	Diesel fuel is made from refining crude oil. It is generally used in medium- and heavy-duty vehicles requiring a great deal of power, like garbage trucks, road equipment, buses, and trains.
Eating fruits/ vegetables	Y	All major commercial fertilizers are ammonia based, made from natural gas, and most commercial pesticides come from oil.
Getting dressed	Y	All synthetic fibres (i.e. polyester, nylon, and acrylic) are derived from petrochemicals. They are used for curtains, carpets, rope and even our everyday clothing.
Painting	Y	Plastic and oil based paints, as well as paint additives, are manufactured from petrochemicals.
Eating canned soup	Y	The shelf life of canned foods can be increased by food additives, derived from petrochemicals.
Putting on make-up	Y	Make-up's that contain oils, perfumes, waxes and color, are derived from petrochemicals.
Taking medicine	Y	Acetylsalicylic acid (ASA), the active ingredient in many pain reliever medicines, is manufactured from petrochemicals.
Burning a candle	Y	Wax is a raw petroleum product.

U1L2 | Oil Addiction

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U1L2A1 | KWL Chart—Oil

overview

In this activity you will begin thinking about the issue of oil addiction. You will reflect on your current level of knowledge and generate questions to guide your learning. After participating in the lesson activities you will summarize what you learned.

learning goal

- To begin reflecting and contemplating the large role that oil, a non-renewable resource, plays in maintaining our current standards of living.

success criteria

- Completion of K, W, and L columns.

Inquiry Questions

- What do I need to know about oil addiction?

The KWL chart is a “**pre-learning**” activity that:

- a** Identifies the things you may **already know** about the topic.
- b** Suggests **areas of interest** and investigation for you and your teacher.
- c** Helps you to **reflect on what you learned** at the end of a particular area of study.

U1L2A1 | KWL Chart—Oil

Instructions

Complete the first two columns and share these ideas with a partner and then the class. You should expand your list using the ideas of others in your class. At the end of the lesson, identify what you learned.

K what I know about the topic	W what I want to know about the topic	L what I learned about the topic

U1L2A2 | Oil and my everyday life collaborative organizer

overview

In this activity you will work in a small group (3–4 students) to complete the below organizer. For each activity you must determine if petroleum is needed (circle ‘yes’ or ‘no’) and justify your choice. Some activities will be easy for you to decide on, while others may require deeper contemplation.

learning goal

- To understand the crucial role oil plays in daily life.

success criteria

- Complete organizer and share answers with the class.

Inquiry Question

- Could we live without oil in our everyday lives?

Do the below activities require oil? Write “Y” for yes or “N” for no and explain your choice.

*Petroleum products are produced from the processing of crude oil

Activity	Requires Petroleum Y/N	Explain
Driving		
Drinking coffee, eating bananas (using imports)		
Washing Dishes/Laundry		
Drinking bottled water		
Heating my house/ apartment		

U1L2A2 | Oil and my everyday life

Activity	Requires Petroleum Y/N	Explain
Walking/running		
Garbage/ recycling collection		
Eating fruits/ vegetables		
Getting dressed		
Painting		
Eating canned soup		
Putting on make-up		
Taking medicine		
Burning a candle		

U1L2A3 | Cost-Benefit Analysis

overview

In this activity you will work collaboratively to identify costs and benefits associated with production and consumption of oil. You will gain insight into the challenges presented by multifaceted global issues.

learning goal

- To understand that oil production and consumption are complex issues with many stakeholders; some winners and some losers.

success criteria

- Complete organizer and informally share findings with the class—each group must justify their overall concluding opinion as to whether $\text{Costs} > \text{Benefits}$ or $\text{Costs} < \text{Benefits}$.

Inquiry Question

- What are the costs to society, environment and economy of our addiction to oil?

Read Huffington Post article ‘The True Cost of our Oil Addiction.’ Form a small group of 3–4 students and works collaboratively to identify costs and benefits associated with production and consumption. Record your answers in the below table.

Costs of Oil	Benefits of Oil

The True Cost of Our Oil Addiction

Richard Steiner (January 15, 2014)

The first step in recovering from any addiction is to tell the truth – admit the addiction, acknowledge its consequences. Yet this is something we still seem unwilling to do with our addiction to oil. Addicts would rather stay high than confront their addiction and commit to recovery.

The truth about oil is that while there are benefits – jobs, energy, government revenue – there are also enormous long-term risks, impacts, and costs. While government and industry extoll the benefits of oil, they remain unwilling to tell the truth about its costs.

Some costs are obvious. Oil spills, such as the 1989 Exxon Valdez in Alaska and the 2010 Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico, are easily recognizable disasters that attract widespread public condemnation. Twenty-five years after the Alaska spill, the coastal ecosystem is still not fully recovered, and toxic oil remains in shoreline sediments. Many oil-producing areas of the world, such as the Niger Delta, the Caspian, and Siberia, have suffered decades of oil spills.

But the true cost of oil goes far beyond the obvious damage from spills. More gradual, less visible costs of oil include ecological habitat degradation from exploration, production, and pipelines; health costs from breathing air polluted with fossil fuel emissions; urban sprawl and traffic congestion around all major cities of the world; and seemingly endless wars fought to secure oil supplies, like Iraq and Sudan, costing thousands of lives and trillions of dollars.

Climate change from carbon emissions is incurring enormous present and future costs – storm damage, drought, wildfires, lost agricultural productivity, infrastructure damage, climate refugees, disease, forest decline, marine ecosystem collapse, species extinctions, and lost ecosystem services. Global climate change costs already exceed \$1 trillion a year, and will continue to rise.

And wherever it is produced, there is a "socio-political toxicity" of oil, a significant distortion of economic, social, and political systems. Rather than the prosperity promised, oil discoveries around the world often become more curse than blessing, causing social dysfunction, assimilation of indigenous cultures, runaway inflation, a decline in traditional exports, overconsumption, abuse of power, overextended government spending, and unsustainable growth. Former Venezuelan oil minister Juan Pablo Perez Alfonzo, a founder of OPEC and once a true believer in the promise of oil, thought differently after he saw the corruption, greed, waste, and debt it caused, then calling oil "the devil's excrement."

World oil use continues to rise, last year hitting a historic high of 91 million barrels a day, and still climbing. To date, the world has pumped and burned about 1 trillion barrels of oil, and there may be another trillion barrels of recoverable "conventional" oil left, with several trillion barrels in unconventional reserves such as tar sands and oil shale, like the huge Green River Formation in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.

But if we want anything resembling a sustainable future, we'll have to leave most of this oil buried right where it is, as the global climate cannot handle this much additional carbon. The carbon-pushers see billions of dollars just waiting to be produced, and are anxious to get to it. As with any addiction, when the easy stuff is gone and supplies tighten, addicts become desperate and willing to take more risk to secure the next fix, such as drilling in the Arctic and deep ocean basin.

While president George W. Bush stunned the world in his 2006 State of Union speech, stating that: "we have a serious problem, America is addicted to oil," his administration did little to wean us from the addiction. And despite candidate Obama's promise to end "the tyranny of oil," and that, if elected, "the rise of the oceans will begin to slow," as president, Obama sounds more of an oil enthusiast, recently boasting: "We're opening up more than 75 percent of our potential oil resources offshore. We've quadrupled the number of operating rigs to a record high. We've added enough new oil and gas pipeline to encircle the Earth, and then some." He is poised to approve the contentious Keystone XL pipeline from the Alberta tar sands, what climate scientists say may be "game over" in efforts to stabilize climate. The tyranny of oil continues, and seas continue to rise.

Oil-producing governments the world over – including the U.S. and states of Alaska, Louisiana, Texas, and North Dakota – are 'captured' and controlled by oil interests that dictate policies to limit regulation, lower taxation, and to favor production and demand for oil over development of low-carbon alternatives. The 2010 Supreme Court Citizens United ruling now allows oil companies to pour unlimited funds into oil-friendly candidates and issues, without public disclosure. Media is awash in ads keeping us hooked on the stuff. U.S. oil production has steadily increased since 2008, largely from oil shale, prompting calls from some to lift the export ban. Clearly, the drug pushers are running the show.

The International Monetary Fund reports that governments encourage our fossil fuel addiction with annual subsidies of some \$1.9 trillion, including \$480 billion per year in direct subsidies. Such subsidies artificially depress prices and encourage overconsumption; detract from government spending on health care, education, and social services; and keep alternative energy "uncompetitive." A 1998 study estimated that for every gallon of gasoline we bought at the pump, we were actually paying as much as \$14 a gallon in additional "hidden" costs. Yet, we continue to ignore these hidden costs, paying for some indirectly through income taxes, and deferring most to future generations. We are tricking ourselves into using cheap and easy oil as fast as we can pump it out of the ground.

And perhaps the most pernicious cost of oil is that it has fueled an unprecedented degradation of the global biosphere. With access to artificially "cheap and easy" oil over the past century, human population has quadrupled and resource consumption has increased many times more, now significantly exceeding Earth's carrying capacity. Without access to fossil carbon, humanity would almost certainly have evolved on a more sustainable trajectory. But by not accounting for its true cost, oil has allowed us to dig ourselves deeper into an unsustainable hole. The environmental debt we are accruing is far larger and more consequential than our national financial debt.

It's high time we kicked the habit, with better regulation and full costing of carbon. The full "social cost of carbon" has been estimated by the federal government at \$50 - \$100 per ton of CO₂, and with global emissions now exceeding 39 billion tons per year, this amounts to \$2 trillion - \$4 trillion annually. When we account for these very real costs, sustainable alternatives become competitive, and we make more rational choices.

In the U.S., oil consumption has declined slightly in recent years, due in large part to the high price of oil, increased availability of natural gas, and government-mandated increases in vehicle fuel efficiency. Governments need to accelerate this trend by shifting fossil fuel subsidies to sustainable low-carbon alternatives, reducing emissions through regulation, and instituting a carbon tax to help capture the long-term cost of carbon.

Sooner or later, we will get to the far side of our troubled oil addiction, as we will run out of the stuff. But the sooner we get there, the better chance we have at a sustainable future. Then, like most recovering addicts, we will wonder why we didn't get clean sooner.

U1L2A4 | Subsidy Comparison

overview

In this activity you will learn about government subsidies by investigating two cases. You will discern that although Venezuela and Norway are both top oil producing countries, they have taken considerably different approaches regarding domestic demand for oil.

learning goal

- To understand how two of the world's biggest oil producing countries use subsidies to influence domestic demand for oil.

success criteria

- Complete below questions, share with your partner, share with the class.

Inquiry Question

- How do governments influence consumer behaviour through subsidies?

Working in pairs, each student selects one article to read ('Venezuela nears end of the road for gasoline subsidy,' OR 'Norway has fallen in love with electric cars—but the affair is coming to an end'). Read your chosen article and answer the below questions.

1. Which industry is being subsidized? Why?

U1L2A4 | Subsidy Comparison

2. What are the successes/failures of the subsidy?

Successes	Failures

3. What recommendations would you make to this country's government to improve the situation?

the guardian

Norway has fallen in love with electric cars – but the affair is coming to an end

John Vidal (January 29, 2014)

Norway's traffic jams are becoming the cleanest and quietest in the world due to a flood of drivers buying electric cars which now power around the country's cities on hydro-electricity, competing for free charging points.

For three months at the end of 2013, the luxury electric sports car the Tesla Model S and Nissan Leaf family electric car were the best-selling models among all cars sold in the country, beating popular and conventionally-fuelled cars including the VW Golf.

The latest figures suggest that over 21,000 all-electric vehicles (EVs) are now registered in the country of 5 million people with sales running at over 1,200 a month, or over 10% of all sales. That compares with a total of around 70,000 EVs registered in the US with a population of 313 m, and just 5,000 in the UK with a population of 63m. Dealers expect there to be more in Oslo than in Los Angeles and San Francisco combined within a year.

The Nordic rush for zero-emission vehicles, which have a range of just over 100 miles in the case of the Leaf, is less inspired by concern for the environment than for the chance of free commuting in the bus lane and generous incentives, says the industry.

Battery-powered cars in the world's fourth richest country are not just exempt from high rates of purchase tax, and VAT, but pay no road and ferry tolls or parking fees, cost less to insure and can be charged up for free electricity from thousands of points. Local government will also subsidise the installation of charging points in homes. Research suggests the subsidies could be worth nearly £5,000 a year per car.

"You can buy a Nissan leaf for 280,000 NOK (£26,500) which compares with 300,000 (£29,400) for a VW Golf. Over 10,000 km, it costs about 1,800 Nok (£176) to run, but the same for a petrol car would be 8,000 Nok (£784). On top of that I save 35Nok (£3.20) a day on tolls but some people are saving far more," says Snorre Sletvold, president of the Norwegian electric vehicle association.

"We needed a new family car. We got a Nissan Leaf because it was really cheap and we did not want to pollute the air", says Maren Esmark, ceo of Friends of the Earth Norway. "We felt we were supporting the technology but the reason why most Norwegians are buying them is because they have a lot of money and can afford two cars, and because they can use them in the bus lanes.

"At the start we got comments like 'do you really think you can save the environment with that car?' but now they are so common that they are not noticed."

By far the two most popular are the Sunderland-built Nissan Leaf which was Norway's third best-selling passenger car last year, selling over 3,500, and the more expensive Tesla Model S which was the country's best-selling car in September and December. Volkswagen and BMW are now rushing to introduce their versions of electric cars.

"A boatload of Nissan Leafs arrives in Norway each week and is sold almost immediately. It is astonishing. We did not expect this. Electric cars started as an Oslo phenomenon but they are now selling all over Norway. By the end of February we expect to be the first country in the world where 1 in 100 cars on the road are electric," said Sletvold.

U1L2A4 | Subsidy Comparison | Article 1

But, says the government, the Norwegian love affair with electric cars may end sooner than expected. Incentives will be withdrawn, or reconsidered, when 50,000 zero emission cars have been registered or come 2018, whichever is the earliest. At the current rate of sales, the 50,000 figure could be reached within 18 months.

Besides, the allure of quick commuting and free fuel is wearing thin as they become more popular and defeat the purpose for which people bought them. The vehicles are now so popular that they dominate the bus lanes into Oslo, making up to 75% of the vehicles allowed in them. In addition, it's getting harder and harder to find unoccupied public charging facilities.

the guardian

Venezuela nears end of the road for gasoline subsidy

Nick Miroff (January 27, 2014)

Gasoline is so dirt-cheap in Venezuela that the comparison undervalues dirt. Or, for that matter, almost any thing else Venezuelan drivers can think of. "It's cheaper than water," said one motorist, pointing out that bottled water costs far more than the 95-octane gasoline gushing into his Ford Explorer.

"Cheaper than air," said the driver of a Chevy Tahoe, after paying more to fill a tyre than the tank.

"The cheapest in the world," a third sport utility vehicle (SUV) owner boasted. "We could wash our hands with it."

And why not? Venezuela sits atop the world's largest oil reserves, and its government sets the price of premium gasoline at about 5 cents a gallon. Its real price – adjusted to the soaring street value of the US dollar – is half a penny per gallon.

Unlimited access to virtually free gasoline has become something of a Venezuelan birthright, and raising prices is considered the third rail of Venezuelan politics. Deadly riots broke out in 1989 at the possibility of a price hike. Not even Hugo Chávez, who died last March after 14 years in power, dared to mess with the pumps.

But with annual inflation topping 50% and the government burning through hard-currency reserves, Chávez's successor, Nicolas Maduro, appears to have no choice. The government is spending more than \$12bn a year to subsidise domestic gasoline sales, Venezuelan energy officials say. The projected price hike is likely to push gas closer to 17 cents a gallon, at unofficial exchange rates.

Global energy surveys rank Venezuela's proven oil reserves at nearly 300bn barrels – even bigger than Saudi Arabia's. Venezuela is the world's 13th-largest producer, and 40% of its shipments go to the US, despite more than a decade of strained relations.

Maduro said that he favours a gradual price increase and that Venezuelan drivers deserve continued access to cheap gas because of the country's hydrocarbon bounty. "But it has to be an advantage, not a disadvantage," he said. "What converts it into a disadvantage is when the tip you give is more than what it costs to fill the tank."

The near-freebie prices amount to an especially generous giveaway to Venezuelans fond of large SUVs and gas-guzzling jalopies from the 1970s and 80s. Cars are in short supply and extremely expensive because of Venezuela's currency controls, keeping once-grand American pleasure boats on the road long after they have disappeared elsewhere.

"I love this car," said Luis Fretas, owner of a baby-blue 1981 Chevy Malibu, insisting that it "gets great mileage".

Among the middle-class and well-to-do Venezuelans who widely despise the socialist government, there appears to be broad consensus that pump prices are an aberration. At a state-owned gas station in Caracas's upscale Las Mercedes neighbourhood, where the Texaco signs have long since been replaced by patriotic murals depicting oil derricks, tankers and national hero Simon Bolívar, no one would defend gas prices so low.

"Sure they should raise them," businessman Gilman Flores said after topping off his Toyota FJ Cruiser for less than the cost of a candy bar.

U1L2A4 | Subsidy Comparison | Article 2

"What Venezuela really needs to do is stop giving oil away to other countries like Cuba," Flores said, echoing criticism from members of Venezuela's opposition who argue that the country should cut off subsidised oil to Havana, and other leftist political allies, before jacking up pump prices at home.

An increase represents a risk for Maduro, who was narrowly elected last April and hasn't been able to lower spiralling inflation and end shortages of staples such as milk, flour and sugar. Because there are no federal or local elections scheduled this year, analysts say, the timing is right for Maduro to make politically unpopular moves.

"He's up against the wall," said Pedro Mario Burelli, a former board member of Venezuela's national oil company, PDVSA, noting that the country is paying more and more to import components needed to make gasoline, making the subsidies "increasingly painful" for the government.

Burelli, a private consultant based in the US, helped implement the last price increase in Venezuela, in 1996. That time, there was little controversy. "No one even remembers it," he said. "All we did was plan transitional prices on public transportation."

Many drivers say gas prices are so low that even a large hike wouldn't register in their wallets. They know that their cheap gas fosters pollution, traffic, contraband fuel smuggling across the Colombian border, and a wider culture of waste and inefficiency. Far more worrisome is the eroding public safety and sky-high murder rate in this country of about 30 million.

Maria Osorio, the owner of a fuel-efficient hatchback, said that the extra mileage is nice but that she has another reason for preferring a modest car. "I have an SUV at home, but I'm too afraid to take it out because I might get carjacked," she said, explaining that she has been robbed at gunpoint five times in the past two years.

Still, steeper prices could fall more heavily on Venezuela's poor if increased transportation costs for food are passed along to consumers. The government says it won't raise public transportation prices, but many Venezuelans get to work on private buses that would probably raise fares.

It was bus fare increases that sparked the rioting of 1989 known as the "Caracazo". Hundreds were killed, and the bloody episode helped launch the political career of Chávez, then a young paratrooper, who would cite the episode as an inspiration for his attempted coup three years later. The attempt failed, but Chávez won the presidency in 1998 and kept gas prices frozen. Gas stations don't even bother displaying them.

"A Priu?" said one gas station employee, asked whether he'd ever seen a hybrid Toyota Prius. "Never heard of it."

Almost-free gasoline is just one element of the "magical" state engendered by Venezuela's oil-warped economy, said historian José Bifano of Venezuela's Central University. "Chávez was very clear about the political costs of raising gas prices," he said. "Now Maduro is willing to take the risk, and the big question is how people will react."

That will depend, said cabbie Jhonny Lozano, on how fast and how much the price goes up. "I think people know gas is too cheap," he said, while cautioning that a price increase to 17 cents a gallon would be "too much".

The taxi sign on his battered brown 1983 Chevy Celebrity was held to the roof by a bungee cord. Lozano said he had no interest in trading the car for something more fuel-efficient. "I have four kids," he said, pointing to the Chevy's roomy back seat, "and they all fit in there."

U1L2A5 | Reflective Paragraph

overview

In this activity you will individually write a reflective paragraph on how you can personally reduce your oil consumption.

learning goal

- To understand that simple changes in our daily lives can lesson our dependence on oil and have a positive environmental impact.

success criteria

- Completion of paragraph planner and reflective paragraph.

Inquiry Question

- How do governments influence consumer behaviour through subsidies?

Your task is to individually write a reflective paragraph on how you can personally reduce your oil consumption. Select three activities from the *Oil and my everyday life* worksheet and suggests ways to reduce your oil footprint.

Plan your paragraph (point form is fine). Final copy to be handed in should be typed.

Activity 1	How can I reduce my oil footprint?
Activity 2	How can I reduce my oil footprint?
Activity 3	How can I reduce my oil footprint?

U1L2A6 | Public Service Announcement

overview

In this activity you will work with a partner to design a public service announcement which encourages people to reduce their oil footprint. You will gain experience as an activist by advocating for change in your school community.

learning goal

- To investigate and discover alternative choices people can make in their daily lives to reduce their oil footprint.

success criteria

- Completion of public service announcement.

Inquiry Question

- How can we convince people to reduce their oil foot print?

What is a PSA?

A PSA is a short video, radio announcement, or print campaign created by a non-profit organization to persuade an audience to take positive action for an issue.

What are you trying to do?

- Grab your audience's attention
- Send a specific, clear, and simple message
- Change their behavior

Task

Work with a partner to design a public service announcement (PSA) encouraging others to adopt less oil dependent habits (i.e. reduce/reuse/recycle, shop locally, support wind/solar energy projects etc...).

U1L2A7 | Position Paper

overview

In this activity you will decide if the costs of oil consumption outweigh the benefits, or if the benefits outweigh the costs. Upon deciding, you will write a position paper justifying your view.

learning goal

- To understand the problematic and far-reaching impacts of oil production and consumption on people, profit and planet.
- To effectively support an informed viewpoint on an issue.

success criteria

- Completion of position paper.

Inquiry Question

- Do the costs of oil consumption outweigh the benefits?

Writing a position paper

A position paper presents one side of an arguable opinion about an issue. The goal of a position paper is to convince the audience that your opinion is valid and defensible.

Requirements

- Clearly state your thesis.
- Ensure that your position is supported by a minimum of three strong arguments (use your cost-benefit group activity notes).
- Support your arguments; without reliable sources your arguments will be weak. Include a minimum of three academic sources. In-text citations and full APA bibliography required.
- Submit to turnitin.com (approximate length: 750 words)

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Oil Addiction

Who has it?
Who wants it?
Why should YOU care?



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Which countries have the largest oil reserves?

One minute brainstorm:
Make your best 'guestimation' of the world's top five oil rich countries.

Check out this world map:
click on the 'Reserves & Capacity' tab:
<http://www.eia.gov/countries/index.cfm?view>

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2014)

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World's Biggest Proved Reserves

Country	2014 Proved Reserves (billions of barrels)
Saudi Arabia, Venezuela	200+
Canada, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait	100 - 200
UAE, Russia	50 - 100
Libya, Nigeria, Kazakhstan, United States, Qatar	25 - 50
China, Algeria, Brazil, Mexico	10 - 25

How many did you guess?

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2014)

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Which countries produce the most oil?

One minute brainstorm:
Make your best 'guestimation' of the world's top five oil producing countries.

Check out this world map, click on the 'Production' tab:
<http://www.eia.gov/countries/index.cfm?view>

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2012)

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World's Biggest Oil Producers

Country	2014 Oil Production (millions of barrels per day)
1. Russia, Saudi Arabia, USA	10+
2. China	4 - 7
3. Brazil, Canada, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Mexico, Nigeria, Qatar, UAE, Venezuela	2 - 4
4. Algeria, Angola, Kazakhstan, Libya, Norway, UK	1 - 2

How many did you guess?

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2014)

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Which countries consume the most oil?

One minute brainstorm:
Make your best 'guestimation' of the world's top five oil consuming countries.

Check out this world map, click on the 'Consumption' tab:
<http://www.eia.gov/countries/index.cfm?view>

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2014)

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World's Biggest Oil Consumers

Country	2014 Oil Consumption (millions of barrels per day)
1. USA	10+
2. N/A	7 - 10
3. Japan	4 - 7
4. Canada, Germany, South Korea, Mexico	2 - 4
5. Australia, France, Italy, Spain, UK	1 - 2

How many did you guess?

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2014)

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Since country populations vary greatly, it is useful to look at per capita oil consumption.

Many statistics are expressed per capita, which means you divide the total by the country's population:

$$\frac{\text{Country's total oil consumption}}{\text{Population of that country}}$$

Per capita oil consumption gives us an idea of approximately how much the average person consumes.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2012)

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Make your best guesstimation
Rank the following countries from highest (1) to lowest (10) per capita oil consumption:

1. China	6. Venezuela
2. USA	7. Norway
3. Canada	8. Japan
4. Australia	9. Germany
5. UK	10. New Zealand

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2012)

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Country	Oil consumption per capita (barrels/day per 1,000 people)
1. Canada	64
2. USA	61
3. Norway	47
4. Australia	44
5. Japan	35
6. New Zealand	35
7. Germany	31
8. Venezuela	27
9. UK	26
10. China	7

How many people got 10 out of 10 correct?

Source: Index Mundi (2012) <http://www.indexmundi.com/map/?v=91000>

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Which activity consumes the most oil?

- Driving
- Putting on make-up
- Eating fruits/vegetables
- Heating houses

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If you said **driving** you're correct!

Transportation currently accounts for 23% of the world's greenhouse-gas emissions.

As of 2011 there were over 1 billion cars worldwide!

It's predicted that there will be 2.5 billion cars worldwide by 2050.

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Make your best guestimation
Rank the following countries from highest (1)
to lowest (5) gas price:

1. Japan
2. USA
3. Canada
4. Norway
5. China
6. UK
7. Saudi Arabia
8. Venezuela
9. Mexico
10. New Zealand


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Country	Gas price (litre, U.S. dollar) March 2015
1. Venezuela	\$0.02
2. Saudi Arabia	\$0.16
3. USA	\$0.70
4. Canada	\$0.93
5. Mexico	\$0.95
6. China	\$1.05
7. Japan	\$1.14
8. New Zealand	\$1.53
9. UK	\$1.68
10. Norway	\$1.94

How many people got 10 out of 10 correct?


Source: Global Petrol Prices <http://www.globalpetrolprices.com> (March 2015)

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Compare gas prices (per gallon) around the world using this interactive map:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/world/gasoline-prices/>

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Think/Pair/Share

What is the relationship between gas prices and driving?

How does this relationship affect peoples' lifestyles? Health?

How does this relationship affect the environment?

How does this relationship affect urban planning?

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the sustainable society **Venezuela**




Source: Financial Times <http://blogs.ft.com>

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the sustainable society **Venezuela**



Source: Ariana Cubillos <http://news.yahoo.com>

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the sustainable society Norway



Source: <http://www.m2mnow.biz> Source: <http://vadebike.org>

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the sustainable society Norway




Source: Financial Times <http://blogs.ft.com>

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Why should YOU care?
Oil is a non-renewable resource.
Eventually the world will run out of oil.
What will your life look like 'after oil?'
How will the world be different 'after oil?'

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sustainability unit one



ask

What is progress?

acquire

- student handouts
- articles
- online websites/internet access
- Powerpoint

explore

- What is progress?
- OECD regional well-being
- Neoliberalism versus progressive economics

analyze

- article analysis
- millennium development goals

act

- write a letter to a politician

U1L3 | Politics and Progress

This lesson will help students to discover the meaning of progress and examine well-being in various countries around the world, including Canada, Venezuela, and Norway. Students will compare and contrast the Neo-liberal view to that of Progressive Economics and compare these ideologies to the Scandinavian Model and the Bolivarian Model. Finally, students will create a model of progress for Canada and share this model with a government official in the form of a letter.

subjects: Geography, Economics, Mathematics, Civics

timing: **Activity 1**

What is Progress? | **45–60 minutes**

Activity 2

Examining differing philosophies for the creation of progress—
Progressive Economics versus Neo-liberalism. | **75 minutes**

Activity 3

Comparing progress in different countries | **75 minutes**

Activity 4

Writing a political letter | **45 minutes of homework**

learning goal

- To understand the neo-liberal and progressive mindsets and their impact on the progress of society.
- To gain a better understanding of how progress/well-being is measure and how the well-being in your region compares to other places around the world.
- To develop a personal opinion of what progress is and how it should be measured.
- To share a personal opinion with a political official.

success criteria

- Students will be able to create a model of progress for Canada and share this model with a government official in the form of a letter.

ask

- What is progress?
- How is progress measured?
- What is the difference between Neo-liberalism and Progressive Economics?
- Which policy (Neo-liberalism or Progressive Economics) can be seen in Norway, Venezuela and Canada?
- Which policy (Neo-liberalism or Progressive Economics) is more likely to promote the factors of well-being that you value most in society?

U1L3 | Politics and Progress

acquire

Activity 1

“Politics and Progress” PowerPoint

Handout 1 “What is Progress?”

Internet access for Websites:

- OECD Regional Well Being: <http://www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org/index.html>
- If it were my home: ifitweremyhome.com

Activity 2

“Politics and Progress” PowerPoint

Handout 2 “Prompts to Record your Thinking?”

Video: Nordic Model versus the Bolivarian Alliance

Articles:

- Neoliberalism: <http://www.globalissues.org/article/39/a-primer-on-neoliberalism>
- Progressive Economics: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/131793272/Progressive-Thinking>
- After I Lived in Norway, America Felt Backward. Here’s Why. A crash course in social democracy: <http://www.thenation.com/article/after-i-lived-in-norway-america-felt-backward-heres-why/>

Activity 3

“Politics and Progress” PowerPoint

Handout 3 “Comparing Progress in differing countries”

Internet access for Websites:

- Millennium Development Goals: <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Data.aspx>
- TED Talk Bjorn Lomborg
<http://blog.ted.com/2013/10/02/have-we-made-any-progress-since-2005-bjorn-lomborg-updates-his-classic-ted-talk-in-a-new-talk-at-ted-hq/>

Articles:

- Census Figures Show Reduction in Poverty in Venezuela over Last Decade
<http://venezuelanalysis.com/news/7644>
- Stephen Harper’s address to the UN
http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/09/25/read_stephen_harpers_address_to_the_un_general_assembly.html
- Making Real Change Happen, Speech from the Throne to Open the First Session of the Forty-second Parliament of Canada
<http://speech.gc.ca/en/content/making-real-change-happen>

Activity 4

“Politics and Progress” PowerPoint

Handouts:

- Writing a political letter
- How to write a political letter
- Rubric: Evaluation of a letter to a government official

U1L3 | Politics and Progress

explore

Please Note: The PowerPoint designed for this lesson is used in each of the four activities. If you are not using all of the activities, please refer only to the slides that relate to your activity.

Activity 1 | What is progress?

This lesson will help students to discover the meaning of progress and examine well-being as measured by the OECD in various countries around the world, including Canada, Venezuela, and Norway.

Step one: Define progress

1. Ask the class to define in their own words “progress.”
2. Discuss the formal or official definition:
 - A forward or onward movement (as to an objective or to a goal).
 - The gradual betterment; especially the progressive development of humankind.Source: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/progress>
3. Ask the class...
“How does this definition relate to current society?”

Step Two: Brainstorming Group Task

In groups of 2–3 brainstorm:

1. What are the factors by which you measure your own progress?
2. What are the factors of measuring progress in society today?
3. Who determines what those factors are?
4. How does the measurement of progress relate to how you evaluate your daily life?
Try to explain any similarities and/or differences.

Step Three: Examine OECD Regional Well-being

1. Explain to the class what the OECD Regional Well-Being Site is. You may read the description below taken from the “OECD Regional Well Being: A users’ guide” available at: <http://www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org/assets/downloads/Regional-Well-Being-User-Guide.pdf>

Where people live matters for their well-being. Quality of life is shaped by a multitude of material and non-material dimensions, ranging from income and jobs to health and environment, among others. Outcomes in each dimension vary greatly not only from one country to another, but also within countries. The mix between different well-being dimensions is unique to each community where people live, study, work and connect. Improving people’s lives requires making where they live a better place.

Understanding people’s level of well-being and its determinants is crucial to gear public policies towards better achieving society’s objectives. As many of the policies that bear most directly on people’s lives are local or regional, more fine-grained measures of well-being will help policy-makers to enhance the design and targeting of policies. They can also empower citizens to demand place-based policy actions that respond to their specific expectations and, in turn, to restore people’s trust.

The OECD publication *How’s life in your region?* builds on the Better Life Initiative, that measures well-being at national level, as well as on the work carried out on regional inequalities through *Regions at a Glance*. *How’s Life in your region?* provides:

- a conceptual framework for measuring well-being in regions and cities;
- a common set of internationally comparable indicators of well-being and a critical assessment of the statistical agenda ahead;
- guidance to policy-makers at all levels on the use of well-being metrics for improving policy results.

U1L3 | Politics and Progress

2. Have students visit the website <http://www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org/index.html> using a school computer lab, personal devices, or at home.
3. Ask students to check out what well-being is like where you live.
4. What parts of the world does your well-being compare to?
5. What are some of the similarities the two regions share?
6. What are some of the differences?
7. Were you surprised by any of the regions that related to your home? Why or why not?

Activity 2 | Examining differing philosophies for the creation of progress— Progressive Economics versus Neo-liberalism.

Students will compare and contrast the Neo-liberal view to that of Progressive Economics. This will then be compared to the Scandinavian Model and the Bolivarian Model.

1. Have the class prepare for the discussion by reading the following articles on Neoliberalism and Progressive Economics. For each article they should answer one question from 2–3 of the categories given on the handout “How do I record my thinking?” Tell the class to be prepared to discuss your interpretations and thoughts with the class. Students will use the links below to investigate these two viewpoints.

Neoliberalism

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/39/a-primer-on-neoliberalism>

Progressive Economics

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/131793272/Progressive-Thinking>

2. Have a quick class take up of the articles discussing 5–8 discussion prompts chosen by the class.
3. Give an overview of the History of Progressive Economics and Neo-liberalism.
4. Discuss with the class:
 - Which of these two philosophies contains the areas that you felt needed to be considered when measuring progress?
 - How would each of these two philosophies measure the progress of Canada, Norway and Venezuela?
 - Watch the video clips Comparing the Norwegian Model to the Bolivarian Alliance (Knot Thonstad LO, Jon Erik Dølvik - FAFO, ALBA/Inter-America Development Bank)
 - Read the Article 3 “After I lived in Norway, America felt backward. Here’s Why”

Ask students to explain:

1. Which philosophy do you see driving the progress of Norway? Venezuela?
2. How are the two philosophies similar and different?
3. How has this philosophy benefitted and/or hindered the society of each country?
4. How do the models proposed compare to Canada?
5. Are there any ideas that you feel have merit for progressing Canadian society? Any ideas that would hinder Canadian progress?

analyze

Activity 3 | Comparing progress in Different Countries

Students will compare the progress and how it compares in countries that have different viewpoints on how to obtain progress (neo-liberalism versus progressive economics).

Step 1: Article Analysis

Read the article provided:

Poverty versus Progress: Comparing the US and Venezuela

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/poverty-versus-progress-comparing-the-us-and-venezuela/5321055>

U1L3 | Politics and Progress

1. Which mindset do these two regions employ?
2. What are the social effects?

Read the article provided:

Census Figures Show Reduction in Poverty in Venezuela over Last Decade

<http://venezuelanalysis.com/news/7644>

1. How has Venezuela's approach to measuring progress affected their society?
2. Which model do Canada and Norway follow?
3. What are the implications of this on their society?

Step 2: A closer look at Canada

What about Canada?

Read Stephen Harper's address to the UN.

http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/09/25/read_stephen_harpers_address_to_the_un_general_assembly.html

and The 2015 Speech From the Throne <http://speech.gc.ca/en/content/making-real-change-happen>

1. How has the philosophy of the Canadian government changed?
2. How may these differing beliefs affect progress in Canada?
3. How well do you feel Canada is achieving the goals that are outlined in PM Harpers' address?

Step 3: Millenium Development Goals

Millennium Development Goals (UN)

Define MDGs with the class. Have students examine the data:

1. Divide the class into 8 equal groups and assign each group one of the millennium goals to examine.
2. Use the website below and examine the progress of Canada, Norway and Venezuela for your assigned goal.
<http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Data.aspx>
3. Make three conclusions about the data you observed.
4. What questions did this data raise in your mind?
5. Share your findings with the class.
6. Respond to the findings of the other groups by comparing their findings to those of your group and answering the following reflective questions:
"Describe the life of a child growing up in Canada in comparison to one of the other two countries. Consider the factors that might influence your behaviour and experiences. Include your feelings, beliefs and assumptions as well as any factual information you have been given."

Step 4: Final Food for Thought

Have the class watch a TED Talk by Bjorn Lomborg

<http://blog.ted.com/2013/10/02/have-we-made-any-progress-since-2005-bjorn-lomborg-updates-his-classic-ted-talk-in-a-new-talk-at-ted-hq/>

Questions for discussion:

- Has the world made any progress?
- What would you spend the money on and why?
- Why are these choices hard to make?

U1L3 | Politics and Progress

act

Activity 4 | Writing a Political Letter

Students will create a model of progress for Canada and share this model with a government official in the form of a letter.

Given what you have learned about measuring progress answer the following question in a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada:

Economic progress is one way to measure the progress of a country. Some people think there are other factors. How should Canada be measuring the progress of our nation? What other factors should be considered?

In your letter you may support the ideology of the current government or you may oppose it. You should also explain a minimum of three criteria you feel are the best indicators of progress.

Note: A good follow up to this lesson is the GIS lab found at the end of the curriculum document.

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the sustainable society

What is progress?

- a forward or onward movement (as to an objective or to a goal)
- The gradual betterment; especially the progressive development of humankind
- How does this definition relate to society?

Source: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/progress>

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the sustainable society

Your task

- In groups of 2-3 brainstorm:
 1. What are the means by which you measure your own progress?
 2. What are the means of measuring progress in society today?
 3. Who determines what those means are?
 4. How does the measurement of progress relate to how you evaluate your daily life? Try to explain any similarities and/or differences.

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the sustainable society

OECD Regional Well-being

- Where you live has an impact on your quality of life, and in return, you contribute to making your community a better place. Comparable measures of regional well-being offer a new way to gauge what policies work and can empower a community to act to achieve higher well-being for its citizens.

Source: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/progress>

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OSST/FEEBC

the sustainable society

OECD Regional Well-being

What's measured

- In this initiative, each region is measured using nine factors – income, jobs, health, access to services, environment, education, safety, civic engagement and housing. A score has been calculated for each factor so that you can compare places and factors within and across countries.
- Check out what well-being is like where you live...
 - What parts of the world does your well-being compare to?
 - What are some of the similarities the two regions share?
- <http://www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org/index.html>

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the sustainable society

Examining differing philosophies for the creation of progress

- Progressive Economics versus Neo-liberalism.
- Use the links provided to investigate these two viewpoints.
- Neoliberalism: <http://www.globalissues.org/article/39/a-primer-on-neoliberalism>
- Progressive Economics: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/131793272/Progressive-Thinking>
- Be prepared to discuss your interpretations and thoughts with the class.

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Summary

- How would you define:
 - Progressive economics
 - Neo-liberal Economics


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Watch the video clips Comparing the Norwegian Model to the Bolivarian Alliance

(Knut Thonstad LO, Jon Erik DeMik - FAFO, Ruben Pereira Durante - ALBA/Inter-America Development Bank)

- Which philosophy do you see driving the progress of Norway? Venezuela?
- How are the two philosophies similar and different?
- How has this philosophy benefitted and/or hindered the society of each country?

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History of Progressive Economics

- Economic liberalism prevailed in the United States through the 1800s and early 1900s.
- Great Depression of the 1930s led an economist named John Maynard Keynes to a theory that challenged liberalism as the best policy for capitalists. He said, in essence, that full employment is necessary for capitalism to grow and it can be achieved only if governments and central banks intervene to increase employment.
- President Roosevelt's New Deal was created, which did improve life for many people.
- The belief that government should advance the common good became widely accepted. (progressive economics)


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History of Progressive Economics

- After the great depression, many economists began to influence governments to spend more money to ensure that unemployment remained low.
- From the 1940s to 1980s, many developed governments adopted a policy of social and economic change by creating infrastructure jobs, which allowed for the expansion and development of their respective countries.
- Taxation was used to pay for social services and to support the poor.
- Many European countries adopted a "cradle to grave" welfare state.


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Issues created by Progressive Economics


- High Government spending
- High levels of National Debt
- High taxation
- High levels of government involvement in the economy


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History of Neo-liberal Economics


- As summarized from What is "Neo-Liberalism"? A brief definition for activists by Elizabeth Martinez and Arnoldo Garcia from Corporate Watch
- Neo-liberal Economics is a set of economic policies that became prevalent over the last 25 years or so.
- "Neo" means new. What was the old liberalism?
- Adam Smith, an Scottish economist, published a book in 1776 called THE WEALTH OF NATIONS.


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History of Neo-liberal Economics


- He believed in:
 - the abolition of government intervention in economic matters.
 - no restrictions on manufacturing
 - no barriers to commerce
 - no tariffs
 - free trade as the best way for a nation's economy to develop.
- These ideas were "liberal" as there were no controls and encouraged "free" enterprise, "free" competition.
- Neo-liberalism serves as the foundation for financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.

a common threads resource 



History of Neo-liberal Economics

- In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher (UK) and Ronald Regan (USA) were both opposed the high levels of debt that resulted from decades of progressive economics.
- They proposed less government involvement, freer market economies, less spending and lower taxation.
- These policies are called "neo-liberal" even though most governments who embrace them are conservative in nature.


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History of Neo-liberal Economics


- Neo-liberal governments have:
 - Sold public utilities and highways to private companies
 - Undercut health care
 - Reduced environmental funding
 - Cut social programs
 - Funded private schools
 - Opted out of social housing


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History of Neo-liberal Economics


- The most significant impact is economic globalization (defined as the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets by www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/globalization).
- These policies resulted in the elimination of many trade barriers and the opening up of the world market for free trade.

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The main points of neo-liberalism include:

- 1. THE RULE OF THE MARKET**
 - Liberating "free" enterprise or private enterprise from any bonds imposed by the government (the state) no matter how much social damage this causes.
 - Greater openness to international trade and investment, as in NAFTA.
 - Reduce wages by de-unionizing workers and eliminating workers' rights.
 - No more price controls.

a common threads resource 



The main points of neo-liberalism include:

- All in all, total freedom of movement for capital, goods and services.
- Belief that "an unregulated market is the best way to increase economic growth, which will ultimately benefit everyone."
- Idea of "trickle-down" economics.

- 2. CUTTING PUBLIC EXPENDITURE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES**
 - like education, health care, the social safety net (welfare, unemployment, housing etc.), maintenance of roads, bridges, water supply all in the name of reducing government's role
 - don't oppose government subsidies and tax benefits for business.

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The main points of neo-liberalism include:

- DEREGULATION**
 - Reduce government regulation of everything that could diminish profits, including protecting the environment and safety on the job.
- PRIVATIZATION**
 - Sell state-owned enterprises, goods and services to private investors. This includes banks, key industries, railroads, toll highways, electricity, schools, hospitals and even fresh water.
 - Usually done in the name of greater efficiency, which is often needed.

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The main points of neo-liberalism include:

- ELIMINATING THE CONCEPT OF "THE PUBLIC GOOD" or "COMMUNITY"**
 - Replaced it with "individual responsibility."
 - Pressuring the people in a society to find solutions to their lack of health care, education and social security all by themselves.

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Issues created by Neo-Liberalism


- Globalizations effect on the developing world
- Homelessness becoming an issue
- Environmental degradation
- Terrorism
- Widening of the poverty gap
- Inability to withstand poor economic times

As summarized from What is "Neo-liberalism"? A brief definition for activists by Elizabeth Martínez and Arnoldo García from Corporate Watch

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Your thoughts...

- Which of these two philosophies contains the areas that you felt needed to be considered when measuring progress?
- How would each of these two philosophies measure the progress of Canada, Norway and Venezuela?

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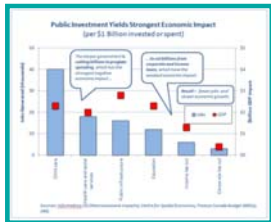
Applying your knowledge:


- Read the article provided:**
Poverty versus Progress: Comparing the US and Venezuela
 - Which mindset do these regions employ?
 - What are the social effects?
- Read the article provided:**
Census Figures Show Reduction in Poverty in Venezuela over Last Decade
 - How has Venezuela's approach to measuring progress affected their society?
 - Which model do Canada and Norway follow?
 - What are the implications of this on their society?

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What about Canada?

- Read Stephen Harper's address to the UN and also examine the chart on the right.**
- How well do you feel Canada is achieving the goals that are outlined in PM Harper's address?
- How has the philosophy of the current Canadian government affected progress?



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Millenium Development Goals (UN)

- In September of 2000, the Millennium Summit (the largest gathering of world leaders in history) adopted the UN Millennium Declaration
- This declaration committed their nations to a global partnership that hoped to reduce extreme poverty by creating a series of time-bound targets, with a deadline of 2015.
- These targets became the Millennium Development Goals.

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Millennium Development Goals (UN)

- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) address extreme poverty by examining-income poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter, and exclusion-while promoting gender equality, education, and environmental sustainability.
- They include basic human rights-the rights of each person on the planet to health, education, shelter, and security.

a common threads resource 



Examining the data

How much success has been seen in the MDG's?

- Divide the class into 8 equal groups and assign each group one of the millennium goals to examine.
- Use the website below and examine the progress of Canada, Norway and Venezuela for your assigned goal.
<http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Data.aspx>

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Examining the data

How much success has been seen in the MDG's?

- Make three conclusions about the data you observed.
- What questions did this date raise in your mind?
- Respond to the findings of the other groups by comparing their findings to those of your group and answering the following reflective questions:

"Describe the life of a child growing up in Canada in comparison to one of the other two countries. Consider the factors that might influence your behaviour and experiences. Include your feelings, beliefs and assumptions as well as any factual information you have been given."


a common threads resource 




Final Food for Thought

Has the world made any progress?

- TED Talk Bjorn Lomborg
<http://blog.ted.com/2013/10/02/have-we-made-any-progress-since-2005-bjorn-lomborg-updates-his-classic-ted-talk-in-a-new-talk-at-ted-hq/>
- Has the world made any progress?
- What would you spend the money on and why?
- Why are these choices hard to make?

a common threads resource 




Take Action

Given what you have learned about measuring progress answer the following question in a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada:

Economic progress is one way to measure the progress of a country. Some people think there are other factors. How should Canada be measuring the progress of our nation? What other factors should be considered?

In your letter you may support the ideology of the current government or you may oppose it.
You should also explain a minimum of three criteria you feel are the best indicators of progress.

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U1L3A1 | What is progress?

overview

This lesson will help students to discover the meaning of progress and examine well-being as measured by the OECD in various countries around the world, including Canada, Venezuela, and Norway.

learning goal

- To gain a better understanding of how progress/well-being is measure and how the well-being in your region compares to other places around the world.
- To develop a personal opinion of what progress is and how it should be measured.

success criteria

- Students will create a personal definition for progress and use it in a comparison of progress in Canada to other regions is the OECD.

Inquiry Questions

- What is progress?
- How is progress measured?

Step 1: Individual task with class take-up

1. In your own words give a definition for the word “progress.”

2. How does your definition compare to the “formal” definition given by your teacher?

U1L3A1 | What is progress?

3. How does this definition relate to current society?"

Step 2: Brainstorming Group Task

In groups of 2-3 brainstorm:

1. What are the factors by which you measure your own progress?

2. What are the factors of measuring progress in society today?

3. Who determines what those factors are?

U1L3A2 | Examining differing philosophies for the creation of progress
—Progressive Economics versus Neo-liberalism

overview

In this activity, you will compare and contrast the Neo-liberal view to that of Progressive Economics. This will then be compared to the Scandinavian Model and the Bolivarian Model.

learning goal

- To understand the neo-liberal and progressive mindsets and their impact on the progress of society.

success criteria

- Students will create a personal opinion on neo-liberalism and progressive economics in order to determine which is the best model for Canada.

Inquiry Question

- What is the difference between Neo-liberalism and Progressive Economics?

Steps

1. Prepare for a class discussion by reading the following articles on Neoliberalism and Progressive Economics. For each article answer one question from 2–3 of the categories given on the handout “How do I record my thinking?” Be prepared to discuss your interpretations and thoughts with the class. Use the links below to investigate these two viewpoints.

Neoliberalism

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/39/a-primer-on-neoliberalism>

Progressive Economics

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/131793272/Progressive-Thinking>

2. Discussion Questions:
 - Which of these two philosophies contains the areas that you felt needed to be considered when measuring progress?
 - How would each of these two philosophies measure the progress of Canada, Norway and Venezuela?
3. Watch the video clips Comparing the Norwegian Model to the Bolivarian Alliance (Knot Thonstad LO, Jon Erik Dølvik - FAFO, ALBA/Inter-America Development Bank) and read Article 1 “After I lived in Norway, America felt backward. Here’s Why”

explain

1. Which philosophy do you see driving the progress of Norway? Venezuela?
2. How are the two philosophies similar and different?
3. How has this philosophy benefitted and/or hindered the society of each country?
4. How do the models proposed compare to Canada?
5. Are there any ideas that you feel have merit for progressing Canadian society?
Any ideas that would hinder Canadian progress?

U1L3A2 | Examining differing philosophies for the creation of progress
 —Progressive Economics versus Neo-liberalism

How do I record my thinking?
Refer to the prompts list to help you get started.

Category	Prompts
Connections	This reminds me of... I know someone who... I see the connection between... I read somewhere... This text reminds me of... The idea here makes me think of... This section is similar to... This compares to... This section made me think about... I already know about...
Questions (Level 1-4)	Ask the 5W/H's What does this word mean? How might/why might? How should/why should? Does this make sense?
Predictions	I saw this coming because... I recognized this would happen because... I wonder if...
Inferences	I think this means... I can infer... I think the author is trying to say... This makes me think that... I think the author wants me to know that... I think the writer means... The evidence that supports my thinking is... I can now conclude...
Visualize	I can picture this... This makes me see... It's clear to me now that... I noticed that... I see _____ when I'm reading because... I created a mental image of... I used images to help me...

U1L3A2 | Examining differing philosophies for the creation of progress
 —Progressive Economics versus Neo-liberalism

Reading Strategies	Prompts
Key Ideas/Memorable	I knew this because... This is important because... He/she did this because... This statement is a big deal because... This quote is a big deal because... Based on this information...
Contradictions	I didn't expect this because... I don't understand this because... I'm confused... If... This is going against what I know because... I don't understand... This contradicts what I know because...
Boring	I'm not interested... I'm lost because... I don't care about his text because... I find this boring because... This text/part doesn't grab my attention because...
Opinions	I think... because... My opinion on this topic is... I believe that... I agree with this statement because... I disagree with this statement because... I still need answers to the question... Based on what I have just read, I now realize...
Assumptions	I think that... I know this is right because... I know this is incorrect because...

After I Lived in Norway, America Felt Backward. Here's Why.

A crash course in social democracy.

By *Ann Jones*

JANUARY 28, 2016

<http://www.thenation.com/article/after-i-lived-in-norway-america-felt-backward-heres-why/>

Some years ago, I faced up to the futility of reporting truths about America's disastrous wars, and so I left Afghanistan for another mountainous country far away. It was the polar opposite of Afghanistan: a peaceful, prosperous land where nearly everybody seemed to enjoy a good life, on the job and in the family.

It's true that they didn't work much—not by American standards, anyway. In the United States, full-time salaried workers supposedly laboring 40 hours a week actually average 49, with almost 20 percent clocking more than 60. These people, on the other hand, worked only about 37 hours a week, when they weren't away on long paid vacations. At the end of the workday, about four in the afternoon (perhaps three during the summer), they had time to enjoy a hike in the forest, a swim with the kids, or a beer with friends—which helps explain why, unlike so many Americans, they are pleased with their jobs.

Often I was invited to go along. I found it refreshing to hike and ski in a country with no land mines, and to hang out in cafés unlikely to be bombed. Gradually, my war-zone jitters subsided and I settled into the slow, calm, pleasantly uneventful stream of life there.

Four years on, thinking I should settle down, I returned to the United States. It felt quite a lot like stepping back into that other violent, impoverished world, where anxiety runs high and people are quarrelsome. I had, in fact, come back to the flip side of Afghanistan and Iraq: to what America's wars have done to America. Where I live now, in the homeland, there are not enough shelters for the homeless. Most people are either overworked or hurting for jobs; the housing is overpriced, the hospitals crowded and understaffed, the schools largely segregated and not so good. Opioid or heroin overdose is a popular form of death, and men in the street threaten women wearing hijabs. Did the American soldiers I covered in Afghanistan know they were fighting for this?

DUCKING THE SUBJECT

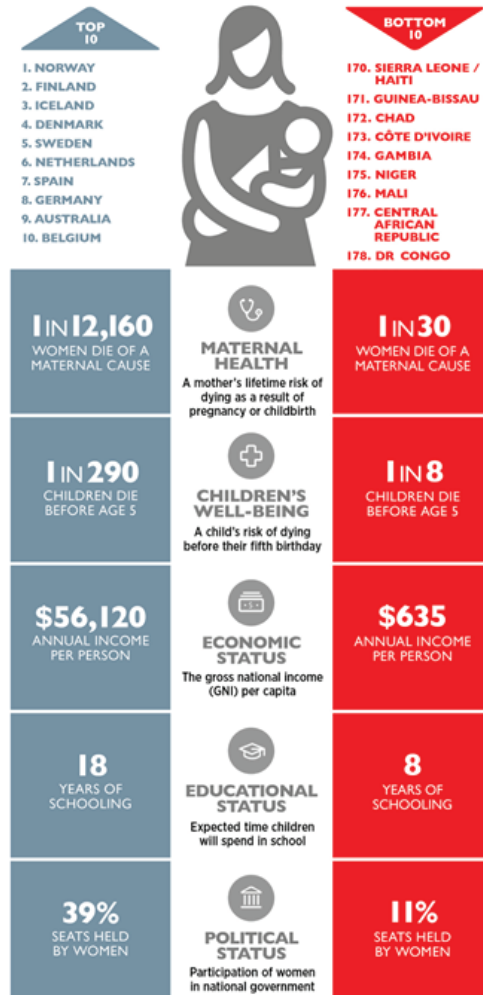
One night I tuned in to the Democrats' presidential debate to see if they had any plans to restore the America I used to know. To my amazement, I heard the name of my peaceful mountain hideaway: Norway. Bernie Sanders was denouncing America's crooked version of "casino capitalism" that floats the already-rich ever higher and flushes the working class. He said that we ought to "look to countries like Denmark, like Sweden and Norway, and learn from what they have accomplished for their working people."

He believes, he added, in "a society where all people do well. Not just a handful of billionaires." That certainly sounds like Norway. For ages, they've worked at producing things for the use of everyone—not the profit of a few—so I was all ears, waiting for Sanders to spell it out for Americans.

But Hillary Clinton quickly countered, "We are not Denmark." Smiling, she said, "I love Denmark," and then delivered a patriotic punch line: "We are the United States of America." (Well, there's no denying that.)

Welfare State

In countries with lower levels of political, economic, and social inequality, mothers and their children lead healthier, happier lives. (The US is #33 on the list.)



(Save the Children)

She also praised capitalism and “all the small businesses that were started because we have the opportunity and the freedom in our country for people to do that and to make a good living for themselves and their families.” She didn’t seem to know that Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians do that too, and with much higher rates of success.

The truth is that almost a quarter of American start-ups are not founded on brilliant new ideas, but on the desperation of men or women who can’t get a decent job. The majority of all American enterprises are solo ventures having zero payrolls, employing no one but the entrepreneur, and often quickly wasting away. Sanders said that he was all for small business too, but that meant nothing “if all of the new income and wealth is going to the top 1 percent.” (As George Carlin said, “The reason they call it the American Dream is because you have to be asleep to believe it.”)

In that debate, no more was heard of Denmark, Sweden, or Norway. The audience was left in the dark. Later, in a speech at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, Sanders tried to clarify his identity as a democratic socialist. He said he’s not the kind of socialist (with a capital S) who favors state ownership of the means of production. The Norwegian government, on the other hand, owns the means of producing lots of public assets and is the major stockholder in many a vital private enterprise.

I was dumbfounded. Norway, Denmark, and Sweden practice variations of a system that works much better than ours. Yet even the Democratic presidential candidates, who say they love or want to learn from those countries, don’t seem know how they actually work.

WHY WE’RE NOT DENMARK

Proof that they do work is delivered every year in data-rich evaluations by the United Nations and other international bodies. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s annual report on international well-being, for example, measures 11 factors, ranging from material conditions such as affordable housing and employment to quality-of-life matters like education, health, life expectancy, voter participation, and overall citizen satisfaction. Year after year, all the Nordic countries cluster at the top, while the United States lags far behind. In addition, Norway has ranked first on the UN Development Program’s Human Development Index for 12 of the last 15 years, and it consistently tops international comparisons in such areas as democracy, civil and political rights, and freedom of expression and the press.

The Nordic model starts with a deep commitment to equality and democracy, because you can't have one without the other.

What is it, though, that makes the Scandinavians so different? Since the Democrats can't tell you and the Republicans wouldn't want you to know, let me offer you a quick introduction. What Scandinavians call the Nordic model is a smart and simple system that starts with a deep commitment to equality and democracy. That's two concepts combined in a single goal because, as far as they're concerned, you can't have one without the other.

Right there, they part company with capitalist America, now the most unequal of all the developed nations, and consequently a democracy no more. Political scientists say it has become an oligarchy, run at the expense of its citizenry by and for the superrich. Perhaps you've noticed that.

In the last century, Scandinavians, aiming for their egalitarian goal, refused to settle solely for any of the ideologies competing for power—not capitalism or fascism, not Marxist socialism or communism. Geographically stuck between powerful nations waging hot and cold wars for such doctrines, Scandinavians set out to find a middle path. That path was contested—by socialist-inspired workers on the one hand, and by capitalist owners and their elite cronies on the other—but in the end, it led to a mixed economy. Thanks largely to the solidarity and savvy of organized labor and the political parties it backed, the long struggle produced a system that makes capitalism more or less cooperative, and then redistributes equitably the wealth it helps to produce. Struggles like this took place around the world in the 20th century, but the Scandinavians alone managed to combine the best ideas of both camps while chucking out the worst.

In 1936, the popular US journalist Marquis Childs first described the result to Americans in the book *Sweden: The Middle Way*. Since then, all the Scandinavian countries, and their Nordic neighbors Finland and Iceland, have been improving upon that hybrid system. Today in Norway, negotiations between the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise determine the wages and working conditions of most capitalist enterprises, public and private, that create wealth, while high but fair progressive income taxes fund the state's universal welfare system, benefiting everyone. In addition, those confederations work together to minimize the disparity between high-wage and lower-wage jobs. As a result, Norway ranks with Sweden, Denmark, and Finland as among the most income-equal countries in the world, and its standard of living tops the charts.

Nordic countries give their populations freedom from the market by using capitalism as a tool to benefit everyone.

So here's the big difference: In Norway, capitalism serves the people. The government, elected by the people, sees to that. All eight of the parties that won parliamentary seats in the last national election—including the conservative Høyre party now leading the government—are committed to maintaining the welfare state. In the United States, however, neoliberal politics puts the foxes in charge of the henhouse, and capitalists have used the wealth generated by their enterprises (as well as financial and political manipulations) to capture the state and pluck the chickens.

They've done a masterful job of chewing up organized labor. Today, only 11 percent of American workers belong to a union. In Norway, that number is 52 percent; in Denmark, 67 percent; in Sweden, 70 percent. Thus, in the United States, oligarchs maximize their wealth and keep it, using the "democratically elected" government to shape policies and laws favorable to the interests of their foxy class. They bamboozle the people by insisting, as Hillary Clinton did at that debate, that all of us have the "freedom" to create a business in the "free" marketplace, which implies that being hard up is our own fault.

In the Nordic countries, on the other hand, democratically elected governments give their populations freedom *from* the market by using capitalism as a tool to benefit everyone. That liberates their people from the tyranny of the mighty profit motive that warps so many American lives, leaving them freer to follow their own dreams—to become poets or philosophers, bartenders or business owners, as they please.

FAMILY MATTERS

Maybe our politicians don't want to talk about the Nordic model because it shows so clearly that capitalism can be put to work for the many, not just the few.

Consider the Norwegian welfare state. It's universal. In other words, aid to the sick or the elderly is not charity, grudgingly donated by elites to those in need. It is the right of every individual citizen. That includes every woman, whether or not she is somebody's wife, and every child, no matter its parentage. Treating every person as a citizen frees each one from being legally possessed by another—a husband, for example, or a tyrannical father.

Which brings us to the heart of Scandinavian democracy: the equality of women and men. In the 1970s, Norwegian feminists marched into politics and picked up the pace of democratic change. Norway needed a larger labor force, and women were the answer. Housewives moved into paid work on equal footing with men, nearly doubling the tax base. That has, in fact, meant more to Norwegian prosperity than the coincidental discovery of North Atlantic oil reserves. The Ministry of Finance recently calculated that those additional working mothers add to Norway's net national wealth a value equivalent to its "total petroleum wealth"—currently held in the world's largest sovereign-wealth fund, worth over \$873 billion. By 1981, women were sitting in parliament, in the prime minister's chair, and in her cabinet.

American feminists also marched for such goals in the 1970s, but the big boys, busy with their own White House intrigues, initiated a war on women that set the country back and still rages today in brutal attacks on women's basic civil rights, healthcare, and reproductive freedom. In 1971, thanks to the hard work of organized feminists, Congress passed the bipartisan Comprehensive Child Development Bill to establish a multibillion-dollar national daycare system for the children of working parents. In 1972, President Richard Nixon vetoed it, and that was that. In 1972, Congress also passed a bill (first proposed in 1923) to amend the Constitution to grant equal rights of citizenship to women. Ratified by only 35 states—three short of the required 38—that Equal Rights Amendment was declared dead in 1982, leaving American women in legal limbo. In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation

Act, obliterating six decades of US social-welfare policy “as we know it,” ending federal cash payments to the nation’s poor, and consigning millions of female heads of household and their children to poverty, where many still dwell 20 years later. Today, even privileged women, torn between their underpaid work and their kids, are overwhelmed.

Things happened very differently in Norway. There, feminists and sociologists pushed hard against the biggest obstacle still standing in the path to full democracy: the nuclear family. In the 1950s, the world-famous American sociologist Talcott Parsons had pronounced that arrangement—with the hubby at work and the little wife at home—the ideal setup in which to socialize children. But in the 1970s, the Norwegian state began to deconstruct that undemocratic ideal by taking upon itself the traditional, unpaid household duties of women. Caring for children, the elderly, the sick, and the disabled became the basic responsibilities of the universal welfare state, freeing women in the workforce to enjoy both their jobs and their families.

Paradoxically, setting women free made family life more genuine. Many in Norway say it has made both men and women more themselves and more alike: more understanding and happier. It also helped kids slip from the shadow of helicopter parents. In Norway, both mother and father in turn take paid parental leave from work during the child’s first year or longer. At age 1, however, children start attending a neighborhood *barnehage* (kindergarten) for schooling spent largely outdoors. By the time kids enter free primary school at age 6, they are remarkably self-sufficient, confident, and good-natured. They know their way around town, and if caught in a snowstorm in the forest, how to build a fire and find the makings of a meal. (One kindergarten teacher explained, “We teach them early to use an ax so they understand it’s a tool, not a weapon.”)

To Americans, the notion of a school “taking away” your child to make her an ax wielder is monstrous. Yet though it’s hard to measure, it’s likely that Scandinavian children actually spend more quality time with their non-work-obsessed parents than does a typical middle-class American child being driven by a stressed-out mother from music lessons to karate. For all these reasons and more, the international organization Save the Children cites Norway as the best country on earth in which to raise kids, while the United States finishes far down the list, in 33rd place.

DON’T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT

This little summary just scratches the surface of Scandinavia, so I urge curious readers to Google away. But be forewarned: You’ll find much criticism of all the Nordic-model countries. Worse, neoliberal pundits, especially the Brits, are always beating up on the Scandinavians, predicting the imminent demise of their social democracies. Self-styled experts still in thrall to Margaret Thatcher tell Norwegians they must liberalize their economy and privatize everything short of the royal palace. Mostly, the Norwegian government does the opposite—or nothing at all—and social democracy keeps on ticking.

It’s not perfect, of course. It has always been a carefully considered work in progress. Governance by consensus takes time and effort. You might think of it as slow democracy. Even so, it’s light-years ahead of us.

U1L3A3 | Comparing progress in Different Countries

overview

Students will compare the progress and how it compares in countries that have different viewpoints on how to obtain progress (neo-liberalism versus progressive economics).

learning goal

- To develop a personal opinion of what progress is and how it should be measured.

success criteria

- Students will define their opinion of progress and how it is measured.

Inquiry Question

- Which policy (Neo-liberalism or Progressive Economics) can be seen in Norway, Venezuela and Canada?

Step 1: Article Analysis

Read the article provided:

Poverty versus Progress: Comparing the US and Venezuela

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/poverty-versus-progress-comparing-the-us-and-venezuela/5321055>

1. Which mindset do these two regions employ?
2. What are the social effects?

Read the article provided:

Census Figures Show Reduction in Poverty in Venezuela over Last Decade

<http://venezuelanalysis.com/news/7644>

1. How has Venezuela's approach to measuring progress affected their society?
2. Which model do Canada and Norway follow?
3. What are the implications of this on their society?

Step 2: A closer look at Canada

What about Canada?

Read Stephen Harper's address to the UN.

http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/09/25/read_stephen_harpers_address_to_the_un_general_assembly.html

and The 2015 Speech From the Throne <http://speech.gc.ca/en/content/making-real-change-happen>

1. How has the philosophy of the Canadian government changed?
2. How may these differing beliefs affect progress in Canada?
3. How well do you feel Canada is achieving the goals that are outlined in PM Harpers' address?

U1L3A3 | Comparing progress in Different Countries

Step 3: Millennium Development Goals

Millennium Development Goals (UN)

Define MDGs with the class. Have students examine the data:

1. Divide the class into 8 equal groups and assign each group one of the millennium goals to examine.
2. Use the website below and examine the progress of Canada, Norway and Venezuela for your assigned goal. <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Data.aspx>
3. Make three conclusions about the data you observed.
4. What questions did this data raise in your mind?
5. Share your findings with the class.
6. Respond to the findings of the other groups by comparing their findings to those of your group and answering the following reflective questions:
“Describe the life of a child growing up in Canada in comparison to one of the other two countries. Consider the factors that might influence your behaviour and experiences. Include your feelings, beliefs and assumptions as well as any factual information you have been given.”

Step 4: Final Food for Thought

Have the class watch a TED Talk by Bjorn Lomborg

<http://blog.ted.com/2013/10/02/have-we-made-any-progress-since-2005-bjorn-lomborg-updates-his-classic-ted-talk-in-a-new-talk-at-ted-hq/>

Questions for discussion:

- Has the world made any progress?
- What would you spend the money on and why?
- Why are these choices hard to make?

Census Figures Show Reduction in Poverty in Venezuela over Last Decade

Jan 25th 2013, by Paul Dobson - Correo del Orinoco International



Eliás Eljuri, president of Venezuela's National Institute of Statistics (Informe21)

Representatives from Venezuela's National Institute of Statistics (INE) officially revealed some of the most important conclusions from the 14th National Census of Population and Housing to the Venezuelan public this week.

The most potent conclusion drawn from the census, which was conducted during 2011, was that extreme poverty levels have significantly been reduced in the ten previous years.

In 2001, 11.36% of the population were measured to be suffering from extreme poverty, while President of the INE, Elias Eljuri, announced that the 2011 census showed that currently only 6.97% are in a similar situation, a reduction of nearly half in the past 10 years, and one which he described as "very significant".

Other conclusions presented to the population include a rise in life expectancy, from 74.5 years to 79.5 years and a 16% rise in the general population numbers, from 24.8 million inhabitants to 28.9 million in 2011.

Furthermore, it was announced that of those 28.9 million, 88.8% currently live in urban areas, while 11.2% live in rural areas, and that the percentage of the population classed as indigenous rose from 2.3% in 2001 to 2.8% in 2011, with 700,000 citizens currently being classed as indigenous.

Such figures reinforce the success of the social policies of the revolutionary government of Hugo Chavez, particularly in the health sector, as well as the infrastructure of basic necessities, but also the education and alimentary sectors.

The National Coordinator of the Census, Luis Geronimo, drew attention to the fact that despite the rise in the general population, the rate of growth is slowly decreasing, meaning that the population will continue growing in the future, just at a slower pace. Furthermore, he stated that there had been a reduction in births and a rise in deaths since 2001, showing that the population is gradually aging.

"For 2050 we expect to be about 40 million people, with a growth rate lower than 0.5%" he explained. "These are demographic changes which all of the countries in the world are demonstrating where there is a process of demographic transition".

The average family size has also reduced, he explained. "Now we are at less than 3 children (per female), and for 2050 we expect to arrive at less than 2 children per female. Also, we expect that less women have children, unless there are important migratory processes which change this tendency".

Such figures show the changes in equality achieved in the last 10 years, allowing women to have better access than ever before to secure jobs, and high level positions, and not be only expected to fulfill the child bearer role in society.

Eljuri explained the methods used by the INE to measure the levels of poverty in the country, in order to preempt accusations from certain political sectors that the statistics have been modified for political ends.

Eljuri explained that the INE used the five basic necessities promoted by the Economic Commission for Latin America (Cepal) to evaluate the levels of poverty.

U1L3A3 | Comparing progress in Different Countries | Article 1

The five necessities which represent poverty are: (1) households with children between 7 and 12 years old which don't attend any school; (2) households which have more than 3 people living in a room; (3) households who live in a house with inadequate construction; (4) households without access to drinkable water or sewerage; and (5) households with more than 3 members where the head of household has less than 3 grades of basic education.

Eljuri explained that this system is called the Unsatisfied Basic Needs system (NBI), and is used to evaluate those households in poverty, extreme poverty, and outside of poverty.

"A household in poverty is that where at least 1 of these 5 factors are applicable; a household in extreme poverty is that where 2 or more are applicable; and a household outside of poverty is that which has all 5 of the necessities met".

Using this system, he showed figures that demonstrate that households outside of poverty have risen from 67% in 2001 to 75.43% in 2011, and that "the total of those in poverty have reduced from 21.64% to 17.6%". "In all indications examined", he concluded, "there was an important reduction of poverty".

He also highlighted that critical overcrowding has reduced from 15.12% to 10.10%, while inadequate house construction has reduced from 9.38% to 8.69%. Similarly, households without basic water and sewerage services have reduced from 14.79% to 8.88%.

He also highlighted that the figures from the census are fully transparent and available to the public on the INE website. Furthermore, impressive as they are, the figures, he explained, do not take into account certain changes seen during 2012 which, according to Eljuri, have had dramatic effects on the demographics of the nation, predominantly the housing Mission Vivienda which was launched towards the end of 2011.

The 346,000 houses and apartments built during the end of 2011 and 2012 were not taken into account in the census which was conducted during the first 8 months of 2011, and he expects that this mission, amongst other factors, will mean that poverty levels are, today, in fact even lower than the figures shown in 2011.

There are estimations, he explained, that combined poverty will have closed 2012 at around about 6.5%, down significantly from the 2011 figures, due to such changes in the housing of the population bought about by government policies.

He finally observed that Venezuela has seen the most significant decrease in poverty in the last 10 years in the continent, and that it continues having the lowest rate of inequality in the continent.

Despite complete clarity by the INE of their methods and results, certain self-proclaimed 'experts' have already appeared in the opposition means of communication claiming that the results have been engineered for political gains, or suggesting that the methods used by the INE did not meet satisfactory levels of thoroughness.

Such 'experts' provided no proof or evidence for such claims, and merely claimed that there were certain vague "problems" with the census, while at the same time failing to recognize the gains and successes the population has experienced under Chavez's presidency.

Such statistics are to be used to further enable the strategic planning of the points of attention of governmental policies which address housing, infrastructure, education, access to basic necessities, and especially for the future of the public housing program, which plans to build 380,000 more high quality houses and apartments in 2013 alone.

Poverty versus Progress: Comparing the US and Venezuela

By Eric Draitser

Global Research, January 29, 2013

Url of this article:

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/poverty-versus-progress-comparing-the-us-and-venezuela/5321055>

If we are to take the traditional definition of the term, then “Third World” refers to those (non-white) countries that struggle to attain high levels of economic development and which, for the most part, are reduced to the periphery of the global economy.

However, since the onset of the economic crisis beginning in 2007-2008, many of the economic problems of those traditionally poor countries have become ever more apparent in the so-called developed world. Socio-economic maladies such as extreme poverty, hunger, and unemployment have skyrocketed in advanced capitalist countries like the United States, while politicians and the media continue to trumpet the mirage of an economic recovery.

Naturally, one must ask for whom this is a recovery...for the poor or for Wall St? Moreover, it has forced the world to examine what progress looks like. One way of doing so is to analyze what the statistics tell us about the United States versus Venezuela. In so doing, one begins to get a much clearer picture, free from the distortions of media and politicians alike, of just how much progress has been made in the Bolivarian Revolution while the situation of the poor and working classes in the US continues to deteriorate.



What Is Poverty?

Before one can reach any definitive conclusions about poverty in the US and Venezuela, it is essential to first establish the stark difference in the way in which poverty is measured in the two countries. With respect to the US, poverty is measured purely by household income, with a certain threshold known as the “poverty line” determined by the Census Bureau. This measurement, based on a purely arbitrary delineation between poverty and “non-poverty”, is the one by which many make determinations about the state of the poor in the US. As should be self-evident, this system of analyzing poverty ignores the obvious fact that

there is little tangible difference between the lives of those slightly over and slightly under the poverty line in that both live in a constant state of privation. Moreover, as increasing inflation, decreasing wages and other factors continue to impact the purchasing power and actual lives of the poor, the poverty line becomes even more problematic.

In contrast, the Venezuelan government has a distinctly different set of measurements to determine true poverty including: access to education, access to clean drinking water, access to adequate housing, and other factors.[i]

Essentially then, in Venezuela, poverty is not a measure of income, but of quality of life. By measuring poverty in this way, the Venezuelan government provides a far more comprehensive picture of the socio-economic situation in the country. It is important to note also that, unlike in the United States, poverty statistics in Venezuela are

one of the primary driving forces behind the formation of government policy. While in the US, poverty has become a dirty word (as evidenced by the subject's total absence from last year's presidential debates), Chavez and the Bolivarian Revolution have made it the centerpiece of public policy in all aspects.

What the Numbers Show

When one examines the statistical data compiled by the Census Bureau in the United States, many very troubling facts emerge. First, it's critical to note that, in 2012, the poverty line for a typical family of four was at a combined gross income of \$23,050.[ii] Note that this indicator is derived from gross income as opposed to net income, so it doesn't even reflect the gravity of the situation faced by these families.

Anyone who has even a rudimentary understanding of the current costs of living in the United States can immediately surmise that the "poverty line" is a cruel joke. This level of income means abject poverty, it means a lack of basic necessities for human life. So, in essence then, we're not talking about "the poor", but those on the verge of death with problems such as malnutrition, serious illness from treatable conditions, and countless other hindrances to basic existence. In addition, it should be noted that median family income (for all families, not just those in poverty) continues to decline dramatically, with a decrease of 8.1% since 2007.[iii] Therefore, it becomes apparent that, not only is poverty widespread, it is growing.

California, long touted as the most economically vibrant state in the US, is now known as more than just the home of Silicon Valley and beautiful coastline, it is also home to the highest levels of poverty in the United States. According to the Supplemental Poverty Measure of the US Census Bureau, California boasts a 23.5% poverty rate[iv] which, if included with those who do not technically fit the poverty measure but who still live very much on the economic margins, shows that poverty is fast becoming an epidemic in California.

As University of Wisconsin Madison economist Timothy Smeeding explained, "As a whole, the safety net is holding many people up, while California is struggling more because it's relatively harder there to qualify for food stamps and other benefits." [v] Essentially then we see that, in the nation's most populous and, arguably most economically important state, the situation of the poor is a dire one as more and more people become dependent on government programs just for survival. This is, of course, against the backdrop of austerity or so-called "entitlement reform" championed by both Republicans and Democrats, which would cut these same programs which are becoming ever more critical for millions of Americans.

Income cannot and should not be seen as the only indicator of poverty and economic status. Indeed, there are many other factors including access to proper nutrition, particularly important for children growing up in situations of poverty. In fact, the most recent data from the USDA suggests that at least 18 million households in the US were food insecure as of 2011.[vi] This is merely the tip of the iceberg when one considers that there are millions of households who are not categorized as "food insecure" but who cannot afford high quality food and the still more families who are only food secure because of government programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as food stamps. Lack of access to highly nutritious foods is characteristic of poor, urban neighborhoods where primarily people of color struggle to feed their children with something other than fast food or low quality food purchased at the corner store.

What becomes apparent in even a cursory examination of this information is that food security and poverty are not merely indicators of economic hardship, they are class designations. The United States is home to an ever-expanding underclass, one that is encompassing more and more formerly working class people and white people, but which still afflicts communities of color most acutely. In every major city and more and more formerly affluent white suburbs, poverty has become an ever-present reality, one that remains hidden as Americans engage in the collective self-deception of "economic recovery."

The Venezuelan Model

In contrast to the United States, Venezuela continues to make tremendous strides in eradicating poverty from a nation that, for decades, had been one of the poorest and most exploited in the Americas. Despite vast oil wealth and abundant resources, Venezuela was characterized by extreme poverty, particularly among the indigenous and peasant populations. This was the product of the colonial and post-colonial system wherein a small, light-skinned elite dominated the country and kept the rest of the people in abject poverty. This situation began to change with the ascendance of Hugo Chavez and the Bolivarian Revolution. Immediately Chavez, already a hero to poor Venezuelans, set about implementing his socialist model that would make the fight against poverty the centerpiece of his public policy. Indeed, this is precisely what has happened in the fourteen years since he took office.

As mentioned previously, Venezuela uses a comprehensive set of criteria to measure poverty including access to education, clean drinking water, adequate housing, households with more than three people living in a room, and households where the head of the household had less than three years of education. Using this rubric, known as the Unsatisfied Basic Needs system (NBI), the statistics are intriguing. In the last ten years, the number of Venezuelans living in extreme poverty (those who experience two of the five indicators of poverty) has decreased from 11.36% to 6.97%, a reduction of almost one half. At the same time, life expectancy and total population have increased significantly, showing the impact of better and more comprehensive health care services. One particularly important piece of data has to do with indigenous people, the group most marginalized historically. In the last ten years, their numbers have grown significantly as well, now making up almost 3% of the population.[vii] This shows that, not only have the quality of health programs and related services increased, but access to them has grown as well, particularly for those traditionally disenfranchised segments of the population.

It should be noted that one of the centerpieces of the anti-poverty programs of the Chavez Bolivarian government has been the exponential increase in construction of public housing and affordable units. President Chavez announced the Great Housing Mission (GMVV)[viii] in 2011 to combat the extreme poverty that so many Venezuelan families faced as they lived in inadequate or unsafe homes. As of September 2012, more than 250,000 homes had been constructed and given to poor Venezuelan families.[ix] This number is surely set to increase in the coming year as the program continues to expand and housing becomes ever more accessible and plentiful.

In the midst of a worldwide economic crisis, the Chavez government continues to expand spending on anti-poverty programs such as housing construction and health care while much of the so-called developed world engages in the mass hysteria of austerity. The Bolivarian Revolution set before itself the task of reducing and ultimately eradicating poverty in a country where poverty was a historical tradition and a seemingly immutable reality. The post-colonial era of Venezuelan history is one fraught with domination and oppression by the United States and subjugation to multinational corporations while the poor and working classes lived in wretched conditions. Chavez's commitment to reversing that legacy is what has, more than anything else, enshrined his legacy in the hearts and minds of Venezuelans.

Conversely, the advanced capitalist economies of North America and Europe are desperately trying to maintain their hegemony and economic survival by means of austerity programs which shift the burden of the depression from the wealthy financiers and speculators who created it to the poor and working class who must pay for it. Draconian cuts to necessary social services upon which millions of Americans depend for their very survival serve to illustrate this point further. Unlike in Venezuela, the Western imperial powers seek to destroy the social safety net and drive their populations into further destitution and desperation. This is, to put it another way, the crisis of advanced, post-industrial capitalism – an economic system which must expand the divide between rich and poor, create extremes of wealth and poverty and generally perpetuate itself on the misery and poverty of the lower classes. Seen in this way, Republicans and Democrats,

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President Obama and House Speaker Boehner alike are culpable for the massive suffering and despair of the poor in the US who can look to Venezuela and the Bolivarian Revolution as a model for a truly progressive vision of the future.

Notes

[i] <http://venezuelanalysis.com/news/7644>

[ii] http://coverageforall.org/pdf/FHCE_FedPovertyLevel.pdf

[iii] http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/income_wealth/cb12-172.html

[iv] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p60-244.pdf>

[v] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/14/california-poverty_n_2132920.html

[vi] <http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/884529/err-141-summary.pdf>

[vii] Ibid.

[viii] <http://venezuela-us.org/2011/03/14/president-chavez-announces-creation-of-%E2%80%9Cmission-housing-venezuela%E2%80%9D/>

[ix] <http://venezuela-us.org/2012/09/07/nearly-250000-homes-built-by-venezuelas-great-housing-mission/>
Eljuri explained that the INE used the five basic necessities promoted by the Economic Commission for Latin America (Cepal) to evaluate the levels of poverty.

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Read Stephen Harper's address to the UN General Assembly

Prime Minister Harper addressed the UNGA on Sept. 25 for the first time since 2010.

By: Star Staff Published on Thu Sep 25 2014



Prime Minister Stephen Harper addresses the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York Sept. 25.

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/poverty-versus-progress-comparing-the-us-and-venezuela/5321055>

For more than seventy years, Canada has supported the United Nations and its institutions, in the pursuit of world peace.

On many occasions Canadians have put their lives on the line to deter active conflict between peoples.

It is a duty we accept and it is a record of which we are proud.

Today, there are many embattled parts of the world where the suffering of local populations and the threats to global security deserve our urgent attention, and I could easily use my entire time here on any one of them.

There are however, other areas of service to humanity. It is to some of these that I wish to speak tonight.

For there is more to peace than the absence of war.

Where human misery abounds, where grinding poverty is the rule where justice is systematically denied, there is no real peace only the seeds of future conflict.

Then we understand how the worst of human nature, perverse ideologies, religious extremism, the lust for power and plunder can rob people in so many places of property, hope and life itself.

That is why Canada has always been ready and willing to join with other civilized peoples and to challenge affronts to international order, affronts to human dignity itself, such as are today present in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and many parts of Africa.

But while these extreme situations on which Canadas positions are well known are being confronted, other problems, such as the problems of underdevelopment remain.

Canadians, therefore, seek a world where freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law are respected.

We hold these things to be intrinsically right and good.

And we also believe that they are the necessary foundation for a better world for more people, necessary for prosperity, and with prosperity comes hope, and with hope, the greater inclination of free peoples everywhere to find peaceful solutions to the things that divide them.

Indeed, we believe freedom, prosperity and peace form a virtuous circle.

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For this reason, the growth of trade between nations, and the delivery of effective development assistance to ordinary people simple, practical aid these are the things that have become the signatures of our Governments outreach in the world.

Trade means jobs, growth and opportunities.

It has made great nations out of small ones.

The story of my own country, Canada, is a case in point.

Historically, trade has built our country, just as today, it is reshaping our world.

Trade means ordinary people can support their families and even dare to dream of something more.

The trade agreements we have concluded tear down the barriers of tariff and excise, and enlarge markets and opportunities for buyers and sellers alike.

Canada has now established such links with countries that today possess more than a quarter of the world's people and nearly half the world's business.

And our free-trade network will grow larger yet.

This is not an exclusive club for wealthy nations.

Yet, no matter how freely we trade, millions of people will, for some time to come, need a helping hand. Easily the most important example and the one closest to my heart, is the worldwide struggle upon which so many of you have been engaged — the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Initiative.

Saving the lives of the world's most vulnerable mothers, infants and children must remain a top global priority. That is, the world must honour the commitments made in this very room to mothers and children in the year 2000.

And there has been remarkable progress.

I think especially of the 2010 meeting of world leaders at Muskoka that raised about seven and a half billion dollars, two billion of it from private donors.

Based on that, the United Nations launched what the Secretary-General called the Every Woman, Every Child Initiative, with the goal of saving 16 million lives by 2016.

An important aspect of this work has been to monitor both the receipt of monies pledged, and how they were used.

The assurance of full accountability has allowed recipients to plan with certainty and donors to give with confidence.

With His Excellency President Kikwete of Tanzania, it was my honour to co-chair the World Health Organizations Information and Accountability Commission linked to this initiative.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a clear vision and that vision is achievable.

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We know how to help many of these vulnerable people.

We have seen what can be done.

We want, therefore, simply to rally the passion and the will to make it happen.

We are preventing, and can prevent more, deaths, deaths of thousands of children every day from easily preventable causes.

We can stop thousands of mothers dying in childbirth who, with relatively little intervention, would survive.

We also know who we need to be working with: new partnerships, partnerships that bring together governments, agencies of the UN the World Health Organisation, the World Food Program and UNICEF with the private sector.

Partnerships that are producing real results and taking us to new heights of excellence.

Here I'm thinking of the MNCH Network in Canada, a group that represents a broad base of Canadian civil society, and are key implementing partners on the ground.

As many of you know, this past May in Toronto, Canada hosted the worlds leading actors on this subject.

We heard the success stories, for example, the Micronutrient Initiative through which 180 million children received Vitamin A pills costing pennies, but that drop child mortality by 25 per cent.

We heard about the Vaccine Alliance, GAVI, and of how, during the three-year period between 2010 and 2013, immunizations saved the lives of two million children.

We have partnerships to deliver better nutrition and better measurement, because vital statistics are critical.

You can't manage what you can't measure. And in this mission, we measure progress in precious lives saved. So every child needs a birth certificate.

So our consensus was clear.

We have seen success, and we have momentum.

Saving the lives of children and mothers is a fight we can win.

To get it done, two things are needed now: the political focus and renewed financial commitment.

I therefore urge this assembly, in the strongest terms, to ensure that in the evolving, post-2015 development agenda, maternal, newborn and child health remain a clear and top priority.

That is the political focus we need.

Then there is the financial commitment.

I know we all have many competing priorities.

But, to have come so far that to stop now would be a tragedy.

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I must tell you, I was very encouraged this morning at the secretary general's Every Woman Every Child event, when President Kim of the World Bank and other leaders announced new financing for the Banks Global Financing Facility For Every Woman, Every Child.

This facility will help developing countries access the financing required to improve their health systems.

I am pleased to announce that Canada will financially support the World Bank's Global Financing Facility For Every Woman, Every Child.

In closing let me say this.

There are many individual countries and specific causes that will rightly occupy your deliberations here this week.

Let's also not forget to also look beyond those, at the long-term opportunities and efforts that can truly transform our world.

We have it in our power to create a better kind of world for our children's children than we have today.

And we should.

For, it was never the intention of the founders of the United Nations, Canada being one of them, that ours would be a world where terrorists could get the resources necessary to sow death and destruction, but where workers and families could not get jobs and opportunities, or where mothers and children could not obtain those necessities required to live and to thrive.

The world that Canada strives for is the world that the founders of the United Nations wanted from the beginning, as boldly articulated in their declaration of 1942: a world where life, liberty, independence and religious freedom are defended, where human rights and justice are preserved, and where all join in a common struggle against savage and brutal forces seeking to subjugate the world.

In such a world, there can be prosperity for the impoverished, justice for the weak, and, for the desperate, that most precious of all things, hope.

It is easy to look at the many problems of the world today and become despondent.

Yet, for all our failings there has been, for most of humanity, tremendous progress in my lifetime.

Therefore, I am enough of an optimist to think that, because we can create a more prosperous, fairer and hopeful world, not only should we, but, indeed, I believe we will.

Merci beaucoup.

Thank you.

Making Real Change Happen

Speech from the Throne to Open the First Session of the Forty-second Parliament of Canada

<http://speech.gc.ca/en/content/making-real-change-happen>

Honourable Senators,
Members of the House of Commons,
Ladies and gentlemen,

As the representative of Her Majesty The Queen, I am pleased to be here to deliver the Speech from the Throne.

A warm welcome to those of you who are returning to your duties as parliamentarians, including those who are returning after an absence. Know that your experience is valued.

Welcome also to the 197 members who are newly elected. Your enthusiasm and fresh ideas will serve your country well.

I call on all parliamentarians to work together, with a renewed spirit of innovation, openness and collaboration.

As governor general, I have seen first-hand what a great country Canada is—from coast to coast to coast.

And I also know this: We can be even better.

How?

By being smart, and caring—on a scale as never before.

The times we live in demand nothing less.

Canada succeeds in large part because here, diverse perspectives and different opinions are celebrated, not silenced.

Parliament shall be no exception.

In this Parliament, all members will be honoured, respected and heard, wherever they sit. For here, in

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these chambers, the voices of all Canadians matter.

Let us not forget, however, that Canadians have been clear and unambiguous in their desire for real change. Canadians want their government to do different things, and to do things differently.

They want to be able to trust their government.

And they want leadership that is focused on the things that matter most to them.

Things like growing the economy; creating jobs; strengthening the middle class, and helping those working hard to join it.

Through careful consideration and respectful conduct, the Government can meet these challenges, and all others brought before it.

By working together in the service of all Canadians, the Government can make real change happen.

It will do so in the following ways.

GROWTH FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS

First and foremost, the Government believes that all Canadians should have a real and fair chance to succeed. Central to that success is a strong and growing middle class.

The Government will, as an immediate priority, deliver a tax cut for the middle class.

This is the fair thing to do, and the smart thing to do for Canada's economy.

The Government has also committed to provide more direct help to those who need it by giving less to those who do not. The new Canada Child Benefit will do just that.

And recognizing that public investment is needed to create and support economic growth, job creation and economic prosperity, the Government will make significant new investments in public transit, green infrastructure, and social infrastructure.

To give Canadians a more secure retirement, the Government will work with the provinces and territories to enhance the Canada Pension Plan.

The Employment Insurance system will be strengthened to make sure that it best serves both the Canadian economy and all Canadians who need it.

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To create more opportunities for young Canadians, especially those from low- and middle-income families, the Government will work with the provinces and territories to make post-secondary education more affordable.

And to support the health and well-being of all Canadians, the Government will begin work with the provinces and territories to develop a new Health Accord.

The Government will undertake these and other initiatives while pursuing a fiscal plan that is responsible, transparent and suited to challenging economic times.

OPEN AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT

Second, the Government is committed to open and transparent government.

The trust Canadians have in public institutions—including Parliament—has, at times, been compromised. By working with greater openness and transparency, Parliament can restore it.

To make sure that every vote counts, the Government will undertake consultations on electoral reform, and will take action to ensure that 2015 will be the last federal election conducted under the first-past-the-post voting system.

To restore public trust and bring an end to partisanship, the Government will follow through on its commitment to reform the Senate by creating a new, non-partisan, merit-based process to advise the Prime Minister on Senate appointments.

And to give Canadians a stronger voice in the House of Commons, the Government will promote more open debate and free votes, and reform and strengthen committees.

Also notable are the things the Government will not do: it will not use government ads for partisan purposes; it will not interfere with the work of parliamentary officers; and it will not resort to devices like prorogation and omnibus bills to avoid scrutiny.

A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT AND A STRONG ECONOMY

Third, the Government will prove to Canadians and to the world that a clean environment and a strong economy go hand in hand. We cannot have one without the other.

Protecting the environment and growing the economy are not incompatible goals; in fact, our future success

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demands that we do both.

Last week, first ministers met ahead of the international climate change talks—a first step in an important and ongoing process.

Working together, the Government will continue to provide leadership as Canada works toward putting a price on carbon and reducing carbon pollution.

To encourage economic growth, the Government will make strategic investments in clean technology, provide more support for companies seeking to export those technologies, and lead by example in their use.

And as part of efforts to restore public trust, the Government will introduce new environmental assessment processes.

Public input will be sought and considered. Environmental impacts will be understood and minimized. Decisions will be informed by scientific evidence. And Indigenous peoples will be more fully engaged in reviewing and monitoring major resource development projects.

DIVERSITY IS CANADA'S STRENGTH

Fourth, the Government's agenda reflects that Canada's strength is its diversity.

Canadians elected a government to bring us together, not to set us against one another. Canada is strong because of our differences, not in spite of them.

As a country, we are strengthened in many ways: by our shared experiences, by the diversity that inspires both Canada and the world, and by the way that we treat each other.

Because it is both the right thing to do and a certain path to economic growth, the Government will undertake to renew, nation-to-nation, the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples, one based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.

Among other measures, the Government will work co-operatively to implement recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, will launch an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and will work with First Nations so that every First Nations child receives a quality education.

The Government will make it easier for immigrants to build successful lives in Canada, reunite their families, and contribute to the economic success of all Canadians.

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In response to a pressing international need, and underscored by Canadians' desire to help, the Government will welcome 25,000 new Canadians from Syria, to arrive in Canada by the end of February 2016.

In gratitude for the service of Canada's veterans, the Government will do more to support them and their families.

The Government will support CBC/Radio-Canada, encourage and promote the use of Canada's official languages, and invest in Canada's cultural and creative industries.

SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY

Fifth, the Government is committed to providing greater security and opportunity for Canadians.

Canadians are open, accepting, and generous people. We know that helping those in need strengthens our communities and makes them safer, more prosperous places to live.

The Government will strengthen its relationship with allies, especially with our closest friend and partner, the United States.

Internationally, the Government will focus its development assistance on helping the world's poorest and most vulnerable.

To contribute to greater peace throughout the world, the Government will renew Canada's commitment to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and will continue to work with its allies in the fight against terrorism.

To keep Canadians safe and be ready to respond when needed, the Government will launch an open and transparent process to review existing defence capabilities, and will invest in building a leaner, more agile, better-equipped military.

And to expand economic opportunities for all Canadians, the Government will negotiate beneficial trade agreements, and pursue other opportunities with emerging markets.

Recognizing that Canada is, fundamentally, a safe and peaceful country, the Government will continue to work to keep all Canadians safe, while at the same time protecting our cherished rights and freedoms.

To that end, the Government will introduce legislation that will provide greater support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault; that will get handguns and assault weapons off our streets; and that will legalize, regulate and restrict access to marijuana.

CONCLUSION

The agenda outlined today is an ambitious one, but it is not one forged in isolation.

Rather, it is the result of conversations with Canadians, who told the Government—plainly and honestly—what they need to be successful.

Canadians are confident people. We know who we are, and we know what kind of country we want to live in.

We know the greatness that Canada is capable of, and we know that our success is not only about doing well for ourselves, but also about leaving an even better, more peaceful and prosperous world for our children.

As you consider the important work that lies ahead, remember that Canadians have placed their trust in you. It is now your sacred responsibility to help build that better world.

By focusing on growing our middle class, on delivering open and transparent government, on ensuring a clean environment and a strong economy, on building a stronger Canada, and on providing greater security and opportunity, the Government will make real change happen.

It will prove that better is not only possible—it is the inevitable result when Canadians work together.

Members of the House of Commons, you will be asked to appropriate the funds required to carry out the services and expenditures authorized by Parliament.

Honourable Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Commons, may Divine Providence guide you in your deliberations and make you faithful custodians of the trust bestowed upon you.

Date modified:

U1L3A4 | Writing a Political Letter

overview

Students will create a model of progress for Canada and share this model with a government official in the form of a letter.

learning goal

- To share a personal opinion with a political official.

success criteria

- Students will be able to create a model of progress for Canada and share this model with a government official in the form of a letter.

Inquiry Question

- Which policy (Neoliberalism or Progressive Economics) is more likely to promote the factors of well-being that you value most in society?

your task

Given what you have learned about measuring progress answer the following question in a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada:

Economic progress is one way to measure the progress of a country. Some people think there are other factors. How should Canada be measuring the progress of our nation? What other factors should be considered?

In your letter you may support the ideology of the current government or you may oppose it. You should also explain a minimum of three criteria you feel are the best indicators of progress.

Use the handout enclosed on “How to write a political letter” to help you structure your letter and ideas.

U1L3A4 | Writing a Political Letter

1. Keep it **BRIEF**

- Start with your strongest point. No need for rambling introductions to the issue.
- Shorter letters are more impactful and easier to remember.
- Limit yourself to one topic because adding topics dilutes the effectiveness of your pitch.
- Keep a positive, friendly tone. Confrontational attitudes will only hurt your cause.

2. Use **FORMATTING** to emphasize important points.

- You want your letter to be easily scannable for the main points and takeaways.
- Bullets are fine but don't use too many in a letter. (You can use lots on "How to" lists.)
- **Bold** and underlining are good to use. So is **color** if you can afford it.
- Avoid italics as they are harder to read.
- Use ALL CAPS sparingly as it can be interpreted as shouting (in written form).

3. **BE SPECIFIC** in your supporting details.

- Use statistics, facts, quotes, names, etc., to back up your claims.
- Look into the history of the issue and see what has been done before. Was it successful? Use this information to support your idea of how to solve the problem or why some other proposal will not work.

4. Use **EPIC** to help you organize your letter:

- **Engage:** Engage the politician with a strong fact, arresting image, or startling statement of your issue. You are trying to grab the politician's attention
- **Propose:** Make a specific proposal regarding a piece of legislation or action they can take to improve the status quo regarding your issue. You want it to be absolutely clear what you are advocating.
- **Illustrate:** Illustrate how the proposal would work and why it's important. Give a few details or examples to make it concrete. This fleshes out your solution and gives reasons why it's a good idea.
- **Call to action:** Call on the politician to take a specific action. This ends your letter with a request which they will remember.

(Adopted from Bread for the World, <http://tinyurl.com/22lhh7>)

5. **FINISH** strong

- **Ask for action.** Be specific and pointed about what it is you want them to do. This is why you are talking to them in the first place.
- Thank them for their time and for listening to you.
- Give them your contact info for future reference.

U1L3A4 | Writing a Political Letter

6. DRAFT, EDIT, REWRITE

- Improper grammar, incorrect spelling, and poor style can hurt your chances of making an effective argument.
- Always ask one or two people you trust to review your letter for these points.
- Come back an hour later and reread it yourself. Then rewrite it.
- Never submit a first draft. Ever. No exceptions. No kidding.

7. FOLLOW UP with a short, personalized thank you note.

- This is especially important if they respond to you in writing.
- Include your ask in the thank you note.
- This keeps your issue and your ask fresh in their mind.
- It shows them you are a respectful organization worthy of respect in turn

Notes:

- **Don't bother writing to a politician for whom you are not a constituent.** Their staff will likely throw the letter away without reading it as soon as they realize you cannot vote for their boss.
- **Your may receive a form letter in response.** This is normal. Don't be offended by it. IF you want a personalized response, try to get a meeting with the politician.
- **Threats are absolutely out of order.** Not only will they alienate the politician you are trying to convince to support your issue, they may also earn you a visit from law enforcement in the post-9/11 world we live in.
- **BE NICE!** I said this before, but it is worth repeating. You are trying to convince someone who doesn't support you to change sides and risk their reputation and position to further your personal agenda. Confrontation may look good on the 6 o'clock news, but it will not bring you any closer to achieving your goal. (Unless your goal is to get kicked out and then blame "the system" for why your issue failed to pass.)

U1L3A4 | Writing a Political Letter

Criteria	Level 4 Exemplary	Level 3 Accomplished	Level 2 Developing	Level 1 Beginning
Format and Organization	<p>Written with appropriate political letter guidelines.</p> <p>Includes an introduction, body and conclusion.</p> <p>Follows the guidelines for writing the letter well.</p>	<p>Appropriate political letter format.</p> <p>Follows the guidelines for writing the letter.</p>	<p>May not be an appropriate letter.</p> <p>Not all guidelines and conventions followed.</p>	<p>Does not produce an acceptable letter.</p>
Knowledge and Support of Ideas	<p>Uses specific, and strong, evidence from student research to support position.</p> <p>Uses this evidence to influence appropriate representative and current legislation.</p> <p>Develops a strong persuasive argument.</p> <p>May receive a response.</p>	<p>Uses some evidence from student research to support position.</p> <p>Uses this evidence to influence appropriate representative and/or current legislation.</p> <p>May develop a persuasive argument or agree with a previous position from the representative.</p>	<p>Uses limited evidence from student research to support position.</p> <p>Attempts to influence an appropriate representative, but support appears limited.</p>	<p>Does not include much, if any, evidence of research.</p> <p>Does not attempt to influence a representative.</p>
Writing Style	<p>Solid work that demonstrates careful attention to details.</p> <p>Few, if any, errors.</p>	<p>Solid work that demonstrates attention to details.</p> <p>The letter may have a few minor errors.</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate attention to details.</p> <p>Many errors.</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate attention to details.</p> <p>Many errors. Very brief.</p>

Comments: