

# Challenging Class Bias

*CD Demo by Terezia Zoric  
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## **Class Bias FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)**

### **What is Class Bias?**

Class bias is an attitude which leads to discrimination based on an individual's or group's income, occupation, education, wealth and/or economic means. (Refer to the *Definitions* section of this document for additional definitions.)

### **Why is it important to recognize and challenge class bias?**

A person's economic position in society makes a great deal of difference in terms of the power she or he has to determine her or his life. Socio-economic class bias has significant implications for what students learn, how they learn, and their sense of self-worth. Class biases often prevent students from acquiring the skills and information necessary to overcome both individual forms of discrimination and structural inequities. Many studies document the strong link between socio-economic background and academic success. To create equitable classrooms, schools, and communities, we must challenge and eliminate the class biases that prevent all people from achieving to the maximum of their abilities.

### **What are some examples of class bias in the school system?**

- The assumption that intellectual work is inherently superior to physical labour;
- Little or no mention in the curriculum of how working class people—including the labour movement—have contributed in creating a more equitable and humane society;
- Attaching stereotypes to socio-economic class;
- The assumption that academically successful students should pursue professional careers rather than skilled trades;
- The undue emphasis on competition as opposed to collective and co-operative efforts in student activities and in evaluation procedures.

### **Who is this document for?**

This educator's resource is designed to provide support for Junior, Intermediate, and Secondary teachers who wish to integrate work on challenging socio-economic class bias into their teaching. Most of the activities and resources within this document have been written or adapted for an intermediate/senior (grades 5 to 12) student audience. It is thought that the activities could be used to enrich the regular classroom curriculum or in advisory/mentoring periods. Many of the activities are particularly well suited to Social Studies, Media, Society, Economics, and Politics

classes and can also be used in Math and Science classes. (For a list of correlated Ontario Curriculum expectations, please refer to Appendices J and K.)

### **What are the document's objectives?**

- a) To promote awareness of the negative impact of classism and the need to challenge class bias, particularly within an educational setting;
- b) To provide teachers and students with ideas, strategies, and resources for challenging class bias;
- c) To encourage students to reflect upon and express their own values about economic fairness and justice and to listen thoughtfully to the views of others;
- d) To promote awareness of the life experiences and contributions of low-income and working people;
- e) To provide realistic, hopeful examples of the work being done to create a more economically just society/world.

### **How can this document be used?**

1. This document may be used to create an entire unit of study, where many of the activities are used in turn (e.g. to cover a month or more of daily lessons in an advisory/mentoring group).
2. Alternatively, any one of the sub-units (e.g. *Investigating Poverty and Economic Inequality*) may be used on its own, in whole or in part, as the basis of a mini-unit, with or without supplementary materials.
3. Most of the sub-units can be mixed and matched. However, the introductory and concluding sub-units (*Needs, Wants and Values* and *Working For Change*, respectively) work best as the first and last sub-units if you are doing many of the activities.
4. Most (not all—so check ahead) individual activities also may be used as stand alone lessons.
5. It is hoped that teachers will extend and enrich student learning by integrating these activities with their ongoing curriculum.
6. Teachers are encouraged to adapt activities and create their own unique lesson plans. Appendix D is provided to help spur teacher creativity.

### **How can I get started challenging class bias?**

Many people are new to the process of understanding the issues and consciously or systematically challenging class bias. A few suggestions to help you get started:

- a) Process at a pace with which you are comfortable. What is important is that you begin this process, and stick with it.
- b) Use this document. It includes many activities, especially in the first two units, that help both you and your students clarify values and learn more about class bias.

- c) Use the “40 Questions to Evaluate Learning Materials for Class Bias” checklist (in the Appendix) to help you rethink the resources you are using. Begin replacing discriminatory or biased materials in your classroom with equitable ones.
- d) Seek support from the Toronto District School Board’s Equity Department, which offers human and material resources, including workshops on Challenging Class Bias.
- e) Exchange ideas and strategies with others (teachers, educational workers, administrators, parents, and students) in your school community.
- f) Continue to read professional materials that address classism and link it to other equity issues. Two excellent examples are *Open Minds to Equality* (by Nancy Schniedewinde and Ellen Davidson) and *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, (edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, 1997)—both of which are available on loan through the TDSB’s Fran Endicott Centre.



### Definitions<sup>1</sup>

#### **Ableism**

The individual, institutional, and societal/cultural beliefs and practises that oppress people who have mental, emotional, and physical disabilities.

#### **Class**

Relative social rank in terms of income, occupation, education, wealth, and/or power.

#### **Class Bias**

An attitude which leads to discrimination based on an individual's or group's income, occupation, education, wealth, and/or economic means.

#### **Class Indicator**

A factual or experiential factor that helps determine an individual's class, such as the type of work one does.

#### **Classism**

The institutional, cultural, and individual set of practices and beliefs that assign differential value to people according to their socio-economic class; and an economic system which creates significant inequality and causes human needs to go unmet.

#### **Cultural Classism**

The ways in which classism is manifest through our cultural norms and practices. It can often be found in the ideas and ideology behind something, such as the idea that intellectual work is inherently superior to physical labour.

#### **Individual Classism**

Classism on a personal or individual level, either in behaviour or attitudes, either conscious and intentional or unconscious and unintentional. Examples include the belief that a certain type of work is beneath you, or the assumption that everyone has the financial resources to go out to an expensive restaurant.

#### **Institutional Classism**

The ways in which conscious or unconscious classism is manifest in the various institutions in our society. Two examples from education: working class kids are

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted in part from pp. 88-89, p. 146, p.175, p. 198, p. 236, p. 245 of *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, 1997.

disproportionately directed into non-university academic streams, while the textbooks used in schools say little about the experiences and contributions of working peoples.

### **Class Continuum**

The ranking of individual or families in a society by income, wealth, status or power; the range of experiences out of which particular class identities are defined. Lines may be drawn at different points along this continuum, and labelled differently. Class is a relative thing, both subjectively and in terms of resources; our experience varies depending upon whether we look up or down the continuum, however, it is clear that everyone at the top is mostly agent/dominant, while everyone at the bottom is mostly target/subordinate.

Targets	Mostly Targets	Mostly Agents	Agents
Lower Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Ruling Class
Poor			Owning Class

### **Class Identity**

A label for a category of class experience, such as ruling class or working class.

#### **Ruling Class**

The stratum of people who hold positions or power in major institutions of the society.

#### **Owning Class/Rich**

The stratum of people who own income-producing assets sufficient to make paid employment unnecessary.

#### **Middle Class**

The stratum of people for whom breadwinners' higher education and/or specialized skills and/or credentials brings higher income and more security than those of working-class people.

#### **Upper-Middle Class**

The portion of the middle class with higher incomes due to professional jobs and/or investment income.

#### **Lower-Middle Class**

The portion of the middle class with lower and less stable incomes due to lower-skilled or unstable employment.

#### **Working Class**

The stratum of people whose income depends on wages for labour.

#### **Lower Class/Poor**

The stratum of people with incomes insufficient to meet basic human needs.

### **Discrimination**

The differential allocation of goods, resources, and services, and the limitation of access to full participation in society based on individual membership in a particular social group.

### **Heterosexism**

The individual, institutional, and society/cultural beliefs and practices based on the belief that heterosexuality is the only normal and acceptable sexual orientation.

### **Homophobia**

The fear, hatred, or intolerance of lesbians and gay men for any behaviour that falls outside of traditional gender roles. Homophobic acts can range from name-calling to violence targeting lesbian or gay people.

### **Prejudice**

Is an *attitude* towards a group that may be the result of a stereotype. For example, 'I like Group X because they are all such and such', or 'I dislike members of the same group because they are such and such'.

### **Sexism**

The individual, institutional, and society/cultural beliefs and practices that privilege men and subordinate women.

### **Stereotype**

An *idea* held about a particular group that assumes that all members of the group share some general quality, and not allowing for individual differences. For example, that 'they' are smart, stupid, good at athletics, hardworking, or lazy.

Also, an undifferentiated, simplistic attribution that involves a judgement of habits, traits, abilities, or expectations and is assigned as a characteristic to all members of a group regardless of individual variation and with no attention to the relation between the attribution and the social contexts in which they have arisen.

### **Racism**

In Canada, the *systematic* subordination of members of targeted racial groups who have *relatively* little social power in Canada (Blacks, First Nations, and Asians), by the members of the agent racial group who have relatively more social power (Whites). This subordination is supported by the actions of individuals, cultural norms and values, and the institutional structures and practices of society.



## Issues to Consider When Teaching About Class Bias<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Taboos about class and the myth of a classless society

Many of us have learned early in life not to disclose the facts or details of our class identities. This silence powerfully maintains the invisibility of class. Not talking about class supports the dominant mythology that we live in a classless society, or at least one in which class does not matter very much because we are all able to move up in class if we work hard enough.

### 2. The work ethic and the myth of a substantial class mobility

Canadians tend to assume that any person can earn enough income to own his or her own home and provide comfortably for his or her own family if he or she is smart enough or works hard enough. The fact that most of us can point to at least one example where someone has jumped classes reinforces the myth of class mobility and the assumption that those who don't move up the class ladder lack a strong work ethic. While it is true that there is some class fluidity in Canada, the reality is that class is much less fluid than most people think. Many studies have linked the post-secondary enrolments and economic status of subjects very strongly to their parents' education and occupations. One study showed that one's father's occupation is the best predictor of one's own income level—more important than intelligence, level of education, or years in the work force. Over the past 15 years, Canadian government policies have rewarded asset holders at the expense of income earners, making it more difficult than ever for working people to move up the economic ladder.

### 3. Class as a continuum

It is useful to look at class as a continuum marked by relative categories that move from poor/lower class, to working class, to middle class, to owning class and ruling class. These relative rankings are defined by income, wealth, status, and power. Because class is a continuum, it is often unclear where and on what basis to draw the line between haves and have-nots. The prevailing ideology—and very often, government and media rhetoric—has successfully drawn a line between the poor (“lazy welfare bums”) and the rest of (“hard-working”) society. We are often directed to blame the victims of our economy for our economic problems. As much as possible, then, efforts to overcome class bias should include analyses of the causes of economic equality and poverty, as well as attention to who benefits from existing economic relationships.

### 4. Hidden history

History is almost always taught from the perspective of the privileged. Much of what we read in our textbooks, for example, is told from the perspective of political and military leaders and other famous people who are drawn disproportionately from the upper classes. The perceptions and

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted with permission from pp. 4-5 of *The Growing Divide: Inequality and the Roots of Economic Insecurity*, by United For a Fair Economy, 37 Temple Place, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02111, Phone: (617) 423-0191 E-mail: [stw@stw.org](mailto:stw@stw.org) Web: [www.stw.org](http://www.stw.org) OR TDSJ

realities of everyday working people are rarely featured. The history of resistance to classism in Canada and globally also largely remains invisible.

### **5. The conflation of democracy and capitalism**

During the Cold War, capitalism and communism became polarized. Most western governments and the mainstream media, who support them, equated capitalism with democracy, and communism, by comparison, with undemocratic and totalitarian political systems. Raising issues of class inequality in our society can lead to being labelled “communist,” “socialist,” “antidemocratic,” “red,” or even “un-Canadian.” This name-calling has often had the effect of marginalizing criticism of our economic structure.

It is important to make the distinction between democracy and capitalism so that we may address issues of economic democracy (see UN Declaration of Human Rights – Articles 22-25) and the failures of our present economic system to distribute wealth and public goods equitably. Political and economic challenges to the economic order should not be dismissed as opposing democracy, but rather be viewed as an important part of a vibrant democracy.

### **6. Economic mystification**

Economic concepts often seem overwhelming to people who are unfamiliar with even the basics (e.g. the difference between gross and net income, GNP, profit, or the difference between income and wealth). Math anxiety and math phobia also often contribute to a feeling of disempowerment or distrust of statistical information, (e.g., statistics on poverty levels, which vary greatly depending on the definition of poverty that is being used).

### **7. Hopelessness and helplessness**

The intensity of feelings of hopelessness and helplessness that arise when we focus on the vastness of inequality can be overwhelming. Many strategies seem too insignificant in comparison to the immensity of the problem. The need to work against classism on a systemic level is overwhelmingly evident. This can lead to an enormous sense of helplessness. The fact that class inequality is getting worse rather than better can lead to overpowering hopelessness. It is important to highlight hopeful strategies and examples.

### **8. Streaming**

This is one of the key ways in which schools act as reproducers of class relationships. Streaming is the sorting of students according to perceived ability, and is often based on the assumption that students’ abilities (assessed by subjective evaluation and biased standardized tests) are relatively static. Streaming creates unequal learning opportunities; and while it affects all students, streaming particularly harms low income students and students of colour. Students placed at lower levels experience instruction and curriculum that is less challenging and experience lower expectations. Differences in learning abilities are thus created by streaming students, and are not necessarily a reflection of a student’s true abilities. As learning gaps widen by each passing grade level, it becomes increasingly difficult for students to move out of the

lower level to a higher level. This in turn has serious implications for students' future endeavours, especially participation in post-secondary education and career opportunities.

### **9. Hidden Curriculum**

Curriculum refers to what is taught, how it is taught, and what the learning environment looks like. These combined considerations influence the knowledge, skill, attitudes and behaviours acquired by students. Hidden curriculum refers not only to content that has traditionally and systemically been excluded or marginalized from the curriculum, but also includes comments and ideas that remain unchallenged in the school or classroom environment which in turn are internalized by students to be acceptable and/or accurate.



## Guidelines for Teachers

### 1. Create a safe classroom climate

It is important that a classroom climate of trust, respect, and support exists so that students' attitudes, knowledge, and feelings can be expressed safely. If you need to, have the class engage in trust-building exercises before you begin activities that require students to take significant risks.

### 2. Acknowledge students' feelings.

Intellect and emotion are connected. Efforts to address issues of class bias and economic inequality can expose and provoke strong fears, concerns, and hopes. These need to be acknowledged if students are to be able to deal with them well.

### 3. Deal appropriately with your own feelings.

a) Be aware of your own feelings. They will help keep you in touch with what is happening in your classroom.

b) Be careful that your feelings and views do not dominate the class. Monitor the discussion to make sure others' ideas and views are being elicited and heard—even if you don't agree with them. Try to get the other students in your class to respond. Where possible, ask a question rather than make a statement to make a point.

### 4. Be a good role model.

Teachers can be excellent models of how to share power and treat others with respect and interest. For example, if students tend to defer to you for the answer or refer all their comments to you, you can redirect the conversation to involve the rest of the group. Also, by expressing your opinion and indicating that you are prepared to subject it to the same critical scrutiny required of students, you can also model the ability to take a stand without being dogmatic.

### 5. Promote dialogue rather than debate.

Dialogue suggests respect for the views of others even if they are different from one's own views. It also requires that you and your students are open to the possibility of broadening your perspectives on an issue through listening to a range of ideas.

### 6. Create and select appropriate material.

The most powerful equity activities teachers plan for students begin with strong connections to students' own experiences and concerns. This means that you will need to learn about and be conscious of your students' class backgrounds and attitudes about class.

In order to properly address your students' need as learners who are addressing classism you will likely need to modify at least some of the activities and materials provided in this document. You may wish to simplify certain tasks to make them more appropriate for younger audiences, for example, or require more senior students to extend their learning by conducting independent research on a given topic.

### **7. Consider the next steps.**

The complexity of the controversial issues of class bias and economic inequality means that there are rarely simple answers. Moreover, class relationships within Canada and around the world are highly dynamic and currently are shifting rapidly.

This means that we all must continually update our own learning if we are to be able to provide students with accurate information and pose relevant questions.

In considering next steps you should think about how socio-economic class issues specifically manifest themselves in your own school.

Think about how you might empower students to be able to participate as democratic citizens who are able to engage in the issues and solve the problems they have identified in their communities.

Think about what you and your students might need to do to find hope for a more economically just and equitable world.

**Part I:**

**Understanding Power**

# Lesson #1 Defining Classism, Racism, and Sexism

**Time:** 70 minutes

### Overview

This lesson provides an introduction to basic definitions of classism, racism, and sexism.

### Purpose

Students will be able to identify the operation of classist, racist, and sexist behaviours and ideas. Students will begin to appreciate the many diverse ways in which power operates.

### Preparation

#### Materials

1. An envelope for each group with examples of racist, sexist, and classist behaviours and attitudes written on individual strips of paper (see Examples below).
2. Chart paper, board space, or overhead for post-activity.

#### Background Information

Although issues of class, race, and gender interact with, and affect one another, as an introduction to these concepts and definitions, it may be useful to present them in isolation in order for students to have some clarity about what each of these terms mean. This may also help students to identify discrimination, based upon class, race, and gender, from concrete examples. As the unit progresses, it is important for students to appreciate how power relating to gender, to race, to class, etc., operates together and the ways in which classism is often intensified through race, gender, and ability. For example, many people who are poor have full or part-time jobs, but don't make enough money to live. The challenges of finding work to support oneself, and/or one's family are different, and often greater, if one is a woman, person of colour, or disabled.

#### Getting Started

1. Ask students what the word 'unfair' means? What makes something *unfair*? Students can be encouraged to think about a time that they didn't feel that they were treated fairly in order to connect with the discussion on a personal level.
2. What are some synonyms that could be used to describe something that is 'unfair'?

#### Main Activity

1. Divide students into small working groups (e.g., 3-5). Tell students that they are going to explore additional examples of people who are being treated unfairly.
2. Give each group an envelope. In the envelope are strips of paper with examples of racist, sexist, and classist behaviours and ideas written on each strip individually (see examples below).

3. Do not identify these terms for students, as the goal here is to have students attempt to classify examples of unfair behaviour into three groups of their own choosing.
4. Ask students to discuss and decide which examples of unfair behaviours and ideas belong together and why. Have them classify the examples into 3 categories. There are different ways the examples can be divided so encourage each group to decide what makes the most sense to them and to be prepared to explain why.
5. Depending on the grade level and familiarity that students have with these issues, they may find different ways to divide the examples. For example,
  - a. they may divide them in 3 categories: by race, by class, and by gender, but may not be able to name them; or
  - b. they may divide them into 3 groups and be able to name all or some of the categories as classist, racist, and sexist.

### Post-Activity

1. As a class, ask students how they felt about the examples they were asked to categorize.
2. Ask each group to share their categories and each of the examples they placed within each category.
3. What makes each example unfair?
4. How did they decide upon their categories?
5. How are the categories that each group selected similar or different from one another?
6. What kinds of behaviours or ideas are represented in the examples? If students haven't explicitly named the behaviours as classist, racist, and sexist, introduce these terms as a way to name and talk about the different examples (see *Definitions*).
7. Record students' responses on chart paper. This chart can also be used for the next two lessons: "Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination" and "Mapping Power".
8. As **classism is often the least named and explored form of oppression**, students may require direct guidance to appreciate the dimensions of classism as being linked to income, occupation, education, and wealth. **Recall that class bias is an attitude that leads to discrimination based on the above indicators.** This is reinforced throughout the unit and students should start to develop a language and framework with which to think and talk about classism.
9. (Optional) As a suggested journal/writing assignment, ask students how they felt when they were reading examples of people who were treated in ways that are classist, racist, or sexist. Did any of the examples remind them of a time that they were treated in ways that are classist, racist, or sexist, or of a time when they treated someone in these ways? Ask students to describe what happened and how they felt.

### Extension

This lesson lends itself well to extending conversations about justice to include homophobia and ableism. This could be done with additional examples generated by the teacher and/or student observations. Whenever possible, students should also be encouraged to explore these dimensions of inequity.

### Examples for Envelopes

Each envelope should have about 12 examples in total, with at least 3 for each of classism, racism, and sexism. The examples below focus on institutional and historically based exercises of power.

### Classism

1. Many more students from working class backgrounds are registered in applied, workplace, and college- streamed classes and are less likely to enter and graduate from a post-secondary program.
2. In 1998, 49% of 18-21 year olds from low-income families had attended college or university compared to 71% among the highest income group. Level of formal education is positively correlated to access to income through paid work.
3. Many people who are poor have full or part-time jobs but don't make enough money to live.
4. Many people on social assistance do not have sufficient income to support themselves or their families. For example, in Ontario today, the amount, once rent and food are paid, that a single parent on social assistance with one child has for all other expenses, per person, per day—is \$2.24. ([www.welfarewatch.toronto.on.ca/ossn/pindex.htm](http://www.welfarewatch.toronto.on.ca/ossn/pindex.htm))
5. “In History, we learn a lot about different Prime Ministers but we don't learn much about people who built the railroads or worked in factories.”

### Racism

## Understanding Power

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1. Between 1855-1904, the Canadian federal government imposed a head tax on immigrants from China. In 1855, the tax was \$50 and by 1904, it was \$500. The government collected between \$18.9-\$24 million from an estimated 81,000 Chinese immigrants. At the same time it provided financial incentives (encouragements) for European immigrants to settle in the West.
2. During World War II, Japanese Canadians had their homes and businesses confiscated and were fired from their jobs because they were considered a threat to national security. Although Canada was also at war with Italy and Germany, similar measures against German and Italian Canadians were not taken.
3. Even though white adult men have had the right to vote since 1867 and white adult women in Canada won the right to vote in federal elections in 1918, people of Asian, Inuit or Status Indian descent were not entitled to vote until years later. People of Asian descent were not permitted to vote until 1948, while people of Inuit or Status Indian descent were not permitted to vote until 1960.
4. For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a policy of Apartheid in South Africa. Whites had control of the government, economy, and a high standard of living. Most of the Blacks in the country, who comprised two-thirds of the population, had to live on rural reserves in poverty and with limited rights.

### Sexism

1. Even 50 years after Confederation, women in Canada were not allowed to vote. During the 1910s groups of women, often called suffragettes, became organized and vocal in their efforts to improve the political rights of women. They had to struggle and make many personal sacrifices in order for some women to win the right to vote in the 1918 in federal elections.
2. Of all the people elected to Parliament in Canada, 3485 have been men and 81 women. In the House of Commons in 2000, men held 240 seats while women held 60.
3. According to police reports for 1999, 523 women suffered major physical injuries or died at the hands of their husbands or common-law partners. This figure is five times higher than the number of men (100) who experienced major physical injuries or death at the hands of their

spouse in the same time period. (It should also be noted that many cases of abuse are not reported to the police).

4. We learn disproportionately about men in our history classes compared to women. When asked to name great thinkers, writers, composers, painters, many people will name men almost exclusively.
5. Women remain grossly underpaid in the labour market. On average, in the year 2000, women working full-time for a full-year make 27% less money than men who work full-time for a full-year. (*Women in Canada 2000*, supra, p. 141)



### Lesson #2      Mapping Power

**Time:** 55 minutes

#### Overview

This lesson provides an elaboration of the interconnected ways in which power operates through ideas, individual actions, and institutional practices.<sup>1</sup>

#### Purpose

Students will be able to identify racist, sexist, and classist behaviours and ideas. Students will begin to understand the different (institutional, ideological, individual) and connected ways in which power operates.

#### Preparation

##### Materials

Chart paper with the examples of racist, sexist, and classist behaviour and ideas from Lesson #1: *Defining Classism, Racism, and Sexism*.

##### Background Information

Review definitions of classism, racism, and sexism from previous lesson with the class. Again, as an extension, this lesson can also be broadened to include homophobia and ableism. Review definitions of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination (individual and institutional).

#### Main Activity

1. Individually, ask students to complete each of the following statements with at least 2 responses. Their responses should not be the same as the ones on chart paper from the previous lesson.
  - a. I know that racism is happening when I see/hear...
  - b. I know that sexism is happening when I see/hear...
  - c. I know that classism is happening when I see/hear...
2. Ask students to share their examples with the class. Record responses on the board, overhead or flip chart. As you record them, sort them visually into 3 groups, depending on whether the examples are institutional, individual, or ideas and beliefs. Each of the groups should roughly represent 1 corner of a triangle. Do not name or label each of the groups.
3. Institutional examples
  4. School courses ignore or marginalize the contributions and history of women, people of colour and working people.
  5. The media portrays certain groups of people as criminals.
  6. Certain students are streamed into applied, workplace and college classes.
  7. None of the kids in the storybooks look like me.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Educating for a Change*, Arnold and Burke et al. This activity adapted from AnneMarie Stewart and Barb Thomas.

8. Ideas/Beliefs
  9. Poor people don't work hard.
  10. Some kinds of work are more respected and valued than others (e.g., physical work vs. intellectual work).
  11. We should have tighter immigration controls because many immigrants are on welfare or are criminals and don't really contribute to our country.
12. Individual examples
  13. Name calling.ii) Inappropriate (racist, sexist, classist, homophobic) jokes.
  14. Physically threatening, bullying or harming someone.

[Insert triangle graphic.](#)

Many examples will likely be based on individual experiences, as students may be less able to identify institutional and ideological exercises of power. This can also provide a diagnostic evaluation of students' prior knowledge of how power works and their familiarity with certain systems. This can be an important starting and reference point to build on as the unit progresses to help students appreciate how systems of power are linked to one another. If necessary, refer to the chart paper from the Lesson #1: *Defining Classism, Racism, and Sexism*, which focuses on historical and institutional examples, to fill out the categories.

### Post-Activity

1. Tell students that you have organized their examples into 3 categories. Ask them what they notice about the examples in each of the categories?
  - a. How could we name each of the categories? Draw in the lines linking the categories and making visible the triangle. Introduce the categories of institutional examples, ideas and individual examples that correspond to the different sides of the triangle.
  - b. Why is it easier for us to think of examples in certain categories?
2. How are these categories connected to one another? If we could draw arrows to show the relationship between them, which way would the arrows point? Help students to think of all the ways in which the categories are connected to one another (e.g. how one causes the other and vice versa.).
3. How does this triangle help us to understand how classism works? Reinforce that classism operates in institutions, individual behaviours, and ideas. Recall that classism both refers to:
  - a. Assigning people value, or distributing power, based upon their socio-economic class; that is, their income, occupation, education, and wealth.
  - b. An economic system and society which creates significant inequality and causes human needs to go unmet.

**Thus, classism can be understood as a system of power that operates in institutions, individual behaviours, and ideas, and which is linked to income, occupation, education, and wealth.**

This triangle is one way of conceptualising this system of power.

4. As this can be a challenging concept for students to grasp, keep this triangle on overhead or chart paper to refer to throughout subsequent lessons. It is an important tool in locating examples of classism and exercises of power to understand the interconnected ways in which power operates. Also, when considering *Working for Change* (Section VII), it is important for students to have an analysis of how power is organized.

**Part II:**

**Needs, Wants, Haves**

## Lesson #3      Poverty in Canada Quiz

**Time: 30 minutes**

### Overview

The poverty quiz provides students with a broad introduction to poverty issues in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will begin to critically examine their misconceptions about poverty. Students will learn about the scope of poverty in Canada and which groups in our community/society most often experience poverty.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of “Poverty Quiz”

#### Background Information

This quiz at the start of the unit allows you to assess students’ prior knowledge and opinions about poverty in Canada. It also provides students with exposure to a wide range of poverty issues.

### Main Activity

1. Distribute handouts of the Poverty Quiz to students and ask them to complete the quiz individually. Ask students to think about how they know what they know, and to be aware of the information they are using to answer questions. (I.e., From where have they gotten their information or impressions? From their family? The media?, etc.)
2. Ask students to work in pairs or small groups to review the quiz as a group. Share responses as well as the information used to arrive at answers. Based on additional information from their group interactions, students may modify responses.

### Post-Activity

1. As a class, take up each of the questions in the Poverty Quiz. Discuss the following:
  - a. What information did students use to determine their responses?
  - b. Where did they get their information?
  - c. Was the information accurate or based on stereotypes (see Definitions) about people living in poverty?
  - d. What surprised students about the quiz?

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<sup>1</sup> Idea for activity and some questions dapted from NAPO: National Anti-Poverty Organization – Oranisation Nationale Anti-Pauvrete. Web site: [www.napo-onap](http://www.napo-onap).

2. Record a list of questions students may have about poverty and the distribution of economic resources for further investigation. Keep questions on chart paper or overhead for future reference.

<b>POVERTY QUIZ</b>	
<p>1. What are the chances that you could experience poverty in your lifetime?</p> <p>a. 1 in 8 b. 1 in 4 c. 1 in 3 d. 1 in 2</p>	<p>1. What is the maximum amount of money a single employable social assistance recipient in New Brunswick can receive per month?</p> <p>a. \$260 b. \$310 c. \$425 d. \$565</p>
<p>2. According to Statistics Canada Low-Income Cut Offs, how many Canadians were considered poor in 1999?</p> <p>a. 956,000 b. 1,567,000 c. 4,886,000 d. 10,676,000</p>	<p>2. According to Campaign 2000, what percentage of Canadian children (under 18) were considered poor in 2000?</p> <p>a. 11.5% b. 12.3% c. 16.5% d. 24.3%</p>
<p>3. What percentage of single women in Canada live in poverty?</p> <p>a. 25.8% b. 36.5% c. 44.4% d. 57.4%</p>	<p>3. How prevalent is welfare fraud in a large province like Ontario as a percentage of total welfare budgets?</p> <p>a. 2 - 4% b. 5 - 8% c. 10 - 12% d. 20 - 28%</p>
<p>4. The world's richest 225 people have the combined wealth of how many of the world's poorest people?</p> <p>a. 400,000 b. 1,500,000 c. 500,000,000 d. 2,500,000,000</p>	<p>4. Between 1976 and 1997, by how much did the minimum wage increase?</p> <p>a. 20% b. 40% c. 60% d. 80%</p>
<p>5. Between 1976 and 1997, by how much did the cost of living increase?</p> <p>a. 25% b. 50% c. 75% d. 100%</p>	<p>5. What percent of the poor in Canada are men?</p> <p>a. 20% b. 44.6% c. 55.4% d. 80%</p>

Poverty Quiz Continued...	
<p>1. What percentage of the poor are women?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 20%</li> <li>b. 44.6%</li> <li>c. 55.2%</li> <li>d. 80%</li> </ul>	<p>1. What percent of food bank users are children?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 10%</li> <li>b. 20%</li> <li>c. 30%</li> <li>d. 40%</li> </ul>
<p>2. What percentage of marriages end in divorce?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 10%</li> <li>b. 28%</li> <li>c. 25%</li> <li>d. 33%</li> </ul>	<p>2. How many times more likely will families led by women be poor than families led by men?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 1</li> <li>b. 2</li> <li>c. 3</li> <li>d. 4</li> </ul>
<p>3. For every dollar earned by men in Canada, how much do women earn on average?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. \$0.48</li> <li>b. \$0.73</li> <li>c. \$0.84</li> <li>d. \$0.97</li> </ul>	<p>3. According to a 2001 Statistics Canada Survey, in 1999, the top 50% of adults had what percent of the wealth in the country?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 28.4</li> <li>b. 46.4</li> <li>c. 72.4</li> <li>d. 94.4</li> </ul>
<p>4. Children from low income families are more likely to have (circle all that apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Lower levels of vision, hearing, speech</li> <li>b. Higher infant mortality</li> <li>c. A home in a less safe neighbourhood</li> <li>d. Higher incidents of mental disorders</li> <li>e. Higher exposure to environmental contaminants</li> </ul>	<p>4. The average salary (not including stock options or benefits) of a CEO of a Canadian corporation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. \$50,000</li> <li>b. \$75,000</li> <li>c. \$125,000</li> <li>d. \$725,000</li> </ul>
<p>5. In 2000, on average, female-led lone parent families would still require how much additional money to reach the poverty line?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. \$210.00 to reach the poverty line</li> <li>b. No extra money.</li> <li>c. \$5,310 to reach the poverty line.</li> <li>d. \$8,510 to reach the poverty line.</li> </ul>	<p>5. Which of the following countries has no inheritance tax (a tax that kicks in at a very high rate and affects only the wealthiest 5-10% of the population in order to distribute wealth more equitably).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. England</li> <li>b. Canada</li> <li>c. Sweden</li> <li>d. Germany</li> </ul>



<p><b>6. Percentage by which maximum welfare benefits in Ontario were cut in October 1995?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. 3.5%</li><li>b. 9.3%</li><li>c. 13.5%</li><li>d. 21.6%</li></ul>	<p><b>6. Percentage by which maximum welfare benefits in Ontario have increased since 1995?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. 0%</li><li>b. 21.6%</li><li>c. 46.0%</li><li>d. 52.3%</li></ul>

**BONUS:**

How much does it cost to send a letter to the federal government to share your concerns about poverty?

- a) 45 cents
- b) 75 cents
- c) \$1.50
- d) nothing

## Answers:

### Lesson 3 - Poverty In Canada Quiz

1. c) 1 in 3

The Economic Council of Canada estimates that one in three Canadians will experience poverty at some point in their working careers. (Economic Council of Canada, 1992)

2. a) \$260/month

New Brunswick has the lowest social assistance rates in Canada. As of March 1996, single employable social assistance recipients can receive up to only \$260/month. A single parent with one child can receive up to \$720/month and a couple with two children can only receive \$806/month. (National Union of Provincial and General Employees Research Department, 1996)

3. c) 4,886,000

That is 17% of Canada's total population. (NAPO, Dec. 1995)

4. c) 16.5% (1,390,000 children).

Since 1970 child poverty has increased by 21% ("Poverty Amidst Prosperity: Building a Canada for All Children" - 2002 Report Card on Child Poverty Campaign 2000).

<http://www.campaign2000.ca/rc/rc02/NOV02reportcard.pdf>

5. c) 44.4%

Unequal wage rates between the sexes and increasing need for a two-income household contributes to 44.4% of all unattached women living in poverty compared to 34% of men. Again, among single parent families, 56% of those headed by mothers are poor, while 24% of those headed by fathers live in poverty. (Statistics Canada, *Income Distributions by Size in Canada*, 1995; Statistics Canada 2000 p 139 cited in "Women and Poverty: A fact sheet by Marika Morris, for CRIAW", March 2002. Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, [www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty\\_fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty_fact_sheet.htm))

6. a) 2-4%

A study conducted by a national auditing firm estimated fraud to be in the range of 2.59-3.66% of the Ontario welfare budget. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives states that the percentage is under 3%. We have reason to believe that this estimate can be generally applied to other parts of the country. (Peat Marwick, *Welfare Fraud and Over Payment: Final Report to the Ontario Social Assistance Review Committee*, Toronto, 1987, p.ii; also Micheal Oliphant and Chris Slosser, *Ontario Alternative Budget Technical Paper #6* Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, May 2003).

Fraud in the income tax system is in the order of 20% (NAPO – see appendix 6). Indeed, the provincial Auditor of Ontario noted that “of the 763,000 corporations with active accounts on the Ministry’s tax roll, 355,000 corporations – or one in two – did not file required returns.” (2002 Annual Report of the Provincial Auditor of Ontario. S 3.02: Coporat5ions Tax, p. 8). [This is cited in the Ontario Alternative Budget Technical Paper #6, May 2003. <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/oab/index.html>]

7. d) 2,500,000,000

It would take the combined wealth of 2.5 billion of the globe’s poorest individuals (47% of the world’s population) to equal the combined wealth of the globe’s 225 richest. That means these super-rich 225 people control almost half the world’s wealth. Indeed the three richest people’s assets exceed the combined Gross Domestic Product of 48 developing countries (see the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women. [http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty\\_fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty_fact_sheet.htm)) [1997 data from *Forbes* magazine, quoted by Jacqueline Neun, “Confronting the growing gap between rich and poor,” *Mandate* 30(2) April 1999, p. 20. *Mandate* is a publication of the United Church of Canada.]

8. b) 40%

1. d) 100%

The average Torontonian spends \$220.33 for clothing, health care, personal care and household furnishings/equipment each month and an additional \$98.75 is required for public transportation. However, a single person receiving welfare has just \$9.62 per month in his/her basic needs allowance once low-cost nutritious foods have been purchased. *Ontario Alternative Budget Technical Paper #6*, May 2003. Website: <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/oab/index.html>

2. b) 44.6%

Canadian Council on Social Development Poverty Statistics “Percentage and Number of Persons in Low Income/Poverty, by Age, Sex and Family Characteristics, Canada 1990 and 1999” Last updated 2002.

3. c) 55.4%

Canadian Council on Social Development Poverty Statistics “Percentage and Number of Persons in Low Income/Poverty, by Age, Sex and Family Characteristics, Canada 1990 and 1999” Last updated 2002.

4. d)

According to Campaign 2000’s *2002 Report Card on Child Poverty*, one in six children, or 1,139,00 children, are living in poverty in Canada (website: <http://www.campaign2000.ca/rc/rc02/NOV02reportcard.pdf>).

5. d)

6. d)

[http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty\\_fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty_fact_sheet.htm)

With many divorced families where custody is not shared, financial support agreements with the non-custodial parent (usually the father) are either not in place or in arrears (Statistics Canada, “National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth: Changes in the Family Environment,” *The Daily*, June 2, 1998.)

7. b)

Citing Statcan, 2001 p.138 on CRIAW website: [http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty\\_fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty_fact_sheet.htm)

In 1998 (the most recent data available), women have average (or median) incomes of \$13,806 while men’s incomes average at \$22,673. This income gap persists across age, educational attainment, labour market situation and family type (Gender Inequality in Canada: A Status Report for 2001 Executive Summary).

Canada has the 5th largest wage gap between women and men full-time workers out of world’s 29 most developed countries. Only Spain, Portugal, Japan and Korea have larger wage gaps.

(Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD in Figures (Paris: OECD, 1999)

8. d) 94.4%

The wealthiest ten percent of family units held 53 percent of the wealth in 1999.

The state of inequitable wealth distribution in Canada means that 70% of our population has only 19% of the wealth, while the wealthiest 30% of families own 81% of Canada's net worth. [Adapted from "Rags and Riches: Wealth Inequality in Canada Summary, December 4, 2002"; see also "Behind the Numbers: Economic facts, figures and analysis Volume 3, Number 4, May 15 2001, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.]

9. a) b) c) d) e)

"The persistence of poverty compromises the immediate and long-term health, social development and cognitive ability of our future generations. Children who live in poverty encounter more hurdles to healthy development and are at an elevated risk for a wide range of negative outcomes to their health and wellbeing. Research shows that poor children are more likely to experience a host of negative outcomes including lower functioning vision, hearing, speech, mobility, dexterity, and cognition. Poor children are also less likely to live in safe neighbourhoods and are at a disproportionate risk of exposure to environmental contaminants." Excerpt from Campaign 2000's 2002 Child Poverty Report Card. (Website:

<http://www.campaign2000.ca/rc/rc02/NOV02reportcard.pdf>)

10. d) \$725,000

Centre for Social Justice, 1998, p. A12. cited in: [http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty\\_fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/Poverty_fact_sheet.htm)

Overall, the bottom 50% of Canadians, in terms of owning wealth, own a total of only 5.6% of Canada's wealth. One in five families has effectively no net wealth whatsoever, and many of these actually have "negative wealth." In the bottom 10% the median family (the median is the family right in the middle of this group if ranked from most to least wealthy) owed \$2,100 more than they owned, while median wealth of the second 10% was a paltry \$3,100, the equivalent of a used car. From "Behind the numbers: Economic facts, figures and analysis – Volume 3, Number 4 May 15, 2001 "Are we all capitalists now? The distribution of wealth in Canada – By Marc Lee

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/btn3-4.pdf>;

also see Rags and Riches: Wealth Inequality in Canada

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/rags-and-riches.pdf>

11. d) \$8,510

In 2000, two parent families continued to fall deeper into poverty and would need, on average, \$10,032 just to reach the poverty line. Campaign 2000's 2002 *Child Poverty Report Card*.  
<http://www.campaign2000.ca/rc/rc02/NOV02reportcard.pdf>

12. b) Canada

Of the 29 industrialized countries in the OECD, only Canada, New Zealand, and Australia have no inheritance tax. These taxes typically kick in at a very high rate and affect only the wealthiest 5-10% of the population. The absence of an inheritance tax (also called a wealth transfer tax) in Canada is an enormous advantage to the wealthy, a gift from other taxpayers of \$3 billion a year to the rich Canadians.

13. d)

22. a)

BONUS: d) nothing (No postage is required)

Letters can be mailed to the Prime Minister at:  
House of Commons,  
Ottawa, Ontario,  
K1A 0A6.

E-mail can be sent to the Prime Minister at: [Chretien.J@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Chretien.J@parl.gc.ca) and soon to [Martin.P@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Martin.P@parl.gc.ca).

## Lesson #4      Food Record

**Time:** 30 minutes (over the course of a week)

### Overview

This lesson fosters an awareness of the money required to eat.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will know how much it costs to satisfy the basic need to eat.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of “Food Record Instructions”

7 copies of “Daily Food Record” per student<sup>2</sup>

#### Note:

Be aware that some students in your class may feel uncomfortable with this exercise for any number of reasons, including: socio-economic status, faith, or history of eating disorders. Make sure that you are careful to ensure that students are not required to share their food records with others, if they do not want to. Emphasize that the Food Record is private.

### Main Activity

1. Go over the Food Record Instructions with students and have each student keep a personal food record for a week, recording how much it costs on the Daily Food Records. (Note that these Food Records can be kept as a reference for Lesson # 28 “Supermarket Exercise”.
2. After one week show students how to extrapolate and figure out approximately how much it costs for each of them to eat for a month (see Food Record Instructions steps 6-8).

### Post Activity

1. Ask students how it felt during the week to keep track of everything that they were eating and its cost.
2. Was it challenging to do so?
3. What observations do you have about the cost of your own diet?

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from an activity by Moira Wong, Asst. Head of E.S.L., Riverdale Collegiate, Toronto Board of Education.

<sup>2</sup> This is one version of a food record that is based upon a fairly traditional template to meet a person’s nutritional needs. For alternative nutritional guidelines (e.g. vegetarian, Mediterranean, Asian, Latin, Senior, Diabetic, etc.) you may wish to consult

<http://www.heartcenteronline.com/myheartdr/home/>

Click on “Prevention Center”, and then scroll down to, and click on, “Dietary guidelines”.





## Food Record Instructions

This food record is confidential. Your teacher will only be checking to see that it is completed; otherwise only you need to see it. It is designed to help you produce a fairly accurate estimate of how much money you spend on food intake in a month by having you keep a record for a week. You will have a chance to compare your estimate later to government estimates of monthly food costs.

1. Complete one sheet every day for a week.
2. For each meal or snack, list all the food and drink you consume under the appropriate column on the left side, under the heading 'item'.
3. Calculate how much each food or drink item you consume costs and list the amount to the right of the item under 'cost'.
4. If you eat a combination meal at a restaurant (e.g., a chicken dinner) that is difficult to divide into parts, write the meal and cost under the category that seems to fit best. Be sure to factor in the price of the taxes and the tip.

**Example #1:** You eat a bowl of cereal for breakfast. You list 'cereal' under 'grains' across from where it says 'BREAKFAST'. The amount of cereal you eat is one tenth of a box of cereal that costs \$4.00, so you do the math:  $\$4.00/10 = \$0.40$ . Therefore you write 0.40 next to 'cereal' as the cost of cereal. (You repeat the same procedure for any milk you pour on your cereal and everything else you eat and drink for breakfast.)

**Example #2:** You eat a banana for a snack you list 'banana' under 'FRUITS AND VEGETABLES' across from where it says 'SNACK'. The banana is part of a bunch of 5 bananas that costs \$.75, so you do the math:  $\$0.75 / 5 = \$0.15$ . Therefore you write 0.15 next to 'banana' as the cost of the banana.

**Example #3:** You eat a chicken dinner at Swiss Chalet so you list 'chicken dinner' under 'MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES' across from where it says 'DINNER'. The dinner cost \$4.99, so you do the math:  $\$4.99 \times 1.15$  (P.S.T. + G.S.T.) + \$1.00 (tip) = \$6.73. Therefore you write 6.73 next to 'chicken dinner' as the cost of the chicken dinner.

5. At the end of each day add up the cost of each column of food and write each total next to 'TOTAL COST OF FOODS EATEN FROM EACH GROUP'.
6. Add up all you food group totals for each day to get a daily total.

7. Add up all your daily totals to get a weekly total.
8. Multiply the weekly total by 4.25 to get an estimated monthly total.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Daily Food Record: Day # \_\_\_\_\_**

Foods Eaten	Milk & Alternatives		Meat & Alternatives		Fruit & Vegetables		Grains & Starches		Extras/Other	
	Item	Cost	Item	Cost	Item	Cost	Item	Cost	Item	Cost
<b>Breakfast</b>										
<b>Lunch</b>										
<b>Snack</b>										
<b>Dinner</b>										
<i>Total Cost from each Group</i>										

Daily total cost:

## Lesson # 5      Is This Menu Fair and Realistic?

**Time: 90 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson encourages students to evaluate the fairness of government assistance to individuals living in poverty and also provides an exploration of the impact of poverty through a first person narrative.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will be able to critically assess the content and cost of government suggested welfare menus in relation to the cost of the food they eat (Lesson # 4) and the diet of a welfare recipient. Students will recognize multiple perspectives on social assistance cuts and be encouraged to develop an informed personal perspective.

Students will be able to better appreciate the impact of poverty and hunger.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Students' completed weekly Food Records (see Lesson # 4 Food Record).

Class set of "Tsubouchi's Welfare Shopping List"

Class set of "Is this Menu Fair?"

Class set of "Draw Your Own Conclusions"

Class set of pp. 4 – 7, pp. 52 - 57 and p. 106 from *Dispatches From the Poverty Line*

1. Have students bring their completed Food Record sheets to class.
2. If you have not already done so, show students how to extrapolate and figure out approximately how much it might cost them to eat for a month. Are students surprised by how much it costs to eat?

### Main Activity

1. Explain the background to former Community and Social Services Minister Tsubouchi's monthly shopping list and distribute copies of it to students. You might say:  
"When the Ontario provincial government cut welfare payments by 21.6% in 1995, anti-poverty activists complained that it would be impossible for people on social assistance to afford to eat properly on their reduced monthly income. In response to complaints, then Social Services minister David Tsubouchi released a shopping list designed to prove that 'you could develop a healthy menu on the money available.'"<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that while welfare payments have remained more or less frozen since 1995, the costs of living during that period have increased significantly.
2. Ask students to individually answer questions 1-3 of Draw Your Own Conclusions handout.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from an activity by Moira Wong, Asst. Head of E.S.L., Riverdale Collegiate, Toronto Board of Education.

<sup>2</sup> "Taunts Hurlled at Tsubouchi," by Martin Mittelstaedt, *Globe and Mail*, Oct. 21, 1995

3. In small groups (e.g. 3-5), ask students to discuss the following questions:
  1. What were students' first impressions of the shopping list/menu? Does it seem appealing? Why or why not?
  2. The shopping list contains only 1 head of lettuce and 1 can of orange juice. Ask students if those seem to be realistic quantities for a month's time. How does this compare to what they consumed in their own food records?
  3. Critics of the list complain that it lacks many food items that most people eat such as salad dressing, tea, coffee, sugar, butter and others. Ask students whether they think that such items should be excluded. Did they eat any of these food items?
1. Regroup as a class and read statements #1, 2 and 3 from *Is this Menu Fair?* Ask students to explain what they think accounts for the differing points of view on what a person needs to spend on a monthly food budget.
2. Introduce and distribute the first set of readings from Pat Capponi's *Dispatches From the Poverty Line* (pp.4 - 7 and pp.52 - 57) and ask students to read out loud as a class.
  4. Ask students how Pat Capponi's cupboard (pp. 4 - 7) compares to the menu suggested by Tsubouchi.
  5. Hand out copies of p.106 in Capponi's book, "Harris, Eves Dine in Style" and as a class, compare the cost of Harris and Eves' meal to those promoted by Tsubouchi and eaten by Capponi. What do they think and how do they feel about the difference?
  6. ALTERNATIVELY, especially for younger students, have them read and discuss some shorter stories from *Targeting the Most Vulnerable* that are actual experiences collected in food banks and community agencies across Toronto in support of Toronto's Pay the Rent and Feed the Kids campaign.
1. As another alternative activity, you can invite a person from the community to share their story with the class. For example, you may contact a local community centre, soup kitchen, food bank, or shelter to see if there are members of the community who would like to share their stories with the class.

### Post-Activity

In pairs, have students complete the Draw Your Own Conclusions questions 4-7. Many will have been discussed or at least touched on during the lesson.

### Extension

1. As an extension activity, have students assess the present situation of welfare and write a letter to the local newspaper or the Minister of Community and Social Services expressing their views. Students can research the amount of money welfare recipients are eligible to receive and how much the cost of living is in terms of the cost of food as well as rent, transportation and other basic living costs.
2. Ask students to research food bank use in Ontario for the last 10 years. What pattern do they notice about the number of people using food banks? What is the relationship between food bank use and welfare rates?



## Welfare shopping list

### Minister's choice

A sample shopping list for a single person on welfare from Ontario's Community and Social Services Minister. The total comes to \$90.21, not including applicable taxes.

#### GRAIN PRODUCTS:

Corn flakes (625 grams) x2	\$5.58
Quaker Oats (1 kilogram)	1.99
Whole wheat bread x3	2.97
Primo pasta (900 grams) x4	5.16
Whole grain rice (2 kilogram) x2	<u>6.58</u>
	\$22.28

#### VEGETABLES AND FRUIT:

Carrots (2 pounds)	\$0.99
Bananas (5 pieces) x2	1.38
Broccoli x2	2.98
Cauliflower x2	3.98
Apples (6 pieces) x2	2.58
Orange juice	0.99
Lettuce (1head)	1.79
Potatoes (10 pounds)	1.77
Oranges (6 pieces) x2	3.38
Mixed Vegetables	<u>2.49</u>
	\$22.33

#### DAIRY PRODUCTS:

Milk (4 litres) x4	\$14.76
Yogurt (175 grams) x12	2.99
Cheese (24 slices)	<u>3.19</u>
	\$20.94

#### MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES:

Ground beef (1 kilogram)	\$5.84
Chicken breasts (6 pieces)	3.27
Eggs	1.79
Bologna (125 grams)	1.79
Beans x12	9.48
Peanut butter (900 ml)	<u>2.49</u>
	\$24.66

Subtotal (subject to applicable tax) \$90.21

## Is This Menu Fair?

### Statement 1<sup>1</sup>

Ms. Melville [a government representative] said the list was compiled to "assure the minister that you could develop a healthy menu on the money available." She added that the list is based on the four nutrition groups in the Canada Food Guide and said the prices were taken from a Toronto grocery store, but she refused to identify it.

### Statement 2

When the welfare shopping list was released in October, 1995, a *Globe and Mail* reporter, Martin Mittelstaedt, stated that "a more realistic list, including sugar, margarine, soft drinks, pasta sauce, mayonnaise, ketchup and oil, added another \$20.40. Some commonly used items, such as toothpaste, freezer bags, soap, detergent and shampoo added another \$16.83 before tax." This represents a total of \$37.23 (or 41%) more than the \$90.21 budget of the Social Services Minister.

### Statement 3

"The City of North York Public Health Department estimated in July [1995] that a realistic monthly food bill for a single male 25 to 49 years old would be \$156 a month, 73% more than Mr. Tsubouchi's shopping basket."

## Draw Your Own Conclusions

1. Compare your food expense totals to those suggested by Social Services Minister David Tsubouchi.
2. Describe the quantity/quality of food you consume in an average week.
3. If your family receives welfare, speculate on the quality/ quantity of food consumed in the average week by a person whose family is not receiving welfare. If you are not a welfare recipient, speculate on the quality/ quantity of food consumed in the average week by a person who does receive welfare.
4. Is the food budget as proposed by Minister Tsubouchi realistic for most Ontarians' needs?
5. What physical, psychological and emotional effects would this diet have on individuals?
6. What behavioural effects would this diet have on individuals?

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<sup>1</sup> All statements are from "Taunts hurled at Tsubouchi," by Martin Mittelstaedt, *Globe and Mail*, Oct. 21 1995. Reprinted with permission from the *Globe and Mail*.



7. Do you think the food budget is fair? Why or why not?

## ***Dispatches From the Poverty Line – Pat Capponi, 1997 pp. 4-7***

It's September now, and I have enough to cover the rent until January 1, 1996. I'll have two hundred dollars left over, if I let the phone go. I have no other income to count on, no job prospects. I'm trying to shake off the feeling that I've just had quick-hardening cement poured over my head. Or that the four-point restraining cuffs have been attached to my wrists and ankles, and the attendant has left the room.

I'm rigid with tension, sitting knees to chest on my futon, my back against the wall, staring out at the schoolyard, which will soon be alive with great gusts of shouts and laughter as the kids take their recess—as if the leaves aren't falling from the trees, as if the ground will never harden, as if snow and ice and frigid temperatures aren't ready to pounce.

It's not as though I'd ever expected to stay safe and comfortable the rest of my life. I've never been able to buy into the majority view that one can impose personal and financial order on chaos, careful planning on happenstance, a cleared and picket-fenced path through the jungle that surrounds us. I've never lost sight of the jungle, the ominous glow of eyes in the dark, the screams of the devoured and the full-throated howls of the temporarily victorious. There are things about life, about people, it is better to never know; but once you know it becomes impossible to believe in the shared illusions of safety and entitlement and reason.

I've lived in this room in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood for five years, the longest I've lived anywhere since coming to Toronto in 1978. It is small, not well maintained. There is a full bathroom and an alcove that serves as a kitchenette, housing a bar-sized fridge and a toaster oven.

My rent, \$475, is an amount I believed I would always be able to meet, whether or not I was gainfully employed. My version of security. I've tried to hoard items such as canned goods and cleaning supplies, but there isn't a great deal of storage space, unless I want to pile goods against the four walls as a bulwark against reality. To quell my rising sense of panic, I've decided to take stock of what's in the cupboards, what stands between me and disaster.

3 tins of corn	6 tins of Irish stew
3 tins of salmon	2 tins of corn beef hash
1 jar (3/4 full) of instant coffee	2 tins of ground coffee
1 large bottle of coffee creamer	2 boxes of artificial sweetener
1 large jar of peanut butter	2 jars of birdseed for my canary, Ricco
2 tins of whole potatoes	2 tins of smoked oysters
2 tins of chili	1 jar salsa
1 (almost full) jar of mayonnaise	1 jar of mustard
1 bottle of vinegar	6 packs of cigarettes
16 rolls of (one-ply) toilet paper	4 rolls of paper towels
1 large bottle of aspirin	6 as yet unread books
4 bars of face soap	4 new razor blades
1 half-full tin of spray deodorant	1 box of tampons
1 tube of toothpaste	1 unused notebook
8 shirts still in their dry cleaner bags	3 clean pairs of jeans
I made another list—of the things stacked against me.	A phone bill I won't be able to pay
A cable bill	A hole in the sole of my cowboy boots
No migraine pills	No emergency back-up eyeglasses
No emergency transit tickets	No winter scarf

I feel like an inept survivalist, victim of his inadequate planning in the face of expected disaster. I immediately determine to put myself on a rationing regime. Until something comes up. I try to kid myself that something will come up.

It's not like I haven't been down-an-out poor before. Not like I'm a stranger to hunger.

The first thing I have to do is get my stomach used to less. The worst thing about hunger is the headaches it gives you, which for me always threaten to escalate into migraines, and I can't afford \$100 for six pills, the cost of the miracle medication.

Drinking lots of water can fool the stomach into believing it's had more than it really has had. Step one.

Step two. Ration cigarettes. Put an open pack in the fridge instead of right where I can see and reach for them without thinking.

Step three. Go out immediately and convert the bulk of my remaining cash into money orders made out to my landlord: don't trust that common sense will prevail over immediate need. I've had to make the choice a number of times in my life, whether to eat or keep a roof over my head.

We are told by the media that most Americans are two or three paycheques from the street. I've already beaten those odds. Over four months now with no income, and I can still pay for three months of walls and a door with a lock on it.

And something will come up.

Won't it?

### ...pp. 52-57

Most single people living at or near the welfare level are likely to be living in rooming houses or their equivalent. They might, in a best-case scenario, have a hot plate, although most places ban them as a fire hazard. They might have shared access to a kitchen, but they're likely to have whatever they try to store ripped off by the less frugal.

I am fortunate, in that I have a toaster oven and a bar-sized fridge, as well as a plug-in kettle/pot that can cook soup.

I kept track of my own diet through the month of June, on those days when there was food to eat, and it consisted primarily of bagels, pink grapefruit (three for a dollar for a while), peanut-butter-and-banana sandwiches, tomato sandwiches, baked potatoes and salsa, nachos and salsa (spicy, it leaves you feeling fuller), English cucumber, an occasional apple and hot dogs.

I should be clear that I didn't have all of the above available at the same time. I might be eating plain bagels every day for a week, then three days of pink grapefruit, four days of

tomato sandwiches (with mayonnaise but no lettuce or margarine), another week of peanut-butter-and-banana sandwiches, three days of hot dogs and weekends with cucumber in vinegar. Eating would be confined to morning (otherwise the acidic content of the coffee destroyed my stomach) and as late in the evening as possible.

In between, of course, great amounts of tap water. Three cups of coffee a day, with Coffeemate and Sugar Twin.

I confess, I didn't spend a lot of time worrying about nutrition, just volume enough to quell hunger pangs.

*I am more fortunate than most of the chronically poor, in that I have more contact with the other classes. It would be rare indeed for a single mother on social assistance in Regent Park to get an invitation to dinner parties or literary events or summer cottages. Rarer still to get periodic offers of cash groceries delivered to her door. The poor are usually as confined by their poverty as if they lived in a maximum-security prison. There is*

*not much exposure to other ways of life, unless their neighbourhood starts to undergo gentrification. And since all the rents go up once that happens, they have to then move on*

*to somewhere not so attractive to the “yuppie” element. There is no relief, no temporary respite...*

## **Welfare Diet “Depressed” Testers, Left Some of Them Lacking Energy**

The feeling was unanimous among participants.

Trying to live within Social Services Minister David Tsubouchi’s new welfare requirements — even if it was just for a week — was not easy. And sometimes it was downright horrible....

“I don’t want to have a tax cut if it means people on welfare are going to have their income cut further,” [Dr. Debbie] Honickman said.

[Nurse Kimberly] Enright said the experience left her feeling “closed in,” giving her insight into a “very boring and demeaning” way to live. East York Mayor Prue said it was “a gut-wrenching experience” that left him not only physically hungry but lethargic and even a little aggressive....

[Globe and Mail business writer David] Olive said that while he had already preached fiscal restraint in his columns, the awareness of how difficult it was to look for work on an empty stomach hit home for him.

(Phinjo Gombu, *Toronto Star*, November 11, 1995)

Allow me to chronicle some of my own findings after a year of poverty diets.

Chronic fatigue is a definite, without the possible disability benefit of the critical add-on “syndrome.”

Generalized feelings of anxiety.

Lowered immunity to coughs, colds and whatever else is going around. Constant headaches. Difficulty concentrating. Difficulty sleeping. An annoying tendency to linger over television cooking shows. Limp hair. Sallow complexion. Slight tremor in the hands.

Acute sensitivity to cold. Lowered

frustration tolerance.

Much earlier, I felt I had matured enough to reach an accommodation with my weight, so I had settled for a few pairs of Levi’s in size 34, and a couple of pairs in an optimistic size 33. I couldn’t wear any of these now without alarming people. I had to search my belongings to come up with a single pair of 32s, which were also now hanging off me, in spite of frequent soaking in hot water to try and shrink them.

I hate the thought of public neediness, which these jeans seemed to shout — a worse giveaway than a growling stomach, which I also constantly fall prey to.

I still believe I can handle almost everything, as long as it is known to me alone. I don’t want to be a public concern.

Headaches are another difficult side effect of hunger: Aspirin gets to be a luxury that has to be lived without, but I fear headaches, which can easily become migraines. I try to cope the best I can with hot and cold cloths, but there are times those solutions fail, and those are very bad times.

For someone as prone to depression as I am, very bad times are bad indeed.

I couldn’t see any light at the end of the tunnel, couldn’t see any way that I would make it out of the situation I found myself in.

I felt I was there as long as I could endure it. And when it’s forever, unlike the good folks who tried it for a week, you can’t look forward to its ending. There is only getting through today and tomorrow and the next day, all the days carbon copies of each other.

Except for my geriatric canary, I live alone. I cannot imagine what it’s like to be

hungry and worn out physically and emotionally, and still have to deal with children and their needs. And also the guilt that comes from not being able, often, to supply even the basics. There are days when my nerves are so frayed, just from the supreme effort of keeping myself together, from lack of sleep, from a

kind of cabin fever, that I thank God I have no one dependent on me.

Poverty, for many, is a life sentence, with no hope of parole.

And, as Mr. Harris has shown, things can always get worse.

## **p. 106 “Harris, Eves Dine in Style”**

It didn't take long for Tory Finance Minister Ernie Eves and Premier Mike Harris to dip into their income tax savings.

After Tuesday's budget announcement, they went for a celebratory dinner....

The restaurant, north of Eglinton Ave., was filled to its 330-seat capacity with six-figure broker types who applauded when the Harris party entered at 9:00 p.m., trailed by three security men.

Eves and Harris ate steak, medium rare, and drank an unpretentious (by Centro standards) bottle of Italian red wine.

At Centro, the tariff for a party of four, with one bottle of wine, is usually about \$500.

(*Toronto Star*, May 9, 1996)

### **Targeting the Most Vulnerable: A Decade of Desperation for Ontario's Welfare Recipients**

By Michael Oliphant and Chris Slosser, Daily Bread Food Bank<sup>1</sup> Ontario Alternative Budget Technical Paper #6

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<sup>1</sup> Since 1987, the Daily Bread Food Bank has conducted an annual survey of food recipients at food banks across greater Toronto to gain a thorough understanding of the issues and barriers facing low-income households. The

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives  
ISBN 0-88627-342-0 May 2003

### **Note About Stories**

The personal stories of individuals that appear throughout this paper are actual experiences collected in food banks and community agencies across Toronto in support of Toronto's Pay the Rent and Feed the Kids campaign. Pay the Rent and Feed the Kids is a province-wide campaign calling for increases to welfare rates so they meet the cost of living.

Thanks go to Catherine Melville, staff at Flemingdon Neighbourhood Services, Toronto and those who shared their stories.

### **Jonny lives on welfare with his partner and their 2 children. Here's how he describes the daily insecurity his family faces:**

It is such a struggle to pay the rent. Then there's the phone bill and the diapers. Just to feed my son, I have to come to a food bank. My daughter's still just on milk. Diapers aren't cheap. Food isn't cheap. The cost is going up, but the job market, the bottom dollar is not going up. For people on welfare, or people who work, or people on

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collected data form the bases for a series of policy papers and public education materials used for advocacy purposes.

welfare trying to work, it's still going to be a struggle.

I feel we are forced into living certain ways with no choice. They don't have the jobs. They don't have the job creation. Pretty much if you go to welfare or ODSP or any of these other programs, you are forced into a life of poverty. No one has a vested interest in you as a human being. All they're caring about is their numbers, the bottom dollar, and that's it. And trying to get the people off welfare. They're just cutting them off, forcing these people to live on the street. It's sad. It's sad what I see.

We've got to support people better. You need people who got helped out, nurtured out of the pit, to lead others out. You get used to living like that. It doesn't become really harder, it becomes easier. Because you want less from the world. And you want more from little circles you create as you go along. It's a hard life. It's harder than anybody else can ever experience.

### **Nadera's story**

I am a single mother on social assistance. I have two children aged 19 and 21. Both of my children are in school. My total monthly income is \$1097.00, all of which comes from social assistance. My rent is \$1100.00 per month.

Every month I worry about paying the rent, as my rent is much higher than my income and I have no money left to buy food for the three of us. Occasionally, I have to use the food bank. However, what I get from there is not enough for the family. I always worry about having food for my family, as there is never enough.

Sometimes I don't eat; skip meals, so that my children could have something to eat. I can barely manage to get by with the help from my son's OSAP loan assistance. That helps to buy some necessity food items. I don't buy fruits, as I can't afford to buy

such nutritious food. I can't even think of buying clothes for me.

Things would be much easier if I could find cheaper or subsidized housing. I applied for subsidized housing three years ago, but they said that I might have to wait for another eight to ten years. I am an immigrant to Canada - I was a doctor in my home country. It has been extremely difficult for me to cope with all the barriers that I have been facing after I came to Canada.

**Asma lives with her 8-year-old daughter. She has a total monthly income of \$957. Her rent is \$760.**

I know how to do very well with very little. My mother taught me this. I buy what I can in bulk, like rice or flour. The rest of my money I spend carefully, a little at a time, to make it last. I try to buy what fresh food I can with this. Some things, like juice, are very expensive.

Overall, I do very well with the little I have. I know how to feed myself and my child. I have good business skills, and learned these in my country before I came to Canada. I do not want social assistance. I want a job. I have training and experience. Did I go to school for so many years for nothing? So many people struggle. Things are very tough. I know many people, who even when they speak English well and have much training, cannot find work. How come it is so very hard to find a job here?

**Tracy and her husband live with their two children. Their total monthly income is \$1140. They pay \$875 a month for rent.** We manage somehow. My husband and myself are not big eaters. We eat simple meals so the kids don't go without.

I think social assistance should look more at each individual situation. Everybody's different. This system is not helping. My husband lost his job. So now we get no money for him. He's back training, but it may be a while before he gets a pay cheque. He still needs to eat. We all still have to eat. Sure it's nice to have a few things that help

out when you actually get a job, but what you really need is extra support at that time. There are things that could be made better for people, and other ways could be looked at for doing this. I have some ideas. Why doesn't anyone ever ask me?

## Lesson # 6                      What Do We Value? (Values Auction)

**Time: 70 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson encourages students to recognize the sources of values in their lives (whether from families, communities, peers, faith groups, government, or media), and to think about how the distribution of economic resources may affect our ability to attain those things which we value most.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will be able to clarify and reflect upon:

1. what they value;
2. to what extent they value material vs. non-material things;
3. what influences their values.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of the “Values Auction” worksheet

Play money (e.g. monopoly money) in a variety of denominations (5s, 10s, 20s, 50s and 100s), equalling \$200 per student (a template is provided or visit

(<http://www.bankofcanada.ca/en/banknotes/general/character/bns.htm>)

One pair of dice for each group of 4 in the class

Chart paper

#### Note

This activity is designed for a class of 28 or fewer students. If your numbers are greater, add items to the “Values Auction” worksheet, still leaving a blank space.

#### Pre-activity

a) Where do our values come from?

Write on the board the following two statements:

“Whoever dies with the most toys wins”

“Live simply so that others may simply live”

b) Ask students to consider some of the kinds of things a person who preferred the first statement as their guiding philosophy might value. What about the second statement?

c) Tell students that they will have an opportunity to decide what values are important to them in their lives, but ask them to first take a minute to pause and think about what has

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from pp. 128-129, 143 *Open Minds to Equality*, by Nancy Schniedewind and Ellen Davidson, 1983, in turn adapted from *A Handbook of Personal Growth for Classroom Use*, by R. and I. Hawley.



influenced the development of their own values.

- d)** Ask students to share with the class what some of the influences on our values may be. (Note: You might choose to visually represent these influences on chart-paper or the board using a human outline in the middle with lines spanning out from the human and connecting to the different influences that students share with the class. These may include families, peers, schools, religious faith, communities, government, and the media. This visual could be put up in the class and consulted throughout the unit as a reference to, and reminder of, how we are influenced by other people, groups, and institutions, as well as how we are able to change our minds, opinions, and values when presented with new information and experiences.)

### Getting Started

#### What do we value? Auction.

1. Tell students that they will have an opportunity to decide what values are important to them in their lives.
2. Pass out the “Values Auction” worksheet and ask students to rank the values from most important to least important.
3. If this is too difficult for your students, have them checkmark 5 or 6 most important values and underline the 5 or 6 least important. If they wish they may add an item that is important to them but is not on the list.
4. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4 and ask them to discuss their lists with each other. This gives them a chance to affirm their values and hear others' points of view, both important parts of values clarification.
5. Ensure students have their worksheets with them for the main activity.

### Main Activity

1. Distribute \$100 to each student. They should still be in their small groups from the ‘Getting Started’ activity.
2. Give a pair of dice to each group. Each student rolls the dice to determine how much more money she or he receives. One dot equals \$10. Those who roll a seven or more are entitled to roll one extra time for an “inheritance” windfall.
3. Regroup as a class and ask students who know about auctions to explain the procedure to others. Clarify any misunderstandings. You, the teacher, will be the auctioneer. Appoint one student banker to collect money during the auction. Begin the auction.
4. Auction off all the items on the Values Auction worksheet list, writing on the board the name of the highest bidder and the amount bid for each item. Keep the pace brisk and use typical auction terms, such as “Going once, going twice, sold for ...”
5. Have students record the amount of money they have left.
6. Collect all remaining money.
7. Again, ensure students have their Values Auction worksheets with them for the next part of the activity.

### Optional

1. Now tell students they may use their remaining “money” to purchase items that they may have added to their list. Have students decide the dollar value of those items compared to the price of other things they bid for and got.
2. Ask students to share a few of these items with the group as well as some “I learned” statements from this experience.

### Post-Activity

As a class, discuss the following questions:

1. Who didn't get anything at the auction? Why not?
2. What would you bid higher for next time?
3. How did you feel during the auction? How do you feel now? (At this point feelings about the unequal amounts of money will surface. Be sure to allow adequate time for students to share feelings of disappointment, frustration, or anger.)
4. How did the amount of money you had affect your ability to get the items you valued most?
5. How did the amount of money you had affect your willingness to take a risk?
6. In life, how does the amount of money or resources an individual or group has affect their ability to get things they value most? If students have difficulty putting their ideas into words, provide one or two examples. Some might be:
  1. In order to become a great athlete, expensive training is usually necessary. This is often true for music and dance.
  2. The more financial resources you have, the more opportunity you have to eat well, get preventive health care, and quality medical care when you are sick.
  3. The more financial resources a person has to get needed education or training for a job, the more opportunity she or he has both for choice of job and success.
7. How was the throw of the “inheritance” die like real life? How does the privilege of inheritance affect your opportunities to get what you value?
8. What changes would we have to make in our world in order for all people to have the opportunity to have what we value most in our lives?

### **Extension**

As an extension you can discuss with the class the differences and similarities between individual and collective values, or private vs. public interests.

1. Are there items in the auction that you consider to be in the interests of one individual? Are there any that are in the public interest (everyone's interest)?
2. Are any of these values in conflict with one another? Why?
3. What are some of the more materialistic values? How about non-materialistic values? Are these ever in conflict with one another? Why?
4. If asked to rank the values according to how you would like everyone to value things, would the list be the same or different than the one you made in terms of your own individual preferences?

## What Do You Value? Auction

Your order	Item
1 _____	great athletic ability
2 _____	clear air to breathe and water to drink
3 _____	ability to make a few close friends
4 _____	happy family life
5 _____	ability to lead others
6 _____	artistic skills (art, music, drama, etc.) and success
7 _____	having fashionable clothes and shoes
8 _____	good health
9 _____	fame
10 _____	lots of money
11 _____	ability to do very well in school
12 _____	success in the job of your choice
13 _____	access to quality education for everyone
14 _____	good looks
15 _____	power over things—fix cars, create recipes, fix computers, design clothes
16 _____	being important/cool
17 _____	ability to speak other languages/communicate with many different people
18 _____	ability to bounce back/stand up for yourself
19 _____	a world free of nuclear weapons
20 _____	ability to give love to others
21 _____	patience
22 _____	ability to make many friends
22 _____	success at changing the world to make it a better place
24 _____	parents who trust you/independence
25 _____	feeling safe walking through your neighbourhood at night
26 _____	having a say in the decisions that affect your life
27 _____	a world free of poverty
28 _____	a sense of belonging to a community
29 _____	ability to think up original ideas
30 _____	good sense of humour
31 _____	entertainment (movies, video games, music)



## Needs, Wants, Haves

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## Lesson #7      Needs, Wants, Haves

**Time:** 55 minutes

### Overview

This lesson examines the necessities of life and helps students to distinguish between needs and wants.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will reflect on their own needs, wants, and possessions.  
Students will assess what constitutes basic human needs and rights.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Copies of interview cards  
Class set of “Needs, Wants, Haves” checklist

#### Note:

It is especially important in this activity and subsequent lessons that teachers not assume or use language that implies that there are no students in the class who are living in poverty. While it should not be suggested that poverty is shameful, it must be recognized that many people do try to conceal their poverty. Moreover, students living in poverty will not feel safe discussing issues of socio-economic status unless it is free of “us” and “them” language. It is important that students not be in positions where they feel pressure to disclose their class experiences. Use discretion in modifying activities.

### Main Activity

1. Give each student a copy of the “Needs, Wants, Haves” checklist with instructions to complete it individually by checking the items that s/he needs, wants or has. An item can be checked more than once. For example, a student may need and want a given item but not have it; may need, want and have an item; may want and have something but not need it etc.
2. Divide the class into small discussion groups.

Without having to disclose the specifics of their own experiences, ask students to decide a list of all of the things that are necessary for a healthy and creative human life. What criteria did students use to determine what is necessary and what may be desirable but not required?

### Post-Activity

1. As a class, ask students to share the criteria they used to distinguish between needs and wants. What did they consider necessary for a healthy life? List responses on overhead, chart paper, or whiteboard.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from p. 35 of *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.

2. Based on this list, develop a class definition of human rights (see Additional Information below). Some guiding questions might include:
  3. Is it necessary for everyone to agree on each item mentioned? If we don't agree, how can we negotiate a collective definition?
  4. When you hear the term human rights, what do you think?
  5. Look at your needs and wants list. Are there other human rights you can think of that are not included on this list? If so, add them and explain why you think they are human rights.
  6. Do people have the right to everything they need? Why or why not?
7. As a class, ask students to complete the following statement: Every person should have the right to...  
Record answers and display in the classroom.

### Extension

1. As an extension activity, students can compare their list of human rights with that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the Convention on the Rights of the Child. There are child/youth friendly versions of these documents available in accessible language (see handouts on following pages). Why is it important to have these documents available in youth friendly language? (see Additional Information)
2. Students can research all of the human rights that the Canadian government has promised to uphold in the United Nations and Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Does the government fulfil its obligations? Explain.
3. Students can also be assigned different countries to compare the human rights that different governments have promised to fulfil.
4. As a journal entry or writing assignment, ask students to write about their thoughts or feelings about completing the checklist outlining their needs, wants and haves. Are many of their needs met or not and how do they feel about that? What do they require to live a healthy and creative life?

### Additional Information

Human rights are often narrowly interpreted, particularly in affluent countries of the West where many people do not face daily struggles for survival. As a result, our right to the necessities of life (food, water, shelter, clothing, health care) are usually not considered human rights. Instead, our understanding of human rights often focuses on fundamental freedoms and civil liberties such as freedom of speech, association, trial by peers etc.

While this activity affirms the value of these freedoms and liberties, the concept of human rights is broadened to also include the rights of all people to the essentials of a healthy, creative, and free human life. In fact, Article 11 of the United Nation International Covenant on Political and Economic Rights recognizes “the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for him[her]self and his[her] family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the



continuous improvement of living conditions.” Article 11 continues to compel states to ensure the fulfilment of these rights.

The right to an adequate standard of living, fair wages for work, medical assistance, education, rest and leisure are also protected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These United Nations documents are available in simplified versions so that they are accessible to youth ([http://erc.hrea.org/Library/First\\_Steps/index\\_eng.html](http://erc.hrea.org/Library/First_Steps/index_eng.html) - click on Part Five).

## **Summary Version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

1. Everyone is free and we should all be treated in the same way.
2. Everyone is equal despite differences in skin colour, sex, religion, and language for example.
3. Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.
4. No one has the right to treat you as a slave nor should you make anyone your slave.
5. No one has the right to hurt you or to torture you.
6. Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the law.
7. The law is the same for everyone, it should be applied in the same way to all.
8. Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their rights are not respected.
9. No one has the right to imprison you unjustly or expel you from your own country.
10. Everyone has the right to a fair and public trial.
11. Everyone should be considered innocent until guilt is proved.
12. Everyone has the right to ask for help if someone tries to harm you, but no-one can enter your home, open your letters or bother you or your family without a good reason.
13. Everyone has the right to travel as they wish.
14. Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being persecuted or are in danger of being persecuted.
15. Everyone has the right to belong to a country. No one has the right to prevent you from belonging to another country if you wish to.
16. Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.
17. Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.
18. Everyone has the right to practise and observe all aspects of their own religion and change their religion if they want to.
19. Everyone has the right to say what they think and to give and receive information.
20. Everyone has the right to take part in meetings and to join associations in a peaceful way.
21. Everyone has the right to help choose and take part in the government of their country.
22. Everyone has the right to social security and to opportunities to develop their skills.
23. Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and to join a trade union.
24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure.
25. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living and medical help if they are ill.
26. Everyone has the right to go to school.
27. Everyone has the right to share in their community's cultural life.
28. Everyone must respect the 'social order' that is necessary for all these rights to be available.
29. Everyone must respect the rights of others, the community and public property.
30. No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

## **Summary of Rights from the Convention on the Rights of the Child**

1. Children have the right to be with their family or with those who will care for them best.
2. Children have the right to enough food and clean water.
3. Children have the right to an adequate standard of living.
4. Children have the right to health care.
5. Disabled children have the right to special care and training.
6. Children have the right to play.
7. Children have the right to free education.
8. Children have the right to be kept safe and not hurt or neglected.
9. Children must not be used as cheap workers or as soldiers.
10. Children must be allowed to speak their own language and practise their own religion and culture.
11. Children have the right to express their own opinions and to meet together to express their views.

Summaries taken from ([http://erc.hrea.org/Library/First\\_Steps/index\\_eng.html](http://erc.hrea.org/Library/First_Steps/index_eng.html) - click on Part Five)

## Checklist of Needs, Wants, Haves (2 pages)

Check all items you need, want, or have. If there are needs that you wish to add, do so. Items may be checked more than once (e.g. you may need an item and may also have it).

		Need	Want	Have
1.	love			
2.	more than 5 shirts			
3.	meat or source of protein every day			
4.	television			
5.	safe water to drink			
6.	friends or family who accept and care about me			
7.	current styles of clothing			
8.	3 meals a day			
9.	an opportunity for good education			
10.	knowledge in school that represents the contributions of my community			
11.	several close friends			
12.	music to listen to			
13.	a bed			
14.	time to be alone			
15.	fair laws			
16.	things to look forward to			
17.	pets			
18.	more than twenty toys or games			
19.	opportunity to participate in sports			

		<b>Need</b>	<b>Want</b>	<b>Have</b>
20.	money to go on class trips			
21.	good physical health			
22.	ability to easily move around my school and community			
23.	time to read			
24.	books that positively represent my community			
25.	control over my life			
26.	access to good doctors and dentists			
27.	freedom to speak openly			
28.	the right to elect the government of my choice			
29.	self-respect			
30.	soap			
31.	roller blades			
32.	the right to freely practice my religion			
33.	time outside			
34.	fun time with friends			
35.	enough clothes to keep me warm and dry			
36.	freedom from discrimination			
37.	the right to be a member of a group of my choice			
38.	holidays			
39.	an unpolluted environment - clear air, water and land			
40.	enough food to keep healthy			
41.	proper housing or shelter to keep safe and comfortable			
42.	the right to protest publicly against government actions			

**Part III: Understanding Class Bias in the Media**

## Lesson #8      Class Bias in the Media

**Time:**      60 minutes

### Overview

This lesson examines representation in the print media as it relates to class bias as well as reinforces stereotypes about race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and faith. <sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will be able to assess the accuracy of representation in print media and identify biases as they relate to class and other social locations.

Students will be able to determine if their own values are reflected in the media.

Students will begin to identify class pressure to wear expensive status symbols.

### Preparation

#### Materials

2 copies of each of the daily newspapers

Several pairs of scissors

Glue sticks

6-8 pieces of chart paper

Markers

1. Introduce the lesson by reviewing some broad definitions of class positions. For example, lower class/experiencing poverty refers to individuals or families with incomes insufficient to meet basic human needs.

Ask students to identify some physical markers of class position. Suggested questions could include:

- a. What are some of the things a person can do or wear that make him or her look rich?
  - b. How might a working class person look and dress differently?
  - c. What kinds of things do you think a middle class person might own or wear?
2. Be sure to speak with students about stereotypes and exceptions - people often dress in ways to mask their class positions. Why might this be? Students may need to be reminded that a stereotype is an idea about a particular group that assumes all group members share some general qualities.

### Main Activity

#### Step A

3. Divide students into 4 groups, 1 for each of the major daily newspapers. In Toronto this is *The Globe and Mail*, *The Toronto Star*, *The National Post*, and *The Toronto Sun*.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from "Racism in the Media (Newspaper Exercise)," by Nora Allingham and Tim McCaskell, *Towards Racial Equality*, TDSB Equity Dept.



4. Give each group 2 copies of the current day's edition of 1 paper.
5. Tell each group to cut out all the pictures they find in the paper. The 2<sup>nd</sup> copy of the paper can be used when there are pictures on both sides of a page.
6. Once students have cut out all the pictures, ask them to sort them into piles based on whether they think the people appear to be "owning class/rich," "middle class," "working class," or "lower class/experiencing poverty." What kinds of information are they using to determine who they think belongs to which class?
7. Each group will glue the pictures in each pile onto a separate piece of labeled chart paper.
8. As students are gluing their pictures, ask them to observe and discuss with one another what they notice about the pictures – who is in them, how do they appear, are there any patterns emerging?

### Step B

9. Once all groups are finished, ask the students to have a walk around the room to look at the images that other groups have compiled. Ask them to think about how some of the patterns that they may have noticed in their paper are similar or different in the other 3 papers?
10. After the walk around, as a class discuss the following questions:
  11. Which groups are over-represented? Under-represented?
  12. Within the categories, what do you notice about the individuals? Are there more men, women, able-bodied, heterosexual, white, aboriginal, people of colour in each of the categories?
  13. Is any group missing entirely from the pictures? If so, who is missing? (e.g. gays, lesbians, aboriginal people, people with disabilities, the elderly etc.)
  14. Are the patterns consistent for all four papers? What might some of the reasons be for these similarities and/or differences?
  15. How are people of different classes portrayed? What are they shown doing? How do they look? How are they dressed?
  16. Are these portrayals accurate or are they stereotypes?
  17. What ideas do these images reinforce?
  18. How might these images influence our own ideas about people and the world? Do you think this influence is positive or negative?
  19. Do you think that these patterns are unique to today's papers?
  20. What can be done to challenge or change media portrayals of different people? What can we do? (For additional ideas beyond those that students may offer, please refer to the final section of this document , Working for Change.)
  21. Imagine that you are a space creature and you come to know the society only through these representations in the paper. What impression would you have of this society and its inhabitants? (Optional) This question can also be the basis for a creative writing activity from the perspective of the space creature visiting earth.

### Post-Activity

22. Ask students to identify the kinds of clothes, shoes, jewellery etc. that students wear that seem to be "class" status symbols.

23. Ask students to reflect on how and why students might feel pressured to spend a lot of money on clothing or dress a particular way at their school?
24. What could be done to challenge this expectation?

## Lesson #9      The Good Life According To...

**Time:** 30 minutes + time to watch a whole or part of a TV show

### Overview

This lesson encourages students to investigate the values and biases that mainstream commercial television programs present about the kind of life that is desirable.

### Purpose

Students will be able to critically examine the power the media has to influence our values and define what is necessary for a good life.

Students will be able to identify and question the biases and excessive materialism inherent in mass media.

### Preparation

#### Materials for Day Two:

Class set of the "Life According to..." worksheets

Videotape of excerpts from the students' favourite shows

#### Note:

This lesson will take place over the course of several days. In the first class you will need to introduce the topic of "the Good Life." You will also need to get a list of your students' favourite television shows in order to tape excerpts of these shows for the next class. During the second class your students will watch the excerpts of their shows and fill out the Life According to... worksheets.

### Main Activity

#### Day 1 (Step A): Introduction to "the Good Life"

25. Have students, in pairs or as a large group, brainstorm and record the material goods and services that are truly necessary for a decent human existence.
26. Ask students: what else do you think is necessary for a "Good Life"? (e.g. loving relationships, personal qualities). Again, record responses.
27. Save these lists for the end of this section when students will have a chance to examine how the goods, services, and characteristics are presented in television programs and advertisements.
28. Poll students to find out which television shows they most often watch. Videotape a variety of excerpts from the shows or decide as a class on a show everyone will watch.
29. Because there may be students in your class who do not have a television, avoid requiring home viewing.

### Day 2 (Step B): Worksheets and Media

30. Show video of television show excerpts and have each student fill in a Life According to... worksheet individually.
31. Write on the chalkboard, overhead or flip chart, in columns, the names of the programs watched.
32. Ask the students to share with the class what life is like according to each program.
33. Do one program at a time. If you are short on time, review the most popular programs. If the class decided to view an entire show, discuss it in more depth.

### Post-Activity

As a class, discuss the following questions:

34. Are there possessions or people in the program that are similar to your life? Explain.
35. Are there possessions or people that are quite different? How?
36. Do any of the people/families depicted look like you or your family?
37. Do you think all or even most people live and look like those portrayed in the TV program?
38. Is this an accurate picture of life in North America? If not, why are those responsible for creating and airing the program(s) showing us this version of reality?
39. There are shows that depict "lower class" families as dysfunctional (e.g., *The Simpsons*). What message does this send to us?

## Life According To...

### Directions

Imagine that you are a time traveler from an era before television was invented. You arrive on earth and find a strange looking box and after pressing a number of buttons, an image appears on this box. Depending on the buttons you push, the image changes. On the basis of one of programs you view, describe life in this time period by filling in the worksheet. You might not have something to say about each category. Fill in as many as possible. Under "anything else important" write down anything not mentioned in the list that your program told you about life in this era.

What the program says about:

1. Kinds of goods available:
  
2. Relationships between:
  - b. children and parents
  
  - c. teachers and students
  
  - d. friends
  
  - e. husbands and wives or partners
  
  - f. boyfriends and girlfriends or partners
  
  - g. men and women
  
  - h. people of different races, cultures, and religions
  
3. Violence

4. Types of housing
  
5. Transportation most people use
  
6. Amount of money people have
  
7. Poor people
  
8. Rich people
  
9. Kinds of jobs people have
  
10. Clothing people wear
  
11. Values
  
  
40. Anything else important

## Lesson #10      Visions of the “Good Life”

**Time: 60 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson encourages students to be critical viewers of media messages, particularly in relation to materialism in advertising.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will be able to critically examine the vision of a good life represented in commercial advertising.

Students will clarify their definitions of what constitutes a good life and the power of the media to influence this vision.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of the “Visions of the Good Life in the Media” worksheets

Variety of U.S. and Canadian magazines that contain advertisements (Students could be asked to bring old ones from home.) There should be at least 12-15 magazines per class.

Video of television ads

### Getting Started

1. Work with students to help them generate definitions/clarify what they believe constitutes the “good life.” Ask students what they think they need to have a good life. Record answers on the board, overhead, or flipchart.
2. Explain that the class will be studying advertisements in magazines and on television to see how the good life is portrayed to North Americans and how their own definitions are similar and different from those viewed.

### Main Activity

1. Distribute copies of “Visions of the Good Life in the Media”.
2. Ask students to form small working groups. Distribute several different U.S. or Canadian magazines to each group. Have students look for ads that seem to present visions of “the good life.”
3. Ask each group to choose one ad in particular and fill in the worksheet as a group.
4. Show a variety of television ads to the class and repeat the exercise.

### Post-Activity

As a class, discuss the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of advertising? Why do companies spend so much money on it?
2. What do the ads claim about products? For example, do ads for mouthwash tell you that you

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from pp.43-51 *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.

will have more friends?

3. Is there a difference between what the ads claim and what the products literally do?
4. If the values behind the products advertised are what is important, what do we really need to buy? (For example, the toothpaste says we will be attractive, happy and healthy. These are the values important for the “good life.” What do you think you need to buy to be happy, healthy or attractive?)



## **Visions of the Good Life in the Media**

### Magazine Ads

1. product advertised:
2. name of product:
3. name of magazine:
4. What is the good life according to this ad?
5. In your opinion, is the ad true, untrue, exaggerated?

### Television Ads

1. product advertised:
2. name of product:
3. What is the good life according to this ad?

4. In your opinion, is the ad true, untrue, exaggerated?

## Lesson #11

## Necessary for What?

**Time: 40 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson encourages students to critically evaluate advertising messages of what is required to live a healthy and productive life.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will be able to distinguish media presentations of needs and what is actually required to survive.

Students will recognize the biases and excessive materialism promoted in advertising.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of the “Necessary for What?” worksheets

Optional: A video of television commercials

1. Ask students to identify memorable commercials they have seen on television. What makes them memorable? Responses might include good music, athletes or well-known people, catchy slogans etc. Make a list of student responses on the overhead, board or flipchart.
2. Alternatively, videotape a dozen television commercials that you expect students may have seen often and ask students to describe 5-8.

### Main Activity

1. Divide the class into groups of four. Each group should choose a recorder to fill in the activity sheet Necessary for What?
2. Ask students to fill in the worksheet based on 8 commercials that they have seen.

### Post-Activity

1. Have each group share a couple of their examples with the whole class.
2. Are there certain ads that most groups chose? What did many of the ads have in common?
3. Based on earlier lessons that also incorporate magazines and print media, have students create a visual display. The theme for half the display could be the world according to ads (images and words that advertisers try to sell us) and the other half could be titled the world according to us. For the latter half, have students brainstorm the words and images that correspond to how they see and experience the world. How are the two halves of the display similar or different from one another?

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from pp. 43-51 of *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.

### **Extension**

1. As an extension to this activity for senior grades, watch the movie *Advertising and the End of the World* (see video resources in appendices) and have a class discussion about how the movie relates to the activity.
2. Some key questions from the movie include, what is advertising's main focus and how can we affect this situation to promote a sustainable future?

## Necessary for What?

Advertising is powerful because it tells us, in a way we cannot ignore, that the product advertised is something we absolutely cannot live without. Complete the following grid for eight ads seen by members of your group. Try to come to some agreement. You may wish to check off more than one column for a product. Remember, you are giving your judgement rather than the opinion of the advertiser.

	Name of Product Advertised	Necessary for Survival	Necessary for Pleasure	Necessary for Status	Necessary for Acceptance by Others	Unnecessary
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						

8						
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## Lesson #12      You “Gotta” Have It

**Time: 30 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson provides students with an opportunity to synthesize and reflect on messages they receive from the media, particularly the creation of needs and desires.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will be able to identify and assess what the media sells us as being necessary in our lives. Students will be able to appreciate non-monetary values that may not be represented in media ads.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of the “You ‘Gotta’ Have It” worksheets

#### Note:

Students need to have spent time thoughtfully examining a variety of television and print advertisements in order to do this culminating activity.

### Main Activity

1. Distribute the worksheet entitled You ‘Gotta’ Have It. In small working groups, ask students to answer the questions based on the ads they’ve read, watched and discussed. It may be necessary to clarify the meaning of the word luxury.
2. In a large group, review/list the material goods and services that are truly necessary for a decent human existence. How does this compare with what the ads tell us?
3. Then list the human characteristics that are necessary. Were these presented in the ads? If so, how?

### Extension

In order to bring an environmental perspective to consumerism, ask students to investigate if everybody on the earth can have the things that the media advertise as being necessary. What might some of the limitations be in terms of the environmental impact? (Use of resources, availability of resources, pollution.) Students should be encouraged to pursue questions of what areas of the world consume most of the world’s resources and produce most of the pollution. A starting point with some good media and consumerism connections is [www.media-awareness.ca/eng/med/class/teamed3/background.htm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/eng/med/class/teamed3/background.htm). Also check out [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org) or [www.worldwatch.org](http://www.worldwatch.org).

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from pp. 43-51 of *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.





## You 'Gotta' Have It

After you finish watching television commercials and reading magazine ads, answer the following questions. **Base your answers to questions 1 and 2 on information and images presented in the ads, not on your own opinions.** Support your answers by giving examples from particular ads and commercials.

1. According to ads, what material goods do you **have to have** in order to live the good life in North America? List 5 (e.g. Coca-Cola products)

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

2. According to ads, what qualities do you **have to have** for the North American good life? List 3 (e.g. you have to be slim, able-bodied, style your hair).

a.

b.

c.

## You 'Gotta' Have It (continued)

3. List 5 needs you think are created by mass media advertising (e.g. I need a cell phone).

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

4. List 5 things that you think are necessities today, but were once considered luxuries (e.g. a car).

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

**Part IV: Investigating Poverty and Economic Inequality**

### Lesson #13      Myths and Facts About Poverty

**Time: 70 minutes**

#### Overview

This lesson facilitates a critical examination of the myths and facts about poverty and people living on low-incomes.

#### Purpose

Students will be able to challenge their own stereotypes about poverty and people living on low incomes.

Students will be able to critically analyze the information they receive about poverty and individuals and families living on low incomes.

#### Preparation

##### Materials

Class set of handouts “Myths about Poverty”

6 slips of paper with one of the Myths of Poverty written on it

6 slips of paper with one of the Statements about Poverty written on it

##### Note:

This lesson (on its own, or combined with LP # 17 "Why are People Poor?") is part of a larger process to deconstruct stereotypes about poverty through case studies, role-plays and activities in subsequent lessons. It is important to encourage students to think about poverty both historically and in different contexts. What makes someone poor in one place may not in another, as there are different social programs available in different contexts etc. This process of determining causes of poverty and holding up our own ideas and assumptions for critical examination is an important skill to discuss explicitly and reinforce in subsequent lessons.

#### Main Activity

##### Step A

1. Divide students into 6 groups and give each 1 statement from the Myths about Poverty list.  
**Do not tell students that the statement is a myth.**
2. Ask students to consider whether the statement is a myth or fact about poverty. They should provide reasons for their conclusion. How do they know that this statement is true or false? If there are different opinions within the same group, they should try to convince others in the group based on the reasons for their argument.
3. Ask students to chart their process, documenting the information (facts and/or logical reasons) they used to determine their responses.

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Information Used</u>
The poor do not want to work.	

## Poverty and Economic Inequality

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### Step B

1. Ask one person from each group to read their statement to the class and report whether they think the statement is a myth or fact and provide their reasons.
2. Do others agree with the students' assessment of the statement? Why or why not?
3. Ask the class as a whole to brainstorm additional information that would help them to determine if the statement is a fact or myth about poverty. Encourage participants to be imaginative and think of all the different sources they could draw on to determine the accuracy of their statement! For example:

#### Statement

The poor do not want to work.

#### Additional Information Required

Interviews with poor people to determine attitude towards work.

Studies showing how rich and poor people value work differently.

Statistics showing how many poor people work.

### Step C

1. Ask students to move back to their original groups. Give each group a slip of paper with 1 of the Facts about Poverty written on it that corresponds to their original statement. For example, if students received Myth #1, they should receive Statement #1.
2. What additional information is provided in each statement?
3. How does the information provided reinforce or challenge students' conclusions about whether their original statement was a myth or fact? What assumptions, if any, were they making about individuals living in poverty?

### Post-Activity

1. Ask students to share their additional information with the entire class and if, based on that information, they believe that their original statement is a myth or fact.
2. Help students to see that their responses may be opinions but that some opinions are verifiable by facts and opinions are subject to change depending on the facts we have available.
3. You may find the following student friendly definitions helpful:

Myth: Widely held but false idea.

Fact: Refers to exact, specific things that have taken place, and/or can be investigated and found/proven to be true.

Opinion: Refers to conclusions, views, thoughts or feelings that are not exact, and they are not proven. They can be vague statements about the past, present, or future.

## Poverty and Economic Inequality

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Argument: Refers to a set of claims, some of which are presented as reasons for accepting some further claim - the conclusion..

4. Ask students to reflect on where they get their information about poverty and the poor. Are their opinions based on facts or stereotypes?
5. Students can follow up on one of these myths and investigate additional sources for information on the reality of poverty. Some websites to start with include, [www.campaign2000.ca](http://www.campaign2000.ca), [www.napo-onap.ca](http://www.napo-onap.ca), and [www.socialjustice.org](http://www.socialjustice.org).

## **Myths about Poverty<sup>1</sup>**

1. The poor do not want to work.
2. Working hard will prevent poverty.
3. Poor families are poor because they have too many children.
4. Poor people need to be taught basic life skills like budgeting.
5. Welfare rates are too generous.
6. There is too much cheating in the welfare system.
7. Poor people are less interested in going to university.

## **Facts about Poverty**

1. In fact, most people experiencing poverty do work full or part-time. The original statement assumes that poor people do not work.
2. In fact, 1/3 of Canadians will be poor sometime during their working lives. Poverty often results from loss of employment, death or disability of working family member, major illness etc. The original statement assumes that poverty is the result of not working hard enough.
3. On average, poor families have the same number of children as non-poor families. The original statement assumes that people are poor because they have too many children.
4. In fact, poor people know how to budget and are poor because they spend all or most of their income on basic needs. The original statement assumes that if poor people had proper budgeting skills, they wouldn't be poor.
5. In fact, welfare incomes are well below the poverty line. The original statement assumes that poor people are leading comfortable lives because they receive a lot of money on social assistance.
6. In fact, only 1.7% of investigated cases in Ontario resulted in conviction, representing 0.43% of the total caseload. Fraud in the income tax system is more than 20 times higher than in the welfare system. The assumption in the original statement is that people receiving social assistance don't really need it and are cheating the system.

### **Extension**

Please see Lesson # 17 "Why are People Poor?"

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<sup>1</sup> Myths and Facts about Poverty taken from the NAPO hand-out *Myths about Poverty*.

## **Lesson #14      Case Studies of Poverty in Canada**

**Time:** 55 minutes

### **Overview**

Through case studies, this lesson encourages students to recognize poverty as a Canadian issue and provides various contexts to explore why people are experiencing poverty.<sup>1</sup>

### **Purpose**

To recognize those who are experiencing poverty in Canada.  
To challenge stereotypes about why people are experiencing poverty.

### **Preparation**

#### **Materials**

Class sets of each of the case studies

### **Getting Started**

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<sup>1</sup> Idea for activity and questions adapted from pp. 43-51 of *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.



## Poverty and Economic Inequality

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- a) As a class, brainstorm a collective definition of poverty. How would we define who is poor? Responses might include how much money people make, if people have a place to live, money for food and basic necessities. Record responses on the blackboard, overhead or flipchart.
- b) Introduce students to the low income cut-off (LICO) that the government uses in determining who is poor. The average Canadian family spends 36% of their income on shelter, food and clothing. If families spend more than 56% (the average amount + 20%) of their income on shelter, food and clothing, they are considered to be living below the poverty line.
- c) Explain that there are 2 basic approaches to measuring poverty in Canada:
  - (a) The absolute measure of poverty would be defined in terms of the goods and services necessary for physical or medical survival. Therefore if a person got food from a food bank, shelter in a community hostel, second-hand clothing and basic remedial health care, they would only require a few thousand dollars to survive. If this was the standard used, very few people would be considered poor even though many of their needs for development would not be met.
  - (b) While some people argue that poverty can be defined in **absolute** terms, because human development requires psychological, emotional as well as physical components, most anti-poverty groups and international development agencies define basic human needs **relatively**, as does Statistics Canada. A relative measure of poverty compares a family's standard of living to the national average. Therefore, someone who is considered poor in Canada relative to the wealth of other Canadians might be considered wealthy in another part of the world. But poor Canadians do not live in other parts of the world; they live in communities where wealth surrounds them daily.
- a) How does our class definition compare with the LICO used by Statistics Canada and absolute measures of poverty?

### Main Activity

1. Distribute case studies to students. Ask them to read them individually.
2. Divide students into 6 groups. Ask them to answer the questions for each case study. While they are responsible for reading each case study, they will have to report back to the class on 1 of the 6. Assign each group one case study to report back to the class. They can create a chart to record their responses or answer in sentences.
3. Who is experiencing poverty? Are the people young, women, older people, rural, urban, single, parents?
4. Why are they experiencing poverty? Do they lack education, job opportunities, good housing?
5. How do they feel about their situation? Are they resentful, sad, accepting, angry?
6. What changes need to take place so that these individuals are not experiencing poverty? (e.g. safe, affordable housing, work skills, affordable child care)

### Post-Activity

1. Ask each group to report back to the class on their assigned case study. Do students agree that all individuals in the case study are experiencing poverty?
2. Are you surprised by who is/can be experiencing poverty in Canada?
3. Do you think of Canada as a rich country or a poor country? If you think it is rich, why do you think there are people experiencing poverty here?

### Extension

Ask students to research the Human Development Index (HDI) that the United Nations uses to determine quality of life. What criteria are considered? How does Canada rank in the HDI? Can they find other indicators that international organizations use to determine levels of poverty and quality of life? Check out [www.socialwatch.org](http://www.socialwatch.org), a great site for information on Canada and many other countries. It lends itself well to comparisons between countries as well as disparities within countries.

## Poverty in Canada - Case Study #1

Jack Gamble washes windows for pocket change to stretch the monthly \$1140 welfare payment that he, his wife and three teenage daughters live on. The payment was almost \$1500 until the provincial government led by Mike Harris chopped the cheque over 21 per cent. Gamble's \$700 a month in rent is going up, while his daughters desperately need new clothes.

"I guess it's predictable but I want [Canada's Minister of Finance] Paul Martin to do more for poor people," Gamble says. The 44-year-old high school drop out works in the tobacco fields between stints on unemployment insurance and welfare.

"I don't want a handout from Ottawa. I want help out of this life by learning something that will give me a job making at least \$20 000 a year. Then I could raise my kids with some dignity and not have to wash windows and empty peoples' garbage for enough money to buy milk and bread."

Reprinted from "Canada's poor need a hand," by Jonathan Ferguson, *Toronto Star*, B3, Feb. 29, 1996.

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## Poverty in Canada - Case Study #2

Margaret and Elmer Wilson live in Vancouver's East End. Margaret, 27, cares for their four children, aged two to seven, while Elmer, 39, works as an optical laboratory technician for about \$24 000 a year. They depend on a clothing exchange at their local school, as well as an annual \$100 honorarium from Elmer's Native band, the Homalco, and the presents and groceries provided by neighbourhood sponsors at Christmas. "I wouldn't want to think about what it would be like if we didn't have these things to help us out," says Elmer. "I work hard, but we live pay cheque to pay cheque."

Wilson says he simply accepts his circumstances as a fact of life. What he objects to, he says, is the way others sometimes judge his family. "Not all Indians are drunk," he says. I don't drink and I don't do drugs. There are many of us who are struggling."

Adapted from "Growing up Poor, " by Patricia Chisholm, p.44 of *Macleans*, Feb. 24, 1997.

### Poverty in Canada - Case Study #3

The Robillard family -- forty-year-old Huguette, nine-year-old Jonathan, and seven-year-old Jean-Sebastien --live in the St. Henri section of Montreal. Their apartment is small and needs repairs; for example, there's a big hole in the bathroom. The boys sleep in the dining room where their twin beds are pushed together to create more space.

Huguette lost her job as a cashier in 1992 and has lived on welfare ever since. She recalls what it was like when she was earning \$9.50 an hour at a hardware chain that went bankrupt during the last recession (economic downturn). "[My son] had everything he wanted." Now the family scrapes by on welfare of \$843 a month, \$523 of which goes for rent and electricity. Although Huguette Robillard has only a grade 10 education and receives no assistance from the boys' father, she never expected this. Despite many attempts, she has been unable to find another job. "It was very disappointing for me because I'd never been on welfare... I always relied on myself."

Adapted from "Growing up Poor," by Patricia Chisholm, p.42 of *Macleans*, Feb. 24, 1997.

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## Poverty in Canada - Case Study #4

[Eugene Upper] was 56, blond, an alcoholic sherry drinker, terrified of closed-in spaces. He had lived on the streets for years. He was, when he visited the drop-in centres for the homeless, chatty, interested in the people around him, gentle, circumspect in his language, clean, quietly appreciative of things given to him -- food, clothing, conversation. He confided that on one or two occasions he had found it necessary to eat cat food.

Eugene was resourceful. He was so streetwise. He knew not to be drunk on the streets in the winter because of the danger of a falling asleep in the cold. He knew he could ride the streetcars and buses through the night until the hostels opened. Odd, then, that on the night of Jan. 5 [1996] at minus 17 degrees, he should freeze to death in a bus shelter at the corner of Spadina Avenue and Nassau Street, smack in the middle of Toronto's west side Chinatown....

Adapted from "One is too many," by Michael Valpy, D1 *Globe and Mail*, June 1, 1996. Reprinted with permission from the *Globe and Mail*.

## Poverty In Canada - Case Study # 5

Fatima is a recent university with an Honours Bachelor of Science. She has applied to many different places without much luck. The biggest challenge that faces Fatima is that some employers demand more work experience, while others tell her she's over-qualified. In four years, Fatima has accumulated a \$20, 000 debt. In three months, she will have to start paying back her student loans. Fatima is currently working three (3) part time jobs to keep up with her rent (\$750/month). With her part time work, Fatima earns \$12, 000 per year. Because of her limited income, Fatima often finds herself visiting the local food bank. "Some days" she says, "I find it difficult to believe that I'm in this situation with a university degree."

## Poverty in Canada - Case Study #6 (Longer Case Study)

Sally, a 29 year-old woman, lives with her 9 year-old son Sean in a motel program in Toronto. While one of the motels had been purchased by the city and is undergoing renovations to make the rooms more liveable for a family, the rest of the 500 people living in this program are spread throughout motels. Some of the customers are couples with little money seeking a place to make out and the poor who find themselves temporarily without accommodation. Their room is about 10 x 14 feet with a double bed and a bunk for Sean. They have a hot plate and a fridge for storing food.

Sally was married for five years but the relationship fell apart when her husband began to have sexual relations with another woman. As Sally recalls it, "My husband never wanted me to work, he wanted me to stay home and raise our son..." At the time of this interview, Sally had been separated from her husband for five years. She began a relationship within a year with another man, and, being unaccustomed to handling money, and having been a dependent person throughout her life, gave her savings away to her boyfriend. Soon her resources were used up and her husband "stopped his support payments (\$300 a month) because he met another girl." Sally and her son next moved through a variety of apartments in Toronto, each worse than the previous. Sean suffered as his life was constantly disrupted. His schoolwork suffered. Sally's family is unable to help with the resources.

Living in the crowded world of a motel room has had some serious effects on Sean's behaviour. "My son was so well behaved before. I'd just tell him to do something and he'd do it. Now if I ask Sean to do something he gets mad, upset and says 'Why do I have to do it? Why don't you do it?' or stuff like that. He'd never been like that and all my friends say they'd noticed a change in Sean since all this happened." Sean's sense of self-worth has diminished through this process, and he feels alienated from his classmates. As Sally observes, he not only feels different, but expresses it differently. "Like he says to me, 'Mom, all my friends go to a home, like they go home. I have to come back to this motel every night.'" How does Sean feel about living in one room? "He hates it."

Sally and Sean receive \$17.50 a day for food, which means, in common with most mothers, Sally often goes hungry to ensure that her child is well fed. "There's like two slices of luncheon meat left. I'm gonna give it to my son before I give it to myself." The food Sally and Sean can afford to buy is of questionable nutritional value. The food stores located within walking distance from the motels overcharge for staple items, and cooking facilities are so inadequate that it is impossible to provide a balanced meal.

Adapted from "The Politics of Poverty," by Thomas O'Reilly Fleming, *Canadian Woman Studies*, pp. 23-24 Volume



12, #4, Summer 1992.

### Lesson #15 Poverty and Homelessness

**Time:** 2 x 70-minute lessons

#### Overview

This lesson encourages students to locate homelessness in the context of poverty and to explore long-term strategies to improve the national disaster of homelessness.

#### Purpose

Students will be able to place the issue of homelessness in the context of poverty.

Students will be able to distinguish between short and long-term strategies and responses to homelessness.

Students will be able to articulate their concerns and perspectives about homelessness.

#### Preparation

##### Materials

2 copies per group of Saturday's edition of the local newspaper with rental listings

Multiple copies of 1 profile per group

Overhead or chart paper with Facts about Homelessness

Book computer lab if possible (for Step C)

Chart paper

Markers

#### Background Information:

The issue of homelessness should be contextualized as part of Canada's commitment to uphold the rights of every individual.<sup>1</sup> In the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Canada has promised to recognize that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of him[her]self and his [her] family, including food, clothing, housing." Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also states that "everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living including adequate food, clothing and housing, and the on-going improvement of living conditions, especially the right to freedom from hunger." Despite this promise, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has condemned Canada for allowing the problem of homelessness and inadequate housing to grow to become a national disaster (December 1998).

It is important to provide students with a context for homelessness as a result of declining wages, unemployment and inadequate social assistance. Homelessness is a direct result of poverty and lack of affordable housing, not the failure of an individual or a choice that people make.

#### Getting Started

1. Ask students if they read the newspaper. If so, which paper and which sections do they enjoy

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<sup>1</sup> Background information adapted from National Anti-Poverty Organization *Fact Sheet on Homelessness* – see Appendix.

reading.

2. Ask students if they have ever looked for a part-time job or used the classified section of the newspaper?
3. Explain that if people are looking for a place to live, a job, want to sell or buy something, often one of the places they look in is the Classified section of the newspaper. Usually the Saturday section has many listings.
4. Depending on the grade level and students' familiarity with the paper, it may be useful to go through some of the rental ads to explain short forms and how to read the ads (e.g. Ft/Pt, Exp., bdrm, \$700inclu, Indry, bsmt).

### Main Activity

#### Step A

1. Divide students into small groups (of about 3-4 students).
2. Distribute multiple copies of 1 profile to each group and 2 copies of the accommodation/classified section of the Saturday newspaper per group.
3. Ask each group to read the profile together.
4. Using the accommodation listing of the newspaper, ask students to explore the rental options available to the person in each profile. Instruct students to circle any rentals that the person in the profile could afford to rent. They should take into account the budget of the individual provided and any special needs or circumstances. What do they notice about many of the listings?
5. Ask students to discuss the following questions in their groups and record responses on chart paper in point form:
  - a. What difficult choice was the person in your profile faced with?
  - b. List all the barriers that the person in your profile faced in trying to improve their quality of life? (lack of childcare, lack of access to medicine, rising rent, lack of affordable housing, poor wages, no protections or benefits in their jobs etc.)
  - c. What are the various options you explored to improve the circumstances of the person in your profile? Were there affordable housing alternatives in the paper?
  - d. As a group, brainstorm the kinds of measures that might help the individual/family in your profile to improve their quality of life. What specific things could be done in relation to housing and homelessness?

#### Step B

1. Ask each group to present the situation of the individual/family in their profile to the class and their responses to the above questions.
2. Do they think that the experiences of the individuals and families in the profiles were typical of those who are homeless?
3. Provide students with the facts/background about homelessness on overhead or chart paper. Are students surprised by the facts? Why?

## Poverty and Economic Inequality

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4. Focus on specific measures, in relation to housing, that could be implemented to improve the quality of life of the individuals and families profiled. Are the ideas short or long-term? It is important to help students distinguish between individual and immediate responses (e.g., providing shelter beds, soup kitchens, distributing blankets and food to homeless people) that are necessary and important in the short term as well as long-term, institutional solutions (e.g., affordable housing, adequate government assistance, rent control, fair wages).

### Step C

Note - if a computer lab is unavailable, print out the relevant 6 pages for students and photocopy for each group or pair.

1. In pairs, ask students to go to the web site [www.tao.ca](http://www.tao.ca)
2. Direct students to click on the 1%. Ask them to read the material related to the 1% Solution Writing Campaign and answer the following questions:
  - a. What is the 1% solution being suggested by the Toronto Disaster Relief Committee?
  - b. What specific action is the committee requesting that people take?
  - c. Who is the Committee attempting to influence?
  - d. Do you agree with the Committee, its proposed solution and strategy for bringing about change? Explain.

### Post-Activity

1. As a class, discuss the 1% solution. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the plan and strategy? Record student responses.
2. What are some other concrete actions that the class, individually and collectively, can take in relation to homelessness? Again, help students to distinguish between short and long-term approaches.
3. Students should be encouraged to pursue their own individual responses as well as write a letter to the Prime Minister and Member of Parliament Responsible for Homelessness. The letter can be based on the ideas presented in the 1% solution as well as their own ideas and responses to homelessness.

For specifics on how to draft a letter, content and contact numbers, see the How to Write your Letter section of the [www.tao.ca](http://www.tao.ca) web site. Depending on the grade level, students can brainstorm ideas for the letter as a class or in small groups and then draft an individual letter. Letters should be edited for clarity of ideas, language and grammar before sending them to Members of Parliament.

### Extension

1. Ask students to research the role of the government in providing social housing in Canada. How has the government's role changed? What are some of the reasons for these changes in the housing policy? What are students' opinions of these changes? A good web site with a report on housing and homelessness in Canada is [www.tao.ca](http://www.tao.ca). Students can click on State of the Crisis, 2001 for the report.
2. Students can make a bulletin board display in their class or a prominent place in the school to educate other students about the 1% solution and other responses to homelessness.

## Poverty and Economic Inequality

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3. Students can start a school letter writing campaign to raise awareness about homelessness and work actively to influence government policy.
4. Have students investigate how families go through the process of putting themselves on a list for affordable housing (e.g., what are the requirements, what about waiting lists, etc.).

## Poverty and Homelessness - Profile #1

You are a woman who is working full time for minimum wage. Luckily you have managed to find a job during the day when your daughter is at school, as you can't afford daycare for your daughter who is 7. A lot of jobs that you applied for require shift work and night work and you can't leave your daughter alone. You take the TTC to work very early, well before your daughter goes to school so you drop her off to a neighbour who has a child at the same school. After school, your daughter is home alone for about an hour until you get back from work, as your neighbour can't pick her up. You worry about her but don't have any other relatives or friends who can stay with her.

You make about \$14,000 a year. Your monthly budget looks roughly like this:

1. Monthly income - \$1167
2. Rent - \$800
3. Food - \$150 (often you have to use the food bank to get enough food for you and your daughter)
4. TTC pass to get to work - \$93.50
5. Phone and other utilities - \$100

You are barely making ends meet every month when your landlord tells you that because of improvements they have made in the building, your rent is going to be increased. Your monthly TTC pass that you need to get to work has recently increased and there is no money for your daughter's school trips or warm clothes for winter. You have been late on rent a couple of times and now with the new increase, you can't afford to stay in your apartment. Where will you and your daughter live?

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## Poverty and Homelessness - Profile #2

You are a woman who has recently arrived to Canada from another country. In your home country, you were a teacher with almost 10 years of teaching experience but here in Canada, your teaching qualifications and experience are not recognized. You have found a job as a dishwasher in a restaurant for minimum wage. Luckily you are only required to work days when your son is at school.

You make about \$14,000 a year. Your monthly budget looks roughly like this:

- a. Monthly income - \$1167
- b. Rent - \$800
- c. Food - \$150
- d. TTC pass to get to work - \$93.50
- e. Phone and other utilities - \$100

One winter, your son gets a very bad cough that won't go away. Your boss isn't very

understanding about giving you a day off to take him to the doctor and when he is sick, there is no one to look after him at home. You don't have any benefits at work so that means no sick days, medical coverage or protection if your employer fires you. Finally, you get one morning off and take him to the doctor. He has a bad lung infection and needs very expensive medication for treatment. He has to come back to the doctor 1 time each week for the next 3 weeks. To get the medication filled, it costs almost \$300. When it is time to pay the rent, you give your landlord \$400 and ask him to wait for the rest as your son needed medication. He gives you an eviction notice. This is not how you imagined life in Canada. Where will you live?

### **Poverty and Homelessness - Profile #3**

You are a woman who was injured while on the job. You now have chronic back pain and find it difficult to keep a job because you are sick and in pain so often. Your partner is working and supporting you as most of your savings have run out because of the treatment you need for your work related injury. Your partner also loses his job when a factory closes down and moves to another country where labour costs are cheaper. After a few months, he still doesn't have work and together, you apply for social assistance.

You have survived by going to the food bank, selling the old car that your partner used to get to work and using up all of your savings. Your partner finds odd jobs once in a while but nothing for long. He wants to take some courses in computers or get trained in another area of work but training courses are very expensive.

The monthly maximum that you receive on social assistance is \$901 but your rent alone in a very small basement apartment is \$750. It is impossible to continue paying so much rent given the inadequate amount of social assistance. You have to move but where will you live?

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### **Poverty and Homelessness - Profile #4**

You are an elderly, single man. Your partner died a few years ago and no family members live nearby. Until recently, you have been pretty healthy but lately, things haven't been going very well. One day, you fell and couldn't get to the phone to get help. You have a fixed monthly income of \$1300 (from your workplace and government pensions). This year, the cost of rent has gone up, as has the cost of heating your house. Your heating bills have almost doubled.

Your monthly budget is roughly as follows:

1. Monthly income - \$1300
2. Rent - \$800

3. Phone, heating, utilities - \$250
4. Food - \$150
5. TTC pass - \$80

You are worried that you won't be able to pay your rent if your bills or rent increase. What are your options?



## **Poverty and Homelessness - Profile #5**

You are a woman with 2 small children. You recently left home because of a very abusive situation. For years, your partner has physically and emotionally abused you. You have left before but as a stay at home mom with 2 children, you can't find a job that pays enough to support yourself and your kids. Finding safe and affordable childcare and a decent place to live is almost impossible.

After staying in shelters for a while and with promises from your partner that he will never abuse you again, you usually return. Unfortunately, the abuse never stops. You are determined not to return, for yourself and your children. You used to live in a rental apartment with your partner and you don't have any money or savings. There aren't any spaces available at the women's shelters in the city. You stay with different friends for a while but no one can keep you for long. It is difficult for the kids to keep moving and going to school and you don't have any more options.

You looked into applying for social assistance but you and your 2 daughters are eligible to receive slightly over \$1000 and you can't find a place to live and eat for that amount. Where will you and your children live and how will you survive on that money?

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## **Poverty and Homelessness - Profile #6**

You are a single man who has been living on the streets for a year. It wasn't always like that. Once, you had a decent job as a factory worker, and a place to live. You got laid off 2 years ago and even with social assistance and help from the food bank, you couldn't afford to make the monthly mortgage payments on your house.

You lost your house and then rented a room here and there for short amounts of time or stayed with friends. Now, you sleep in shelters and get a meal wherever you can. The conditions at the shelter are horrible. Still, you can't get into shelters every night because there aren't enough beds anymore. Sometimes you ask for money on the streets to buy some food. Winters are especially tough. People often walk by without even acknowledging you and others tell you to stop being so lazy and find a job.

You try to do odd jobs like raking leaves and shovelling snow but when you don't have an address, no one will hire you and you can't even apply for social assistance. You are sick of living the way you do. What are your options?

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## **Poverty and Homelessness - Profile # 7**

You are a male youth who has recently left home and dropped out of high school. You ran away from home because you had a very difficult time with your father. You have tried living with your distant relatives for awhile, but they can no longer afford supporting an extra person in their family.

Unfortunately, you haven't had much luck finding a job since you don't have a permanent address and a telephone number where employers can contact you, and you can't even apply for social assistance. You have tried living in a number of shelters. However, it has become increasingly difficult to get a bed each time. You now find yourself living on the streets of Toronto. What are your options?

## **Facts About Homelessness<sup>1</sup>**

1. In Ontario during the year 2000, 54,000 tenant households were faced with eviction because they could not pay the rent.
2. The waiting list for social housing in Toronto in November of 2000 included 20,364 single adults, 30,563 families and 12,183 seniors – a total of 63,000 households. Applicants are told that the wait could be from 12 to 19 years.
3. In Toronto, more than 30,000 people stayed in shelter beds in 1999. The biggest increase was among 2 parent families.
4. At least 250,000 people will experience homelessness in Canada each year.
5. Homelessness has important health implications. Homeless people are at increased risk of dying prematurely and suffer from a wide range of health problems.
6. Aboriginal people are significantly over-represented in Canada's homeless population.
7. In November of 1998, the mayors of Canada's biggest cities passed a resolution to declare homelessness a national disaster.

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<sup>1</sup> Facts taken from *State of the Crisis, 2001: A report on housing and homelessness in Canada*, National Housing and Homelessness Network, 2001.



### Lesson #16

### Reasons for Poverty

**Time: 55 minutes**

#### Overview

This role-play activity describes situations of poverty, particularly among youth and their chances for a safe and secure future. <sup>1</sup>

#### Purpose

Students will be able to examine some of the primary reasons why people experience poverty. Students will begin to identify who is experiencing poverty in our society and world.

#### Preparation

##### Materials

Copies of interview cards  
Class set of “Worksheets for Interviews”

#### Getting Started

Introduce the activity by emphasizing that extreme poverty is not a phenomenon restricted to the Third World. For this activity, examples have been drawn from a variety of countries. Although in these case studies young people tell their stories, other age groups, particularly older people, are also affected by poverty.

#### Main Activity

##### Step A

1. Distribute interview cards to 5 members of the class.
2. Choose 5 others to be interviewed and give them interviewee cards.
3. Distribute worksheets to the rest of the class.
4. Have the students conduct the first round of interviews.
5. After each person is interviewed, provide a few minutes for the completion of the worksheet.
6. As a whole group, ask participants to share quickly some of their responses. List these on the chalkboard or on newsprint under the heading “Experiencing Poverty.”

##### Step B

1. Repeat the interview process as described above with the second round of interviews (5 years later), choosing new participants if group size permits.
2. Have the rest of the group complete part B of the worksheet.
3. Ask the participants to share their responses to the questions on worksheet B.
4. List these under the heading “Continual Poverty.”

Alternatively: Tape the interviews before the class.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from p. 56 of *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.

### Post-Activity

1. As a group, ask students, do you think anyone should have to experience poverty? Why or why not?
2. Do you think that by getting a good education and working hard people can always avoid experiencing poverty? Referring to the “Continual Poverty” list, try to draw out some reasons why hard work and even education might not be enough to avoid poverty when there are too few jobs, jobs pay poorly, discrimination exists or people don’t have access to social programs.
3. What are some of the other reasons that people in the interviews continue to experience poverty?

## **Worksheets for Interviews**

Complete Part A of the worksheet after listening to each of the first interviews. Complete Part B after each of the second set of interviews.

### **Interview 1 - Part A**

List as many reasons as you can why Mohammed is poor.

What does Mohammed hope for in the future?

### **Interview 1 – Part B**

Did Mohammed get what he wanted? If not, why not?

### **Interview 2 – Part A**

List as many reasons as you can why Alvaro is poor.

What does Alvaro hope for the future?

## **Interview 2 – Part B**

Did Alvaro get what he wanted? If not, why not?



### **Interview 3 – Part A**

List as many reasons as you can why Jamie is poor.

What does Jamie hope for the future?

### **Interview 3 - Part B**

Did Jamie get what he wanted? If not, why not?

### **Interview 4 – Part A**

List as many reasons as you can why Nancy is poor.

### **Interview 4 – Part B**

Did Nancy get what she wanted? If not, why not?

### **Interview 5 – Part A**

List as many reasons as you can why Nada is poor.

What does Nada hope for the future?

## **Interview 5 – Part B**

Did Nada get what she wanted? If not, why not?

## Interview 1

### Part A – Interviewer

1. What is your name?
  2. How do you live in Bombay on your own?
  3. Why did you come to the city?
  4. How will you survive here?
- 

### Part A – Interviewee

1. My name is Mohammed Halif. I live here in Bombay, on my own. I came here from a small village when I was just a kid.
  2. At first when I got off the train, I was very frightened. Then I met another boy who taught me how to beg. Now I own a shoeshine box at the train Station. I earn three rupees (about \$0.10) a day, maybe more.
  3. Oh, I went to school for a while in Nagpur—that’s my village. My mother and sisters live there. But my mother doesn’t get enough money to buy food every day. She left my father because he beat her so I had to wash dishes in the restaurant to help get money. One day I dropped a heavy tray full of dishes, and they all broke. The man wouldn’t pay me for three months. I had to tell my brother and he got really angry so I ran away to the train.
  4. There are always scraps in the garbage cans and I can sleep anywhere. If I get extra money I save it up to buy good clothes. One day when I am older, I will have a business. I’ll sell fruit and vegetables. I’ll be a good businessman-you’ll see-because I know how to look after myself.
- 

### Part B – Interviewer

Mohammed, five years ago you were talking to us about your life in Bombay. What are you doing now?

What did you do then?

Can you go back to the country?

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### Part B – Interviewee

1. I sold my shoeshine business. I wanted to get my own fruit stand. I had saved money and given it to a man to keep. He keeps money for boys, and they can get it back when they need it. But when I asked him for money, he laughed. He gave me a few rupees but the rest of it I never saw. He disappeared.
  2. I went back to living on the street. In the rainy season I clean taxis. It’s hard. Mud gets all over you. You get filthy. Sometimes I don’t get much work and I can’t buy anything
-

to eat. But you can always find scraps in garbage cans and drink tea that people leave over at cafes on the road.

3. No room for me at home. Besides, my mother can't feed me. I can take care of myself. I get sick a lot right now but after the monsoon season maybe I'll get a shoeshine box again. Life will be better.

## Interview 2

### Part A – Interviewer

1. What is your name?
  2. Can't they afford to send you to school?
  3. How much do you earn?
  4. What will you do when you are older?
- 

### Part A – Interviewee

1. My name is Alvaro Perez. I'm fourteen years old, I think. I work on this farm in Colombia- that's in South America. I would rather be at school but I work here to earn money for my family.
  2. Books are too expensive. And my brothers and sisters, too, want to go to school. Now that I earn money, I can help them. My dad is gone. So my mother is in charge.
  3. I earn ten dollars a week. I work from seven o'clock in the morning until four in the afternoon each day. Then I go play football with the other boys coming out of school. My mother she milks cows on the farm. She earns only five dollars a week. They don't pay us enough to eat.
  4. I don't want to go on working here. I want to go to the big town. It's much more interesting. In the town I will get a job in an office maybe. You'll see. I'll maybe be a manager because I know how to work hard.
- 

### Part B – Interviewer

1. Alvaro, five years ago you were working on the farm. What do you do now?
  2. What happened to you in the city?
  3. How did you survive?
- 

### Part B – Interviewee

1. I left that. I wanted to live in the big town. I told my mother I needed a better job. She warned me not to go but I went anyway.
  2. After a few days, I was robbed. The city turned out to be an awful place. I had no money, no place to go, no friends. I picked through the garbage for food. There were no jobs. There was no water for washing. I had to wear my dirty clothes for weeks at a time.
  3. I joined up with some other young men collecting scrap wood and paper to sell. We work hard till late in the night so that our backs ache. My body feels ready to fall apart. We
-

earn enough to buy a bit of food that's all. I would like to go back to the farm but my mother died last year and I heard there is no work there till next summer.

## Interview 3

### Part A – Interviewer

1. What is your name?
  2. What do you do?
  3. How will you get out of this place?
- 

### Part A – Interviewee

1. My name is Jamie. I live in Dundee—that's in Scotland. I live in a housing project. It looks more like a prison block the way they built it. All you need is a couple of machine guns up on the roofs. Me and my friends we haven't got a gun but we've got a boom box and all that concrete makes a good echo chamber.
  2. A lot of nothing. I left school and I wasn't prepared for nothing. This place has got to be seen to be believed. They say there's more social workers to the square inch than any place else in Scotland and no jobs. Nothing, everybody hates us, calls us part of the problem. My mom and dad are on the bottle and the old man upstairs is a loony and we have to put up with him setting fire to the place and us youth just get lumped in with them all—the junkies and the alkie and thieves.
  3. I got this scheme—me and my friend. They got some Youth Employment Project and we are figuring on creating a community centre. There was going to be a supermarket down the street and the building was there but they never opened it. We're going to get all the youth together and really make something of it. You'll see. It'll work because we've got lots of energy even if we don't have no jobs.
- 

### Part B – Interviewer

1. Jamie, when we talked to you five years ago you were going to make a store into a youth centre. What happened to the project?
  2. What do you know?
  3. What happened to all the energy you had when we talked last time?
- 

### Part B – Interviewee

1. We had this good idea and a great big space lying empty but the rich people from the other side of town, they didn't trust us. Nobody trusts us, so they called a meeting. They made us sound like we would vandalize the place, tear it apart. They wouldn't let us touch it. They wanted us to stay in the housing project.

2. My old man is dead and I help my mom out a bit with the other kids. Still no jobs out there. I don't see no future for us. What are we supposed to do. No one looks twice at poor people.
3. You get worn down. The police harass us, the local government wants to get rid of the project and build a fancy high rise. Lots of my friends they just sit around and sniff glue. For a while, they forget there are so many questions and no answers. My best friend joined the army. Not me. I don't want to get my brains blown out. I just hang around here. For what, I don't know.



## Interview 4

### Part A – Interviewer

1. What is your name?
  2. Do you go to school?
  3. Do you like school?
  4. What will you do when you grow older?
- 

### Part A – Interviewee

1. My name is Nancy Fullwood. I'm thirteen, and I live in Kingston, Jamaica. My mother, she is over in Canada. She works to send us what she can but she has trouble finding jobs cleaning for people. People look down on her because she is black. Me, I live with my grandmother. But she's blind and she has five of us to look after.
  2. I go to the school but the teachers look on you like you're a lower grade because you're poor. And sometimes I am so hungry and thirsty when I get there I just fall asleep in class. So I don't hear the lesson. And the teacher gets mad.
  3. Sure I do but, if you're poor you don't find it easy to get somewhere to do your homework and your brother or sister messes your book up. So when the teacher sees it she says, "what happened to this?" and she just throws it away and doesn't mark it. I don't think that's fair.
  4. I will go to Canada and get a good job, maybe a secretary. Maybe I will get more schooling there, and buy a big house, not like our shack-a house with a real roof and a yard.
- 

### Part B – Interviewer

1. Nancy, five years ago you told us you would leave Jamaica and go to Canada to work. Here you are in Canada. Did things work out well for you?
  2. What do you do?
  3. Do you ever think about going back to Jamaica?
- 

### Part B – Interviewee

1. I left school before I finished high school because I couldn't pass the exams to go on. Only five people in our class out of one hundred got places in the higher grade. I came here to live with my mother. But she has no money to rent a bigger place so I have to work. Jobs are hard to find. No one wants to look at you when you are black.
  2. I don't have skills so I do cleaning with my mother and look after kids in the house where she works. They don't figure they have to pay me much and I work long hours - seven in the morning till six at night watching three kids. They drive me crazy!
-

3. There's nothing there for me. When you are poor, you are poor. I still want to get me a good job but I don't know where the money is going to come from to get training and good clothes when we don't have enough some months for the rent and the groceries.

## Interview 5

### Part A – Interviewer

1. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?
  2. Do you like school?
  3. What are your hopes for the future?
- 

### Part A – Interviewee

1. My name is Nada and I live in Toronto. I'm 13 years old and my birthday is in November. Me and my brother and parents, we don't have our own place to live so we live in one room in a house. That's all we can afford. We used to go to the shelter sometimes or stay with some relatives or friends but nobody can afford to keep four people. At least we have our own room now. It was hard sleeping in the shelter with so many other people every night.
  2. School's okay but it's hard to concentrate. We go to the foodbank sometimes even though both my parents work cause they don't make a lot of money. Before coming to Canada, my mom was an engineer and my dad a teacher but they're not allowed to work here in their old jobs. My mom found a job in a grocery store and my dad gets work wherever he can, shoveling snow or delivering papers. Sometimes my brother and me help him deliver papers to houses but his dream is to teach again. He is trying to find a school that will let him volunteer. Maybe if he gets some experience in Canada, he will be able to teach again. I like to read a lot but it's not the best feeling at school since I don't have a lot of friends. It's hard when all the other kids talk about shopping, what they did on the weekends or holidays. I don't have much to say.
  3. I hope that I'll be able to be a writer when I grow up. I love words and reading like I said and I want to be able to write and not worry about being poor all the time. I'm not greedy or anything but it would be nice to have my own place when I'm older and not think about money all the time. Maybe you'll see a book of mine in the bookstores one day.
- 

### Part B – Interviewer

1. Nada, five years ago things weren't going so well at school. Did your school experience get better?
  2. Did you keep writing?
  3. Where are you living now?
- 

### Part B – Interviewee

1. School was okay. It wasn't great or anything and it was harder as I got older to not have my own room or a place to concentrate or do homework or anything. I finished high school but it's not like I could go to college or university. I work at a fast food restaurant. I worked there after school and during the holidays while I was in high school and after graduation, I just kept on working. The pay isn't great and the work is pretty boring. I don't feel like I'm

learning anything but at least I have a job. I applied to be a bank teller and keep looking for other jobs.

2. I wanted to study creative writing cause I did keep writing, poetry and short stories but there is never much time. I found a great writing program at a college but I couldn't afford to go and my parents can't afford to help me out. I never even asked them. I didn't want them to feel bad. Besides, they've worked so hard all these years and I want to bring home some more money. They are getting older and tired and my mom gets sick a lot. I hope that I can save a bit of money and maybe take a night course in creative writing.
3. All of us are living in a one bedroom apartment. My parents sleep in the room and me and my brother sleep in the living room. It's hard never to have any privacy. It would be so great to have my own room some day.

### **Lesson #17      Why Are People Poor?**

**Time: 40 minutes**

#### **Overview**

This lesson provides a critical examination of popular beliefs about the reasons for poverty and an opportunity for students to apply information from earlier lessons.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Purpose**

Students will be able to examine their assumptions about the reasons for poverty and wealth. Students will be able to examine some of the primary reasons why people continue to experience poverty.

#### **Preparation**

#### **Materials**

A class set of “Poor Because. . .” handouts

#### **Note:**

While this lesson can be done at the start of the unit as a diagnostic tool, it is important to challenge students’ problematic assumptions about people experiencing poverty while also providing alternative perspectives. By doing this lesson later in the unit, students have been provided with a context to balance popular and inaccurate beliefs about poverty. It can be done as a culminating activity to assess students’ ability to synthesize and apply information explored in earlier lessons as well as another opportunity to have students reflect on and challenge their own assumptions.

#### **Main Activity**

1. Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5.
2. Distribute a copy of the Poor Because... handout to each participant.
3. Ask each group to try to reach consensus on the 3 best and 3 worst responses to the question.
4. List the responses given on the board, overhead or flip chart.
5. Ask members of each group to explain why they chose the responses they did.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from pp. 55-66 of *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.

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### Post-Activity

1. Help students see that the responses given are opinions. Some are verifiable by facts, while others may be based on limited information about a situation.
2. Beside each response given by the class, list information that would support the opinion, as in the example that follows. Encourage participants to be imaginative.

#### Response

#### Information Required

People experience poverty because they are lazy.

Interviews with people experiencing poverty to determine their attitudes towards work.

Studies showing that rich people prefer working more than people experiencing poverty.

People experience poverty because of illness or disease.

Statistics from public health organizations on the health of those with lowest income levels.

experience

Studies that show that people who are sick poverty rather than the other way around.

3. Discuss whether the information required actually exists and how students might go about finding it.

### Extension

1. Do this activity at the start and end of the unit to compare opinions and assess learning.
2. Have each student respond to the question, “Why do you think people experience poverty?” or write a short editorial under the heading “There are reasons why people are experiencing poverty.”

## Poor Because...

Indicate the three best responses with (√) and the three worst responses with (×) from the following list:

### People Are Poor Because...

- \_\_\_ they are lazy and do not work hard enough to earn what they need
- \_\_\_ they do not have work (unemployment)
- \_\_\_ even though they work very hard, they do not earn enough money to buy what they need (wages are too low)
- \_\_\_ they do not have enough education or skills
- \_\_\_ they have too many children
- \_\_\_ rich countries give generous aid but it is misused or does not reach the people who need it
- \_\_\_ they are discriminated against (treated unfairly) because of their colour, nationality, religion, or sex
- \_\_\_ governments are dishonest
- \_\_\_ governments do not really do their job
- \_\_\_ they suffer from illness or disease
- \_\_\_ they have a history of being ruled and used
- \_\_\_ they are affected by war
- \_\_\_ rich countries do not give enough aid
- \_\_\_ no reason in particular, that's just the way the world is
- \_\_\_ there are too many people in the world and not enough resources (food, land, etc.) to go around
- \_\_\_ of natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes
- \_\_\_ there are enough resources in the world for everyone to have what they need but these resources are not shared fairly
- \_\_\_ too much money is spent on weapons and not enough on buying what people need
- \_\_\_ resources (food, water, land, energy) are wasted rather than used for what people need
- \_\_\_ other reasons (list any you can think of)

## Lesson #18 Musical Chairs (Wealth Distribution)

**Time:** 60 minutes

### Overview

This lesson focuses on the unequal distribution of wealth in Canada and Ontario and the exacerbation of this inequality over time.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

To encourage students to recognize the unequal distribution of wealth in Canada in a historical and contemporary context.

To think critically about wealth distribution and class inequalities in Canada.

### Preparation

#### Materials

10 straight-backed chairs without armrests

10 student volunteers

#### Background Information:

Up-to-date statistics on the distribution of wealth in Canada are very hard to obtain because the federal government specifically cut Statistics Canada's ability to gather such data. However, a new survey on some aspects of wealth distribution by Statistics Canada called "Survey of Financial Security" was released in March 2001, and contains very worthwhile information.

### Getting Started

#### Introduction

1. Ask for 10 student volunteers to stand in front of 10 chairs (without armrests).
2. Announce that in this demonstration each person represents one-tenth of the adult Canadian population and each chair represents one tenth of the private wealth owned by Canadians.
3. Have students maintain the order in which they are standing, from left to right.

### Main Activity:

#### Step A – 1970

1. Tell the class that you are going to start by looking at wealth distribution in Canada in 1970. Say: "In 1970 the top (wealthiest) 10% of adults owned 53% of all private wealth and the next 10% owned 17.5% of the private wealth in Canada. The third wealthiest 10% owned 12% of the private wealth."
2. Ask the student representing the wealthiest 10% (who is standing farthest to the left in the line) to lie across 5 and 1/3 chairs.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted and reprinted with permission from pp.66-79 of *The Activist Cookbook: Creative Actions for a Fair Economy*, by Andrew Boyd, United For a Fair Economy, 1997. Debriefing questions adapted from p.241 *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, 1997.



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3. Ask the second student (to the right) representing the next 10% to use a little more than 1 and  $\frac{1}{5}$  chairs.
4. Ask the student representing the third wealthiest 10% to sit in a little more than 1 chair.
5. That leaves 7 students who are to fit themselves into the remaining 2 chairs. Encourage them to try to sit.
6. Allow students to get up and (briefly) get comfortable.

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### Step B – 1980

1. Tell students that the next exercise will use wealth distribution figures from 1980. Ask them to speculate about how things might have changed in those 10 years. After hearing a few guesses, say: “In 1980 the top 10% of adults owned 57% of all private wealth and the next 10% owned 16% of it.”
2. That means that the student representing the wealthiest 10% can lie across 5 and 7/10 chairs.
3. A second student representing the next 10% can use a little less than 2 chairs.
4. Tell the 8 remaining students to try to squeeze into the remaining 3 chairs. Encourage them to sit. Say: “Don’t fall through the cracks!!!”
5. Also explain to the class: “If the person representing the wealthiest 10% could be divided up, his/her top 10% (this is the wealthiest one percent of the population) would have almost 2 chairs (18.8%).”

### Step C — Ontario in 1989

1. Announce to the students that the class will look next at wealth in Ontario in 1989. Say: “In 1989 the wealthiest 10% of adults owned more than 60% of all private wealth. The next 10% owned about 15%.”
2. Ask the student representing the top 10% to lie across 6 chairs. A second student representing the next 10% can use 1 and 1/2 chairs.
3. Again, 8 students are to try to fit into the remaining 3 chairs. Encourage them to sit.
4. Also note: “If the person representing the top 10% could be divided up, his/her top 10% (the wealthiest 1% of the population) would have more than 2 chairs, almost a quarter of all the privately-held wealth (23%).”

### Debriefing:

Discuss the following questions with the student volunteers and the rest of the class:

1. How did you feel as part of the bottom 80%?
2. How did you feel as part of the middle 10%?
3. How did you feel as part of the top 10%?
4. How did you feel observing the activity?

### Post-Activity

1. If you were going to move someone off the chairs to make more room, who would it be? Why should it be them?
2. From what you’ve heard on TV, the radio, and elsewhere, where are decision-makers looking to make room?
3. Which people are most likely to need or value public wealth, such as public schools, public libraries and public hospitals?

## Distribution of Wealth - Additional Information

Though there are no accurate comparisons that can be made between the wealthiest and most poor people in Canada, the following statistics may help to outline the severity of the situation today<sup>1</sup>:

1. In 1995 the calculated net worth of the 50 wealthiest Canadians was more than the combined government revenues of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.
2. The combined wealth of the richest 100 Canadians in August 2000 was \$128.8 billion.
3. Canada's Gross Domestic Product in 1999 was \$958 billion.
4. At the average annual earnings of full-time employees in Canada (\$45,070 for men and \$32,553 for women, it would take 6,102 years for men and 8,448 years for women to make it to the bottom realm of the Rich 100 list.
5. Comparing Canada to the rest of the developed world, the gap between the richest and poorest 20% of the population in Canada is worse than all other developed nations, except for the United States and Switzerland.
6. By November 1997 there were three times the number of millionaires in Canada than there were in 1989.
7. Although income distribution and wealth distribution are different, it may be important to highlight that in 1973, the top 10% of Canadian families with children under 18 took home 21 times the market income of the poorest 10% of families. By 1996 the richest families had a market income 314 times greater than the poorest families.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix \_\_: The 50 Richest Canadians and Hurtig, Mel (2000) *Pay the Rent or Feed the Kids*. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart; Also *Canadian Business Magazine*, August 7, 2000; Yalnizyan, Armine (2000) *Canada's great divide*. Toronto: Centre for Social Justice.

## Lesson #19      If Only We Had More Money

**Time: 60 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson explores the effects of socio-economic inequality through an examination of social interactions between youth.

### Purpose

Students will be able to understand the emotional and material effects of socio-economic inequality.

Students will understand how class differences affect social interactions (e.g., how a person may behave differently around those of another class versus those of his/her same class).

### Preparation

#### Materials

At least one photocopied scenario per group of four students

### Main Activity

#### Step A

1. Have students form groups of four.
2. Distribute a copy of the first scenario to half the groups.
3. Distribute a copy of the second scenario to the other half of the groups.
4. Have groups read, discuss and practice acting out their scenarios. Ask them to create their own endings.

#### Step B

1. Have the groups with the first scenarios present to the whole class.
2. Debrief with the following questions:
  - a. How do you think Sarah felt when Stuart suggested the group go for a soda?
  - b. Have you ever felt that way? When? What did you do?
  - c. What do you think of the ways Sarah handled the situation in the role-plays you saw? Can you think of anything else she could have done or said?
  - d. What do you think of what the other students said or did? Are there any other more creative ways they could have handled the situation?

#### Step C

1. Have the groups with the second scenarios present.
2. Debrief with the following questions<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Questions for scenarios adapted from pp. 70-71 *Open Minds to Equality*, by Nancy Schniedewind and Ellen Davidson, 1983.

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1. How do you think Dave felt when Bill teased him about his shoes? How do you think his parents felt when he asked for new shoes?
2. Have you ever felt like Dave? When? What did you do?
3. What do you think of the ways Dave handled the situation in the role-plays you saw? Can you think of anything else he could have done or said?
4. What do you think of what Dave's parents said or did? Are there other more creative ways they could have handled the situation?
5. Have you noticed other situations where people haven't been able to participate in the same way as everyone else because they or their family had little money? Explain.
6. How you feel when you don't have enough money to do what others are doing? What do you think others should do or say?

### Step D (Optional)

1. Have the groups divide into pairs for the third scenario and give them an opportunity to discuss it and write an ending together.
2. Hold a class discussion, or have students answer the following questions:
  - a. How do you think Katerina felt when Yee Fun asked her why she had never been invited to her home?
  - b. Have you ever felt that way? When? What did you do?
  - c. What do you think Katerina's choices were to handle the situation in the scenario?
  - d. What do you think of what Yee Fun said? Are there any other ways she could have handled the situation?
  - e. What do you think others should do or say when people aren't able to participate in the same way as everyone else because they have little money?



## Scenario 1

Stuart, Jennifer, Marco and Sarah are new friends in the same grade 7 class. Stuart, Jennifer and Marco each get allowances of about \$5/week, which they are free to spend as they wish. Sarah comes from a home with very little money and does not receive an allowance.

One day after school the four students are sitting in their classroom working together on a group geography project. The four seem to be enjoying each other's company. Stuart suggests that they all go out for a soda while continuing to work on the project. Jennifer and Marco both get up to go saying that they think it's a good idea....

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## Scenario 2

Bill and Dave are at the mall looking at stuff and hanging around. At a shoe store they notice expensive new sneakers that have just come out on the market. Bill tells Dave that the only way he'll ever improve as a skate boarder is "to ditch those cheap no-name shoes you insist on wearing" and buy a pair of shoes better suited to skate boarding. Dave tries to laugh Bill's comment off, and that works for a while, but Bill mentions Dave's "pathetic shoes" three more times before Dave goes home.

When Dave gets home he decides to talk to his parents about his situation. Although he knows that money has been tight since his dad lost his job, he hopes his parents will understand how hard it is for him to get teased....

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## Scenario 3

Katerina is visiting her friend Yee Fun at her home, as she has done on several occasions. After dinner, when the two are alone, Yee Fun asks Katerina why they never visit or spend time at Katerina's home. In the past Yee Fun has felt uncomfortable or excluded because people, even some of her friends, had negative attitudes towards her because she's Chinese-Canadian. She thinks this might be true with Katerina. She asks Katerina whether her family is racist. Katerina feels terrible. She doesn't want to lie to Yee Fun, but she also doesn't want to admit that she is ashamed of her family's tiny, cramped one bedroom apartment....





**Part V:**

**Labour Issues**

## Lesson #20 Introduction to Labour History

**Time: 70 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson provides a historical overview of the role of unions in Canadian history.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will recognize union gains in the context of Canadian history.

Students will understand that union gains have been achieved through organization and struggle.

### Preparation

#### Materials

1 copy of Dates sheet

1 copy of “What Happened When” sheets per group

Class set of Student Activity sheets

### Getting Started

1. Ask students what things they would consider important in looking for a job. Responses might include, good pay, safe working conditions, respected by workers and managers, vacation time etc. Record student responses on flipchart, overhead or board.
2. Should all workers have the working conditions that we would like to have in our jobs?
3. Do you think all workers have these kinds of working conditions or have always had them? If not, where do they think they have come from?
4. What do people do to ensure their rights as workers? Tell students that in many workplaces, workers form unions, organizations formed to further their mutual interests regarding wages and working conditions. Workers’ rights have come from worker and union struggles over the decades.

### Main Activity

1. Cut the Dates sheet into strips and tape on the classroom walls in 6 different locations (do not tape the 1990-2000 date).
2. Divide students into 6 groups and give each group 1 What Happened When worksheet.
3. Ask students to decide which events on each sheet sound important to them and write these key dates on separate pieces of paper. Students should discuss why certain events sound more important than others or brainstorm all the reasons why they think certain events are particularly important.
4. Ask students to arrange themselves chronologically around the classroom according to their important dates, read the information to the class and then explain in their own words what they think is the significance of the event.
5. Have the class fill in a brief summary of important events on the Student Activity sheet.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999.

### **Post-Activity**

Ask students:

Why do you think the struggle for workers' rights has been so difficult?

Whose responsibility is it to fight for workers' rights?

What are actions that can be taken in order for us to ensure that we are able to achieve the working conditions we discussed at the beginning of class? Refer back to Preparation question #1.

Refer students to websites relating to labour union history and ask them to investigate the dates they chose as particularly significant. Are they important for the reasons they thought? What additional information have they been able to find out about those particular events? A great Internet resource is [www.civilization.ca/hist/labour/lab01e.html](http://www.civilization.ca/hist/labour/lab01e.html).

### **Extension**

Students can research recent events (1990-present) in terms of union struggles and victories. They may wish to investigate events such as Bill 136, Days of Action, etc.

**Dates**

**1800 - 1872**

**1873 - 1891**

**1892 - 1913**

**1914 - 1938**

**1939 - 1965**

**1966 - 1989**

**1990 - 2000**

## Labour Issues

<b>What Happened When?</b>							
<b>1812</b>	<b>1816</b>	<b>1827-33</b>	<b>1837</b>	<b>1843</b>	<b>1848</b>	<b>1867</b>	<b>1872</b>
<p>The first dock – workers' unions appear in Saint John and Halifax.</p>	<p>Nova Scotia passes a law prohibiting workers from getting together to ask for better wages and hours and sends them to jail for three months if they do.</p>	<p>Printers, carpenters, shipwrights, shoe workers and tailors form unions in Quebec and Montreal.</p>	<p>Rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada for more democratic government are crushed. Many people are executed or deported</p>	<p>Lachine Canal strike. Labourers want more than sixty cents a day, and they don't want "store money" – a piece of paper that entitles them to supplies at an employers-owned store. A riot starts, and the army is sent to stop it.</p>	<p>The Master and Servant Act is passed, forcing servants to stay with their masters, no matter how they are treated, for a stated number of years. Captured runaways are jailed.</p> <p>Shoemakers and tailors in Montreal are afraid they might lose their jobs because of a new invention – the treadle sewing machine. They march through the streets and into the factories to smash the machines, but they are stopped by the police.</p>	<p>Canada is born as an independent nation.</p>	<p>Toronto printers go on strike for a fifty four hour week and ten dollars a week in wages. They lose.</p> <p>The <i>Trades Union Act</i> is passed, which makes it legal for workers to organize. But they have little real protection. The Act doesn't stop employers from firing workers who belong or not hiring those who might belong to a union.</p> <p>Employers circulate lists of workers sympathetic to unions, and those on the list never got jobs.</p>

## Labour Issues

<b>What Happened When?</b>							
<b>1873</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>1876</b>	<b>1880-82</b>	<b>1885</b>	<b>1886</b>	<b>1888</b>	<b>1891</b>
A fire and an explosion in a coal mine in Westville, Nova Scotia, kill sixty miners	Daniel O'Donoghue, an Irish born printer, and the president of the Ottawa Trades Council, becomes the first labour leader to be elected to a provincial legislature.	Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone in Brantford, Ontario.	Of the 17 000 labourers brought from China to build the Canadian Pacific Railway through the Rockies, 4 000 die	On November 7, the Canadian Pacific Railway is finished. The last spike is driven into the last rail at Craigellachie, British Columbia.  On November 16, Louis Riel, founder of Manitoba and leader of the Northwest rebellion, is hanged in Regina.	In Canada, the Trades Labour Congress (TCL), a group of craft unions, is founded.	<i>The Ontario Factory Act</i> , which limits hours of work for women and children, is passed. But it doesn't apply to places with fewer than twenty workers, there are too few inspectors to enforce it, and the maximum fine of \$500 means that employers ignore it.	An explosion in the Springhill coal mine in Nova Scotia leaves 25 men and boys and seventeen horses dead.

## Labour Issues

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<b>What happened When?</b>						
<b>1892</b>	<b>1894</b>	<b>1900</b>	<b>1902</b>	<b>1907</b>	<b>1908</b>	<b>1912</b>
<p><i>The Truancy and Compulsory School Attendance Act</i> is passed in Ontario. All children younger than fourteen must attend school.</p>	<p>Labour Day is made a national holiday.</p>	<p>The federal Department of Labour is established.</p> <p>Arthur Puttee, hardhitting editor of the Winnipeg labour newspaper, <i>The Voice</i>, and Alphonse Verville, a union member from Montreal, are elected to the House of Commons.</p> <p><b>A First.</b></p> <p>The Great Quebec Shoemakers' Lockout.</p>	<p>The Trades and Labour Congress convention votes to expel the Knights of Labour and other rival unions.</p>	<p>William Lyon Mackenzie King creates the <i>Industrial Disputes Investigation Act</i>, in response to an eleven-month coal strike by Alberta miners. The Act says that workers vital to the public welfare can't strike until a government investigator tries to solve the conflict. King is made Canada's first Minister of Labour the following year.</p> <p>Collapse of the Quebec Bridge during construction because of a mistake in design. Seventy-five workers die, including thirty-five "high steel" men from Caughnawaga Reserve.</p> <p>In 1916 the bridge falls down again killing thirteen workers.</p> <p>The 1907 collapse is the worst bridge accident on record in the world. The mistake was a misplaced decimal point that reduced the thickness of a vertical support. After it stopped falling down, the bridge was, and still is, the</p>	<p>Socialist International declares March 8 International Women's Day, remembering strike by women garment workers (March 1885)</p>	<p>Strike by women textile workers swells to 20 000 in the streets of Lawrence, Massachusetts. The call is for "Bread and Roses" and gives rise to the song by the same name. This becomes the anthem of women in the labour movement in Canada. In Quebec, thousands of women march against poverty in 1995 and sing a new version of "Du Pain et Des Roses"</p> <p>The Wobblies leads a strike of the Chinese railway workers in British Columbia.</p> <p>Beginning of a two-year</p>

## Labour Issues

				longest cantilever bridge in the world: 549 m (1800 feet) between piers and 987 m (3239 feet) in total length.		strike by Vancouver Island coal miners.
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<b>What Happened When?</b>						
<b>1914</b>	<b>1919</b>	<b>1922-25</b>	<b>1927</b>	<b>1929</b>	<b>1935</b>	<b>1937</b>
<p>World War One starts. More than 60 000 young Canadians lose their lives in this war. World War One ends in 1918.</p> <p>Ontario passes the Workmen's Compensation Act for workers injured on the job. <b>A First.</b></p> <p>Sparks from a rock fall set off dust explosions in a Hillcrest, Alberta, mine; 189 men suffocate in Canada's worst coal mine accident.</p> <p>Two disasters in the seal hunt: the ship <i>Southern Cross</i> vanishes with 173 aboard; and Newfoundland seal hunters are left stranded</p>	<p>Winnipeg General Strike. Up to 30 000 workers go on strike - postal workers to firefighters, to factory workers. After 42 days, 2 dead from Mounted Police attacks, hundreds injured, many jailed. The General Strike is</p>	<p>Cape Breton Coal and Steel Strikers. More than once in these strikes, the coal and steel companies call in the army and hire their own special police force. They close the company stores, turn the miners out of their homes and cut off the water supply. Women and children are attacked with whips when they protest, and one miner is killed. Many families</p>	<p>Old Age Pensions are Introduced.</p>	<p>Stock market crash and beginning of the Great Depression</p>	<p>On-To-Ottawa Trek of the unemployed; the Regina Riot. Faced with great numbers of jobless men, the government sets up work camps which some call "slave camps" far away from the cities. More than 170 000 men and boys live in them during the Dirty Thirties. They are given food, a bed, and twenty cents a day. Many join the Relief Camp Workers Union, the driving force behind the On-To-Ottawa Trek. A thousand men and youth ride in freight cars across the country to plead for help from the Prime Minister R.B. Bennett. They start in Vancouver; they are stopped in Regina.</p>	<p>General Motors Strike, Oshawa.</p> <p>On April 8, 1939 4 000 workers at the GM plant in Oshawa go on strike demanding 8-hour shifts, better pay and recognition of their union. The Ontario government of Liberal Mitch Hepburn calls the union "foreign and communist".</p> <p>When the federal government refuses to send in the army, Hepburn sets up his own police force made up mostly of U of T students who get paid \$25.00 a week to break the strike.</p> <p>On April 23 the two sides reach an agreement and the strike is over. The workers get everything they wanted.</p> <p>The union, Local 222 of the United Auto Workers, is recognized by the government as the lawful representative of the workers. This opens the way for hundreds of thousands of semi-skilled and</p>



## Labour Issues

on ice floes during a three-day blizzard. Sixty-nine freeze to death, eight are never found, and many of the forty-six survivors lose hands and feet.	Strike is crushed.	are close to starvation, and the union leader, J.B. McLachlan, is sent to jail.			On July 1, during a rally, RCMP and city police try to arrest the Trek leaders. A riot erupts. Downtown Regina is wrecked, more than a hundred people are hurt, and one person dies.	unskilled workers in all big industries to form unions.  Founding of Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in U.S.
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### What Happened When?

1939	1942	1944	1945	1946	1948	1958	1961	1965
World War Two Starts. Strikes are against the law in all industries producing goods and materials for the war.	Unemployment insurance begins.	P.C. 1300 is passed by Prime Minister King and his Cabinet (the Privy Council, hence P.C.). It gives workers the right to a union of their own choice, and employers must bargain with that union.  The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a political party of farmers, workers and others wanting	World War Two ends.  The end of the war means the beginning of strikes in all major industries. In the next two years, workers win better wages, hours, and working conditions, including vacation	<i>The Rand Formula</i> comes about as a result of the Ford strike in Windsor, Ontario. In 1945, 11 000 workers at Ford Motor Company in Windsor go on strike to try to persuade Ford that all workers at the plant should have to join the union and pay union dues. When Ford brings in strike breakers, the workers blockade the plant by parking and leaving hundreds of cars, trucks and buses on the road leading to the plant. The strikes drags on for several months until finally the company and union agree to let Justice Ivan C. Rand settle the dispute. Six days before Christmas, the strike is over. In January, 1946, Justice Rand announces his decision. Although he doesn't give the workers the "union shop", he	The year 1948 sees the beginning of the Eaton Drive, a four year try at getting a union into Eaton's, and the first big push into "white collar" territory. The drive is led by Eileen Tallman, a woman of great energy and dedication. In 1952 the long struggle ends, and the union loses by a handful of votes. About the same time, more than 1000 employees of Dupuis	Newfoundland loggers' strike.  The Springhill Mine explosion and tunnel cave-in kills 75 miners. In his book, <i>Great Canadian Disasters</i> , Frank Rasky talks about one of these miners: "Percy Rector, a fifty-five year old bespectacled man, dies in the depth of the earth in agony because his mates don't have a knife. Two heavy timbers had snapped shut like a giant trap on his arm. For five days, his comrades listen	The New Democratic Party is founded from the old CCF, with the support of the Canadian Labour Congress.  The Second Narrows Bridge in Vancouver collapses during construction because of faulty engineering plans. Eighteen	Postal Strike. An illegal walk out since public service workers aren't allowed to strike.

## Labour Issues

		social change, wins the Saskatchewan election. It immediately gives its own employees the right to form a union. <b>A First.</b>	pay. <b>A First.</b>	does say since all employees benefit from the union, all must pay union dues, even if they don't belong to the union. This becomes known as <i>The Rand Formula</i> , & becomes the cornerstone for providing unions with the money needed to operate as viable organizations.	Freres, a huge department store in Montreal, form a union and go on strike for two months. They win. <b>They prove it can be done.</b>	in numb horror to his cries. "Please cut my arm off, boys," he pleaded. "O God, O merciful heavens take my arm and let me go!"	workers die.	
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### What Happened When?

1966	1967	1970	1973	1976	1982	1985	1987
<p>Quebec teachers' strike. The Quebec government forces them to return to work.</p> <p>Canada Pension Plan starts.</p> <p>The merger of the Civil Service Association and the Civil Service Federation to form the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC).</p>	<p>Canada's 100th birthday.</p> <p>The <i>Public Service Staff Relations Act</i> is passed. The act gives public services workers the same rights as other workers, including the right to strike (except for the Mounties and the armed</p>	<p>The October Crisis in Quebec during which the Liberal government under Pierre Trudeau thinks there might be an armed revolt. <i>The War Measures Act</i> is imposed; many innocent people are arrested and jailed.</p>	<p>Ontario teachers stage a one day general strike to protest changes in collective bargaining rules.</p> <p>In 1975 teachers gain the right to strike as a result of this.</p>	<p>Day of Protest over wage and price controls. A million workers don't go to work on October 14, exactly one year after the government announced the controls.</p>	<p>Chrysler Strike, Bob White, president of the Canadian Auto Workers (UAW) takes on the automotive giant and wins.</p> <p>The floating drilling rig <i>Ocean Ranger</i> (nicknamed "Ocean Danger" by its crew),</p>	<p>Bob White leads the Canadian UAW to Interdependence from its US parent. Eaton's gets a union. Six union stores are finally organized in 1985 after a six-month winter strike - and a nation wide customer boycott., during which thousands of people cut their blue and white Eaton's account cards in half and mail them to Frederik Eaton. The employees become part of Local 1000 of</p>	<p>The International Woodworkers of America follows the lead of the Auto Workers, the Paperworkers, and the Energy and Chemical Workers, splitting into separate Canadian and U.S. unions on its 50th anniversary.</p>

## Labour Issues

	forces). The law is a direct result of the illegal postal strike of 1965.				sinks in a storm off Newfoundland . All eighty-four workers die.	the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union - the same local that tried so hard 35 years before. Some Simpson's Sears, Hudson's Bay and Zellers workers join.	Eaton's workers vote to decertify their union in five of the six organized stores. Union leaders vow to try again.
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### What Happened When? (Student Activity)


## Labour Issues

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<b>What Happened When? (Student Activity)</b>			

## Labour Issues

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## Lesson #21 Exploring Our Work Experience

**Time: 90 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson explores paid work experiences and the role of unions in the workplace.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

**Students will reflect on and share their paid work experiences.**

Students will investigate the benefits and injustices of work experiences.

Students will begin to evaluate the effectiveness of individual and collective approaches to problem solving in the workplace.

This activity can help teachers understand the nature and extent of their students' work experiences.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of "My Work Experience" worksheets

Copies of "Casino Worker Angela Snary's Story" for students without paid work experience

Chart paper

Markers

Masking tape or tacks to post charts

#### Note

The lessons in this section focus on paid work experiences. Though not explored, it is important to acknowledge work experiences that are not paid, either at home or individuals working for a family wage. It is also important to recognize that workers who are not unionized, such as domestic workers, are often among the most marginalized.

### Main Activity

#### Step A

1. Distribute "My Paid Work Experience" question sheets and have students complete them individually. Encourage students to recall part-time or temporary work they may have done. If students have no paid work experience, ask them to read Casino Worker Angela Snary's Story and complete the worksheets in the role of Angela.
2. When students have completed their worksheets, divide the class into groups of 4.
3. Ask students to take turns, briefly describing their work experiences to group members. Encourage students to ask each other questions to clarify the nature of each person's work experience.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999, and from *Work and Co-Creation*. A. Huntley, J. Morin and Marsha Sfeir, 1983.

4. Ask one person from each group to compile and record on a sheet of paper, all of the personal benefits group members derive from their jobs (i.e., their answers to #2 from the question sheet). It should be titled Personal Benefits.
5. Ask a second person from each group to compile and record on a sheet of chart paper all of the social benefits group members produce as a result of their jobs (i.e., their answers to #3 from the question sheet). It should be titled Social Benefits.
6. Have each group post their lists around the classroom and reconvene as a large group.

### Step B

1. As a class, discuss the following questions, making sure that the responses of each group are represented:
  - a. What are the most common ways in which people in the class personally benefit from having a job?
  - b. What are the most common ways in which people in the class produce social benefits as a result of their jobs?
  - c. To what extent does the paid work people in the class do contribute to the service or well-being of others?
  - d. How valuable or useful is the work that is being done?
  - e. How do students think or hope that their experiences of work will change in the future?

### Step C

1. Ask students to return to their small groups.
2. Ask a third person from each group to record on a sheet of chart paper the problems group members experience with working conditions on the job (i.e., the answers to question #4 from the question sheet). It should be titled Problems with Working Conditions
3. Ask a fourth person from each group to record on a sheet of chart paper the problems group members experience with working relationships on the job (i.e., the answers to #5 from the question sheet). It should be titled Problems with Working Relationships.
4. Have each group post their lists around the classroom and reconvene as a large group.

### Post-Activity

1. As a class, discuss the following questions, making sure that the responses of each group are represented:
  - a. What are the most common types of work problems encountered by people in the class?
  - b. What are some of the ways individuals can try to solve these problems?
  - c. In general, how effective do you think individual approaches might be?
  - d. What are some of the ways groups of people can try to solve the identified problems?
  - e. How effective do you think collective approaches might be?





### **My Paid Work Experience**

Description of your current employer or most recent job.

Who is your employer?

What type of work do you do?

Briefly describe your tasks and responsibilities:

### **Individual benefits**

What is your rate of pay?

Do you get extra for overtime?

Which of the following benefits do you get?

- Vacation Pay
- Bonuses
- Dental Benefits
- Discounts
- Extended health care
- Other benefits:

Do you achieve any personal goals in your work? Explain.

Are you learning any new skills? What are they?

Are you challenged in your job? In what way?

Do you enjoy your work? Why or why not?

Do you have worthwhile opportunities to get to know other people? How?

### Benefits to other people

How does your employer benefit from your work?

How do others (friends, family, members of the community) benefit from your work?

### Problems with working conditions

Do you have to work long hours?

Do you have to work at times that make it difficult for you to attend school or get enough sleep?

Do you find the work boring? Explain.

Are there threats to health and safety at your place of work? What are they?

### Problems with working relationships

Have you had problems with you employer/supervisor? Explain.

Do you have any conflicts with other employees? Explain.

Do you have any conflicts with customers? Explain.

Have you ever experienced racial, sexual or any other type of harassment at work? Explain.



### Casino Worker

#### Angela Snary's Story

Casino worker Angela Snary, who is 22, learned survival skills the hard way.<sup>1</sup> She left a difficult home situation in the last year of high school. Juggling school at Lambton Community College with her first love, hockey, she supported herself as a restaurant server. Until the bottom dropped out of Ontario's chemical valley, Snary had planned to work as a process operator in one of Sarnia's many chemical plants. To keep her career options open, she applied for and won a coveted dealer's job at the casino.

At first, her hard-won sense of independence made her very sceptical of the union. "I didn't like them calling me at home during the organizing drive", she says. "My thinking at the time was that I had seen too many people protected by a union, and I believed that had taken the competitiveness out of Sarnia's industry. And then there's my sports, my hockey. I believed that if I worked hard as part of a team, my skills would be recognized."

As a dealer, Snary was told she would be considered part of an elite group of specialists in Canada's growing gaming industry. She'd earn over \$7 per hour, plus tips that would amount to hundreds of dollars per week. "That's how they sold it to us," she explains. "And while there are great parts to the job," says Snary, "it's not all it's cracked up to be."

Once the casino opened and money started rolling in, promises of teamwork went up in smoke. "At first everyone was gung-ho," says Snary. "There was that sense of teamwork that I love about hockey. But things changed fast. We've had dealers spit on, dealers hit. One man at the VIP table raised his hand to me. I vowed when I left home that no person would ever hit me again. I complained about that, and about patrons blowing smoke in my face, and I had supervisors telling me what amounted to 'shut up and deal.'"

Snary looks ruefully at the bandage wrapped around her wrist. In just five months of dealing blackjack on the 4 a.m. to 12 noon shift, she's developed tendonitis, a

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999.

repetitive strain injury, from the constant fast wrist-flick of the cards used by any good dealer. First Aid at the casino refused to report the injury, and now she's in the middle of another battle with the Workers' Compensation Board (now the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board).

The gamblers' blue clouds of cigarette smoke have also taken their toll. Snary now needs asthma medication to get through her beloved hockey games. "I came to terms with it (joining the union) on my own, I guess," says Snary. "That's the way I do things. And once I make up my mind, I give 100 per cent. Now I know why the union had to call when they did and work so hard to get in here."

In a few short months, Angela Snary has moved from union skeptic to union activist, putting in extra time at strike headquarters and helping out others in ways that won't add to her injuries. "This strike has given me a new sense of teamwork, what real teamwork is about," she says. "Some dealers had been looking down on others and didn't see themselves in the structure of the whole union. But being out here - talking to people, listening to others' stories - has been good for all of us."

## Lesson #22

# What Are Your Rights on the Job?

**Time: 60 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson provides an introduction to basic rights in the workplace and the role of unions in safeguarding workers' rights.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will become familiar with some of the rights they have in the workplace. Students will appreciate the role of unions in securing many important programs in diverse workplaces.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of "What are Your Rights on the Job?"  
Overheads of "Union Advantage"  
Overhead of "Thanks to Unions We Have..."

### Background Information

Familiarize yourself with Appendix 8, to learn more about the labour legislation that defines workers' rights in Ontario.

### Getting Started

If you have not done so already, ask students about their work experiences, and their familiarity with unions.

### Main Activity

1. Distribute the handouts *What are Your Rights on the Job?* In pairs or small groups, ask students to answer the questions. They should write an explanation for all of their answers, even if they're not entirely sure of the right answer.
2. Take up the worksheets, (see Answer Key) discussing each answer and getting input and feedback from each group on their responses. It is important to emphasize the role of unions in protecting workers. Contracts that unions negotiate help to protect workers from the power that employers have.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999.

### **Post-Activity**

1. Display the overhead, “Union Advantage”. When we compare workers who are unionized and workers who are not part of unions, what do we notice about their wages and working conditions?
2. Why do you think workers join unions?
3. Display overhead “Thanks to Unions We Have...” Read them out loud and explain things that may be unfamiliar to students.
4. Can students think of reasons why some people may not like unions?



## What Are Your Rights on the Job?

1. You are offered a job as a waiter. This job involves serving alcohol. Your new boss tells you that, because you will be getting tips, he'll only pay \$5.00/hr.

Can he pay you less than minimum wage? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Your boss asks you to work Victoria Day.

Must she pay you extra because it is a holiday? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. While working, you accidentally break a piece of equipment.

Can your boss deduct the value of the equipment from your pay cheque? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Two days before your scheduled vacation, your boss tells you that you'll have to work that week and take your vacation later.

Can he do that? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. You are 18 years old and work behind the deli counter at a market. One day, the person who slices meat is sick. The manager tells you to take over. You've never done it before and don't think you can do it without the proper training.

Do you have to work the slicer? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. When you first started your job, you were paid \$8.50 an hour. You've been at the same place for a year now without a raise. You know, however, that some new employees are getting \$9.75 an hour.

Does the company have to give you a raise? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Just as your 8-hour shift is about to end, your boss comes to you and says you have to work overtime to help repair some machinery.

Can you be forced to work overtime in this case? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Your boss comes to you one day and tells you that, after working there 2 years, your services are no longer needed after the end of the week.

Can he terminate you just like that? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. A union organizer comes to your workplace to try to organize the workers there. When your boss finds out, she threatens to fire anyone she sees talking to the union people again.

Can she do that? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. On the application form for a job, there are a lot of questions that seem to be a little on the personal side. There are questions about where you were born, your age and your marital status and so on.

Does the potential employer have the right to ask these questions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Your new supervisor at work is constantly putting an arm around you when giving you instructions. The touch seems more than friendly, and it makes you very uncomfortable.

Do you have any rights that will help you make him/her stop? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Answer Key

1. No. \$5.95 is the minimum wage for alcohol servers. Ontario law provides different wages for different circumstances.

2. Yes, but only if certain requirements have been met.

a) You must have worked there for 3 months

b) You must have worked 12 shifts in the last 4 weeks

c) You must work your regular scheduled shifts immediately before and after the holiday.

Note: Holiday pay is time and a half for hours worked on the holiday in addition to a regular day's pay.

3. No. Nor can you be charged for cash shortages or loss of property if someone else had access.

4. Yes. It is up to the employer to determine when you take vacation.

*However, if you are a union member the union often negotiates when holidays may be taken and how much notice must be given if there is a change required by the employer. In situations where vacations are taken at different times of the year, the union will have negotiated how vacation time is booked, usually by seniority.*

5. No. You do not have to do the work that you consider might cause injury.

*If you belong to a union, your employer cannot take reprisals against you for refusing to work in such circumstances. Most union agreements contain what are known as "just cause" clauses, which means that there must be a good, work-related reason for firing or discipline. In addition, the contract is a legally binding document which would prohibit unsafe conditions.*

6. No. Compensation is up to the employer, as long as minimum wage laws are observed.

However, if you are a union member the wages for all positions would be negotiated between the employer and the union and would be spelled out in the collective agreement.

7. No. An employer cannot make their employees work more than the number of hours in a regular shift except in the case of accidents or emergencies (which are defined as urgent situations that have not been planned for).

*If you are a union member, extra compensation for this type of situation may have been negotiated as part of the contract.*

8. No. You are entitled to notice of termination, up to 8 weeks depending upon length of employment, unless you have been on the job less than three months. You may receive termination pay instead of notice, which totals the amount of salary and benefits for the notice period.

*Union agreements often include other conditions for layoff notice as well, such as more time of notice, a guarantee of how long the laid-off employee will be kept on a recall list, etc.*

9. No. An employer cannot penalize workers or influence their decision about organizing.

10. No. The Human Rights Code of Ontario specifically protects employees and job applicants from harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, sex, sexual orientation, handicap or disability, age, marital status, family status or record of offences.

*Union contracts often have anti-discrimination clauses as well, which further protect the workers against discrimination on the job.*

11. Yes. It is against the law for your employer or supervisor to make sexual suggestions or requests of any employee. You have the right under the law to freedom from harassment in the workplace and freedom from any reprisals for having rejected a sexual advance by a person of authority.

If you feel you have been subjected to inappropriate behaviour from a person in authority there are several steps you should follow:

Tell the person responsible to stop.

Keep a record of what happened: what was said or done, who was involved, where and when it happened and the names of any witnesses.

If the harassment does not stop, file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission within 6 months of the incident.

*Union contracts often have anti-harassment clauses as well, which further protect the worker against harassment. In addition, the union can provide representation to fight cases of harassment on the job. Many unions have trained workplace leadership to deal with harassment complaints.*

## Union Advantage

**TABLE 1:  
WOMEN (AGE 25+)  
CLERICAL, SALES AND SERVICE WORKERS WORKING  
FULL-TIME IN PRIVATE SECTOR (FIRM SIZE 20+)  
IN 1995**

	UNION	NON-UNION
Average Hourly Wage	\$13.85	\$11.01
% of Workers Earning Less than 2/3 of Economy-wide Average Hourly Wage (less than \$9.33)	15.5%	43.6%
Average Annual Earning	\$26,963	\$21,786
Average Number of Vacation Days	16.9	11.7
Pension Coverage	78.6%	47.1%
Health Plan	84.0%	62.4%
Paid Sick Leave	82.7%	59.2%
Dental Plan	79.8%	59.9%

**TABLE 2:  
MEN (AGE 25+)  
BLUE COLLAR WORKERS WORKING  
FULL-TIME IN PRIVATE SECTOR (FIRM SIZE 20+)  
IN 1995**

	UNION	NON-UNION
Average Hourly Wage	\$18.74	\$15.76
% of Workers Earning Less than 2/3 of Economy-wide Average Hourly Wage (less than \$9.33)	n/a	14.1%
Average Annual Earning	\$39,931	\$35,230
Average Number of Vacation Days	17.7	12.2
Pension Coverage	82.7%	49.2%
Health Plan	90.2%	65.1%
Paid Sick Leave	66.9%	51.9%

Dental Plan	83.4%	66.5%
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Adapted from: *The Economy*, Winter – 1997-1998, Vol. 9, No. 1.

# **Thanks to Unions We Have...**

**Free Public Education**

**Paid Vacations**

**Minimum Wages**

**Workers' Compensation**

**Human Rights**

**Pay Equity**

**The Right to Organize**

**Limit on hours of Work**

**Health Coverage**

**Paid Holidays**

**Canada Pension Plan**

**Overtime Pay**

**Severance Pay**

**Job Security**

**Cost of Living Raises**



# **Ban on Child Labour**

Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999.

**Wages – Average Hourly Earnings  
Union vs. Non-Union, Canada 1999**  
By Sex and Employee Status (full time vs. part time)

Employee Status/Sex	Union	Non-union	Union Premium*
Women Full Time	\$18.24	\$13.86	24%
Women Part Time	\$16.95	\$10.14	40.2%
Men Full Time	\$20.39	\$17.65	13%
Men Part Time	\$15.57	\$9.47	39.2%

\* *Union Premium calculated as difference between average union and non-union wage divided by union wage x100*

Adapted from: Yates, Charlotte A.B. 2001. "Making it Your Economy: Unions and Economic Justice". The CSJ Foundations for Research and Education, Ontario Federation of Labour, p. 13.

Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999.

## Lesson #23      **Fighting for Economic Justice (Alberta Laundry Workers)**

**Time: 70 minutes**

### **Overview**

This lesson provides a case study of collective worker action to challenge economic injustice.<sup>1</sup>

### **Purpose**

Students will learn how 1 group of economically marginalized people fought for economic justice. Students will appreciate that there are actions workers can take collectively to challenge injustice.

### **Preparation**

#### **Materials**

Class set of “Laundry Workers” reading

Overhead or one enlarged copy of “Definition of Underlined Words”

5 copies of “Laundry Workers Fight Back Questions”

Copies of each of Lilia, Yvette, Nadiya, Edna or Cindy readings for each group

### **Main Activity**

1. Hand out copies of the Laundry Workers reading and read it to/with the class. Pause to help students understand new vocabulary and check for comprehension of the events.
2. Divide students into 5 expert groups and distribute the Laundry Workers Fight Back Questions to each group.
3. Assign each group a different laundry worker’s story -- Lilia, Yvette, Nadiya, Edna, Cindy. Have students read their story and answer the accompanying questions.

### **Post-Activity**

1. Ask each group to briefly present the experience of their assigned person to the rest of the class. Students can also be asked to present in the role of the person assigned.
2. As a class, discuss whether you think the strike was or was not a success. Encourage students to define success and explain their reasons.

### **Extension/Alternative**

1. Divide students into 8 different groups, and assign character roles for a Town Hall Meeting. The character roles are as follow:
  - Laundry workers/union (5 students)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Heritage of Struggle: Canadian Labour History Workbook*, pp.99-104 by Metro Labour Education Centre. The five women’s stories that follow are from Anne McGrath and Dean Neu, 1996. “Washing Our Blues Away,” *Our Times*, Vol. 15, No. 1, March/April 1996.

- Hospital administration (4-6 students)
- Hospital patients (3-4 students)
- Representatives from the Ministry of Health (3-4 students)
- Family members of the striking laundry workers (3-4 students)
- Reporters from major newspapers (3-4 students)
- Other hospital workers (3-4 students)
- General public (remaining students)

2. In their groups, ask students to brainstorm what their character would say about the laundry workers' wildcat strike. Have each student in all of the groups write up a 3-4 minute speech that presents the views of their character. Within each of the groups, there can be a consensus or diversity in their views

## Laundry Workers

Often, people don't take action because they don't think they can change things. This is about a group of workers who took action and brought about changes.

In Alberta, 120 laundry workers lost their jobs because Calgary's Health Authority decided to ship Calgary's dirty hospital linen to K-Bro Linen Systems, a private company in Edmonton.

On November 14, 1995, laundry workers from the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 8 at Calgary Hospital walked off the job and vowed to stay off until the Health Authority reconsidered its privatization plans. The next day, the Alberta Union of Public Employees laundry workers at the Foothills Hospital joined the strike. Other unionized health workers followed, including dietary workers, food services workers, housekeeping staff, maintenance workers, radiologists and switchboard operators. They felt they would be next in line for layoffs. A major wildcat strike was on. It lasted for 10 days.

Thanks to the strike, the government and the Calgary Regional Health Authority finally reconsidered and an agreement was negotiated. Health Minister Shirley McClellan announced that planned health care cuts of \$53 million would be cancelled and an additional \$40 million would go towards homecare and community services.

The Health Authority also agreed to a moratorium on contracting out and to give severance pay to laundry workers affected by contracting out. The workers also won an extra eight months of notice before any contracting out can occur and amnesty for taking part in the wildcat strike.

The agreement wasn't enough. These workers wanted more. They did not only want to keep their jobs, they wanted an end to health care cuts – cuts that seemed to be based more on ideology and nepotism than on concern for patients, workers or even efficiency.

CUPE National President, Judy Darcy said:

“The 120 laundry workers should be written up as public heroes. These courageous workers sparked the country's first major job action over health care cuts. They took on the government and won a victory for all Albertans.”

## Definitions of Underlined Words

<u>Privatization</u>	to change ownership from government to a individual or business
<u>Wildcat strike</u>	a strike violating the collective agreement and not authorized by the union
<u>Negotiate</u>	to work toward a deal or agreement through discussion
<u>Moratorium</u>	to stop something for a fixed period as a result of an agreement
<u>Amnesty</u>	an official pardon
<u>Severance pay</u>	an amount of money paid to a worker on the early termination of a contract
<u>Ideology</u>	a set of beliefs, especially political beliefs
<u>Nepotism</u>	favouritism shown to relatives or friends
<u>Efficiency</u>	to do a job very well without wasting time or energy

## **Laundry Workers - Group 1: Lilia Blasettie**

The first couple of days were really hard. We were alone on the picket line. A few people joined us after work. But then on the Friday, all the other groups came out from the other hospitals to join us. They were picketing other hospitals too. It really changed the tempo of the strike. At that point we had decided we weren't going to go back to work until we had some kind of negotiation going on, and we got some of our demands met.

I'm single and I don't have any dependants. I'm going to school, so I do have a busy life, but going on strike didn't put a dent in my personal life or anything like that. But I was really happy to be part of something that made a difference to Albertans; that really opened people's eyes to the economic woes of Alberta. These people do have human faces and they do have families, mortgages and things like that. We wanted the public to know that this wasn't something you just wipe out; that these people had feelings, and that is was going to affect their community.

Just because our strike was illegal doesn't make it immoral. As far as I'm concerned, it was morally right. Once you've got your back to the wall, you've got nothing to lose. I don't know that fighting for your job is illegal. Everybody should have the right to fight for their jobs.

The question of breaking the law was the main point, that first night when we were debating the issue, that deterred a lot of people from making the decision right away. People wanted to know what the consequences were. Could we be fined? Could we be jailed? People were afraid that it would really affect their families.

We knew the issue was a lot bigger than us. We did get some funding back for medicare, but it's not enough. The fight still continues. Most of us don't let too much get by us now. It's funny, the people who never used to speak are the ones who are asking the questions now. Those people now feel that they're not alone.

I don't think people should give up hope. These cuts aren't going to last forever because, sooner or later, they're going to affect somebody politicians know, and it's going to have a real human face to some of them. I know they have a dirty job. But the point is, they're the only ones who have a guaranteed job. I think people should start tapping into that: that they're really in it for themselves and not really for the public.

## Laundry Workers - Group 2: Yvette Lynch

It all started two years ago. We took a pay-cut so we could save our jobs. As more time passed, we started to hear rumours about the laundry being contracted out. The workers got quite upset. There was a lot of tension in the workplace. It got back to management how we were feeling, so they called another meeting to reassure us that there would not be any contracting out, but that one of the laundries would have to close. They didn't say which one. They hinted that it might be the Foothills because it is an older laundry and needed fixing up.

One day there was an article in the newspaper that the hospital was looking for a contractor to put in a bid. Management called a meeting to tell us to ignore the paper, because it didn't mean the laundry was going to be contracted out. More lies. That was the last meeting we had until that day management and the union came and told us that they had a bid. We were told the laundry would be closing in March, and there would only be 10 positions available, for whom we didn't know.

By that time we were all seeing red. We were all upset because management was just lying to us all the time. So we asked management if we were going to get a severance package. They said no, there is no money in the savings account. I felt like someone had just kicked me in the stomach. No job, no money, no thank you. Our courage was building everyday. I had nothing to lose. I had lost it a long time ago when they made us take such a big cut-back.

As a single parent, I was once able to save \$1,000 a year. Now I can't save one cent. I even have to use my Visa or Sear's card to get things done.

At the beginning of the strike I was scared, thinking: "*How am I going to pay my bills?*" But as the days passed, the union assured us that everything was going to work, even if we didn't get everything we asked for. My brothers and nephew and some people I didn't know donated food and money to those of us who really needed help.

I wanted to show management that just because we are at the bottom, we are not stupid. We have feelings too. Plus I wanted to show my daughter how to stand up for her rights, even if she ends up being a single parent like her mom. The fight is not over yet.



### **Laundry Workers - Group 3: Nadiya Jina**

I work at Foothills Hospital. I have two children: a son and a daughter. My son is 18 years old and my daughter is 16 years old.

I've worked for two years in the laundry. I come from Tanzania, that's in East Africa. The strike was something completely new to me to know about, because I had never come across such things. My family and I were worried, but excited too. My son is taking a computer programming course and he just started this December. We were worried about how we were going to pay his fees and all that. My daughter is in grade 11.

When I heard there was going to be a strike I was very scared. I was just thinking, I don't know how I'm going to take this message home. My husband is working too, but still, only after making both our salaries can we take care of our house needs. Also, I have my mother-in-law living with me, and she's old. She doesn't get any pension because it's only three years now since we came to Canada. So it would be really hard for us if I didn't keep this job. I was really scared.

I don't know if the job security is going to be there, but I feel that at least now we have got some time to make some decisions. I was not aware of anything like "legal or illegal", because this was the first time I had come across these things. I didn't know what was going on. I was just thinking that, whatever we are doing, we will be helped after all. Maybe our voice will be heard, rather than staying home and being quiet. This is what I experienced. After the coming and going through the strike, I came to know that if we raise our voice, somebody's going to hear us.

I feel very good now with the other workers. After having the strike, we came to know each other more, and our friendship is stronger. I think it's all much, much better now. We never knew what a union was before. It's from the strike that I got to know what power a union has. It's good to have a union.

## Laundry Workers - Group 4: Edna McMullan

We had known for a few months that this whole contracting-out thing was going on. Nobody thought that anybody with any sense would send the laundry out to Edmonton and send the laundry back. We even thought our union would get the bid because we had one of the best bids. As soon as we heard that Edmonton had got it, everyone was just in shock. Then they told us that we'd all be let go. There was no money for any severance packages, nothing like that. I hadn't been there for that long, but some people have been here for at least 20, 25 years.

They thought we would just go back to work for the day. When the hospital board representative left however, our union reps stayed and talked to us, and we said: "*We'll Walk.*" They thought we'd just roll over and take it, because a couple of years ago when they took a 28 per cent pay-cut, people had complained, but no one had really done anything. And so they thought they could do this to us and nothing would happen. We said we were too stressed out to work the machines safely, so we all went home. The place closed down. There was nobody in here. It was amazing.

We met that Tuesday night to discuss our options. It was just so exciting. At 5:30 the next morning we started picketing outside. I think management was amused the first couple of days. I don't think they thought it would last very long. It was great to see that what we could do could be so big. A lot of the people here are older ladies who have never really had the chance to do anything like this, to ever really stand up for themselves is a big way. It was wonderful.

I've never been on strike before. I'm 28. I'm single. I had a part-time job. That was a real back-up for me. I didn't have as much on the line as a lot of people did. A lot of people had mortgage payments and children. But there were tense moments not knowing what the result would be, wondering if we'd go back and lose our jobs.

When Ralph Klein relented on his cutbacks because of this strike, I didn't really feel that had very much to do with the laundry workers' situation. I mean, this place is still going to probably close next year; these people are still going to be out of work. I mean, we will get a severance package. Things are better than they were before the strike and we definitely did win some things. But I don't see easing up on cutbacks helping us at all.

## Laundry Workers - Group 5: Cindy Pendon

I wasn't there when the decision was made to walk. I was at home. Somebody phoned me from work, and she left a message saying that they walked out and I thought: *"Finally we had the guts to go out."*

The next day we were all on the picket line. I was so happy. I said: *"We're finally doing something about this abuse that we're taking."* They cut staff in half, they cut our pay, everything was cut. We were doing the job of three people. They had kept saying that we were going to keep our job; *"Just take this offer."* But in the end, we still don't have a job. So we were finally doing something. We were on the picket line seven days a week, 10 hours a day, even when it was very cold.

We're all little people – laundry staff – and we were the first ones to stand up to the big guys. We didn't care if it was illegal to go on strike. We're out of a job anyway, so we didn't have anything to lose. It's the final straw and if we're going to lose our job, we're going to lose it, but we have to do something before we lose it. We were surprised to get all this support from everybody, from the whole country.

It is all related. They contracted out the housekeeping and we didn't do anything, so they thought they could do the same thing to us. If we hadn't done anything, somebody else would have, one of the other departments would have. They started from the bottom up.

I have two kids and a husband. Luckily my husband's working. He's really supporting me, and he said it's fine that we walked out, we should have done it two years ago. He was prepared to lose our house, as long as we did something.

My kids are seven and eight. They were very supportive. When I told them they're not going to get any Christmas presents because of the strike, they said: *"It's OK Mommy. As long as you get your job back."* I was surprised.

I'm glad that we did it. I'm not sorry at all. Before, I was very sceptical of the union because I'd never had to deal with them. But now I'm 100 per cent for the union. I finally found out what the union is for. If I have to do the same thing all over again, I will do the same thing. I wouldn't change a thing.

## Laundry Workers Fight Back – Discussion Questions

1. Describe the person you have read about, including their name and a bit about their personal background.
2. What was the experience of your person during the strike?
3. What was your person's opinion of the strike?
4. What were the problems that caused the strike?
5. How did your person feel about their experience?
6. Based on all the information your group has, do you think the strike was a success? Explain why or why not.

Be prepared to share the experience of your person to the whole class

## Lesson #24 Interview a Worker in Your Community

**Time: 70 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson provides students with the background to interview a worker in the community to explore paid work experiences.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will recognize the knowledge and insights of working people in their community.

Students will become familiar with the concepts of working conditions, job satisfaction and workplace democracy.

Students will appreciate the complexity of the workplace.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of “Sarah’s Story”

Class set of Assignment: Interview a Worker and Interview Tips

Class set of Sample Interview Evaluation

### Getting Started

- a. Ask students what they think of when they hear the following terms: working conditions, job satisfaction and workplace democracy. Record responses on the board, overhead or flipchart. Student definitions should include the following components:
  - b. Working conditions – the physical, mental and emotional conditions under which people work, including the cleanliness, safety and stress of the work
  - c. Job satisfaction – how rewarding workers find their work, both in terms of intrinsic rewards (satisfaction gained purely from the work itself) and extrinsic rewards (satisfaction gained from benefits that come from working, such as pay, health coverage etc.)
  - d. Workplace democracy – the extent to which decisions affecting people in the workplace are made by those who work there, e.g., whether the majority of the workers have a say about how overtime is distributed or whether management makes most decisions unilaterally, that is without the participation of workers.
- e. Ask students to speculate about the quality of their own working futures.
  - a. What kinds of working conditions do they expect?
  - b. How much job satisfaction do they hope to have?
  - c. Will their workplaces be democratic? Why or why not? Should they be?

### Main Activity

#### Part A

- a. As a class, read together the excerpt based on Sarah Inglis’ work experiences and history. Students can be asked to take turns reading out loud.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999.

- b. Stop periodically and ask students what kinds of questions they think the interviewer asked Sarah to find out more about her work experiences? Record responses on the board, overhead or flipchart.
- c. After completing the reading together, ask students to generate a list of all the possible questions they might ask a worker to investigate their work experience and history.
  - d. Explain the difference between open-ended and closed questions. For example, a closed question might be, “Do you enjoy your work?” An open-ended question might be, “What are the things you like and dislike about your work?”
  - e. Help students to appreciate how these questions are different. Which will help them to find out more about an individual’s work experiences and why?

### **Part B**

1. Ask students to think about work experiences that they are interested in exploring. This might be a line of work they may want to pursue or something they have always wanted to learn more about.
2. In order to help you understand worker experiences, arrange an interview with a person who works in this field. This person can be a classmate, relative, friend or someone you don’t know but is willing to be interviewed. See Assignment: Interview a Worker/Interview Tips for further details of this assignment.

### **Extension**

Have students write their own stories about working from a future point of view as if an interviewer had interviewed them.



## Fast-Food Worker, Age 20 – Canada

### Sarah's Story<sup>1</sup>

Sarah Inglis started out as a typical fast-food worker. She applied for a job at the local McDonald's in her town of Orangeville, Ontario, when she was just fourteen. She was interviewed on the spot. When asked if she was punctual, Sarah said "Yeah, sure." She laughs now, admitting that she didn't know what the word meant. She got the job.

Sarah says she wanted to work so "I would have some independence from my parents" and so she could "buy clothes and go to movies and stuff like that." Like most new employees, she was nervous at first. For the first time in her life she had to get a social insurance number and give out personal information about herself. She had to learn new skills – how to take orders and use the cash register. "Nobody ever really taught me how to do the fries, so the manager gave me hell one day," she says. At the beginning she felt a little removed from the "day staff," the adult workers who did full-day shifts. But she made friends with the other teenagers and after a while got used to the ten or twelve hours a week she was working on Saturdays and Sundays.

She was named "employee of the month" when she was fifteen. (For this she got a Ronald McDonald watch and her picture on the restaurant wall.)

Then, "little things started happening." The management started cutting people's shifts so they would not have to give them paid breaks. The adult workers who had been putting in regular eight-hour days were suddenly working three-and-a-half hour shifts. One of the managers admitted the reason was "you're more efficient on three-hour shift, 'cause you start to drag at the end of an eight-hour shift." Workers no longer knew long in advance when their shifts would be. Another manager often humiliated workers by yelling at them in front of the customers. One busy lunch hour, Sarah took a quick breather, leaned against the counter and sighed. The manager saw her and dressed her down for this lapse, and "just made me feel horrible." Another day, a number of the teens were planning a trip to Toronto to go to prom. They were having difficulty making arrangements for a hotel. The manager said to Sarah, "Why don't you just stand on the street corner and make a few extra bucks?"

Sarah says, "I know it's sexual harassment now, but I didn't know it then. They know that young people don't know their rights." She was humiliated and outraged.

The final straw came when a woman day-shift worker Sarah had become close to was fired for asking a manager to be more sensitive with the workers. Sarah says she was becoming more politically aware at that point in her life. She'd begun paying attention to the newspapers and what was happening in the world. She decided to organize a union in her workplace. She was sixteen.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: *The World's Children*, Jane Springer, Copyright, 1997



“Wages weren’t such a big deal for me,” says Sarah. What she was after was “job security, respect and dignity.” Some people responded to her unionizing attempt by saying “You gotta expect to be treated like shit. It’s your first job!” But she didn’t buy it. “Besides,” she says, “they treated the adults who worked the day shift as if they were kids too.” Sarah thinks that schools must teach kids about their human rights, including their rights as workers. As she says, “How important is Greek history when kids don’t know their rights on the job?”

After attempts with several unions who were unwilling to work with anyone so young, she contacted the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) – and didn’t tell them her age. Within a month, she and her friends had signed up 67 of 102 workers at the restaurant. The union’s certification should have been automatic, since they had a majority of workers on their side. But McDonald’s heard about the plans to unionize and managed to convince some of those who had signed up to change their minds. McDonald’s charged that the organizers had used unfair labour practices and the case was taken to the labour board. “Someone said I held a knife to them!” Sarah exclaims. “And another person said I’d locked her in my car! But the locks on my car didn’t even work!”

At the labour board hearing, McDonald’s layers implied she was an alcoholic and a “dopehead”. After four months of deliberation, the company and the union agreed to vote because there was no end in sight. Sarah explains. “The union never got a chance to call witnesses due to the lengthy trial.”

McDonald’s gave out “no-union” t-shirts and buttons saying “just vote no” and even held a party for the workers. Sarah and her friends were waging a struggle against the multinational that has been unionized in only a few of its thousands of restaurants worldwide. It was uphill all the way. They lost the vote 77-19.

Sarah is now 20 and enrolled in labour studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. She works part-time at a designer clothing shop to finance her studies. Sometimes she has had to keep her experience quiet in order to get a job. But she continues to speak to high schools, unions, and youth groups. And in December, 1995 she travelled to London, England, to testify in favour of David Morris and Helen Steel, who were being sued by McDonald’s for distributing a leaflet criticizing McDonald’s food and its treatment of its workers. During her day-and-a-half-long testimony, a McDonald’s vice-president stared at her for hours on end, sometimes winking, sometimes glaring. McDonald’s lawyers insisted she reveal the names of people who had signed union cards in her organizing attempt. She refused and was threatened with contempt of court. They backed off and she was not charged. But it is clear that Sarah Inglis was a big threat to McDonald’s four years ago – and she still is.

## **Assignment: Interview a Worker**

In order to help you understand how the experience of working affects people, you are required to interview someone who works for a wage.

### **You are responsible for:**

- a. Arranging an interview that is a minimum of 20 minutes long
- b. Generating the questions you ask the worker. The questions you develop should be designed to give you insight into the meaning and experiences of work in the person's life. Try to use open-ended questions to evoke longer explanations rather than short yes/no type answers. For example, the question "what are some of the things you like and dislike about your work?" is more likely to generate insights into the person's work experience compared to, "do you like your work?"
- c. Keep in mind the issues discussed about workplace experiences in class. Your questions should focus on working conditions, job satisfaction and workplace democracy.
- d. Submit a sample of 7 questions, in the order in which you would ask them at least 2 days prior to the interview. Your questions will be checked for relevance, logic, clarity, directness, length, organization and tactfulness.
- e. Conduct the interview and record the worker's responses. Write down the main points that are made by the person you interview. Also describe the setting where the interview took place, how you felt and any other observations immediately after the interview while it is still fresh in your mind!
- f. Summarize your findings in written form. Write a brief descriptive summary of your observations of the interview. Also comment briefly on what you learned about the worker's job satisfaction.
- g. Students may also be asked to make an oral presentation based on their interviews. You may also undertake a class project to compile all of the stories in a class book of Interviews with Workers in our Community. This process can involve peer editing and be expanded as part of a class writing project (photos of the person interviewed maybe useful if interviews are going to be compiled.)

### **Interview Tips**

- a. Arrange the interview far in advance of the assignment due date. Explain the purpose of the interview, time commitment required and why it would be helpful to you. Arrange the time and place clearly and make sure that it is convenient for the person you are interviewing.
- b. Prepare more questions than you will need.
- c. Check your questions to ensure that they satisfy the assignment requirements.
- d. Practice the final draft of your questions on a friend so that you know the questions well and can also practice recording answers. (class time may be allocated to practice)
- e. Be polite and friendly to the person you are interviewing. Remember that they are giving you their time. Introduce yourself and explain the format of the interview. Be patient and thank the person for their help.

## Sample Interview Evaluation

### Prior to the Interview:

You will be evaluated and receive feedback on the questions you submit prior to your interview and based on the following criteria:

- Relevance
- Logic
- Clarity
- Directness
- Length
- Organization
- Tactfulness
- Suggestions for revision
- General Remarks on Questions

### Following the Interview

- a. Your written notes from the actual interview are to be handed in. They will be reviewed for evidence that you asked the planned questions and responded to your participant with enough flexibility to get information about their work experiences.
- b. Your final summary of the interview should demonstrate an understanding of work experiences in one or more of the following areas: working conditions, job satisfaction and workplace democracy. You will be evaluated on your ability to interpret answers provided to you and to draw conclusions based on the overall impressions of the person you interviewed.
- c. Students may be required to make an oral presentation or participate in producing a class book of Interviews with Workers in our Community.

Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999.

## Lesson #25

## Who Counts as Unemployed?

**Time:** 70 minutes

### Overview

This lesson provides an introduction to unemployment and critical examination of government statistics in relation to unemployment.

### Purpose

Students will critically examine the difference between official and real unemployment statistics in Canada.

### Preparation

### Materials

Class set of “Who is Unemployed?”

### Getting Started

1. Ask the class what they think is meant by the term unemployment.
2. Generate a common sense class definition of what it means to be unemployed. Write responses on the board, flip chart, or post on overhead. Tell students that the class will return to this definition later.
3. Share with students that unemployment has touched many Canadians in recent years. “In 1999, the **official** unemployment rate was 7.4%.”
4. Inform students that there is also an **official** unemployment rate for youth.
5. Ask students to guess the current **official** unemployment rate. How different is this rate for youth? “In 1999, the unemployment rate was about 5.3% for those males 25+ and 5.8% for females 25+ . For those aged 15-24, the unemployment rate in 1999 was 14.0%. For youth, unemployment rates in 1998 were 8.9% for those with university degrees, 14% for high school graduates and 26.7% for those with 8 or fewer years of schooling.”
6. Ask, what pattern do you notice in terms of level of education and employment?

The above statistics were adapted from Statistics Canada at the following website:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/labor23a.htm>

### Main Activity

#### Step A

1. Provide students with the handout “Who is Unemployed?” In pairs or groups, ask them to put an X beside the people who would be considered unemployed according to the class definition.

2. Ask students to share their conclusions. Is there agreement about who is unemployed? If not, what criteria have been used to determine who is unemployed?
3. Share with students that according to the government, only #3, 5 and 8 are **officially** unemployed.
4. Explain to students that the government counted as unemployed only those people who:
  - a. Were not working temporarily but expected to be called back to work and were available for work.
  - b. Were not working but were actively looking for work.
  - c. Had a new job that would start within 4 weeks and were available to work.
5. The following people were not considered officially unemployed by the government:
  1. Those people who worked only a few hours or were forced to take part-time work even if they were looking for full-time work.
  2. Discouraged workers who had not looked for work because they couldn't find a job or thought that there were no jobs.
  3. Those who left the job market because they couldn't find work and were doing something else such as going to school.
  4. People who were looking for work but had not registered with an employment office.
  5. Those people who were voluntarily unemployed, e.g., a parent at home with his/her child because day care costs are too high.
  6. Older people who are officially retired and collecting pensions but would still like to work.

### Step B

1. Divide students into small groups (of 3 students per group) for a "Radio Interview" exercise.
2. Have students decide within their own group what role they want to play. The roles are: the Interviewer, the Interviewee, and a labour economist.
3. Ask students to write out an interview script (of no more than 3-4 minutes), where they will interview someone who is not officially counted as employed by the government (i.e. for ideas, see the list in Step A). In the interview, students will consider: some of difficulties this group of people face as well as other relevant questions.
4. Have students perform their "Radio Interview". If possible, have students record their interview on an audio or video tape. However, consider allowing time for live performances in class.

### Post-Activity

1. Explain to the class that many people argue that the real unemployment rate is much higher than that calculated by the government and is closer to 15-20% for those aged 25+ and about 30% for those aged 15-24.
2. Have students consider the following questions:
  - (a) Why do you think that the government only counts certain people as unemployed?
  - (b) Why are most people from the handout not considered unemployed by the government? (Student response may include: by keeping unemployment rates low, the

government can claim that it does not have a responsibility to the many people who are unemployed but don't count in the official numbers.)

- (c) What are some reasons why people may be unemployed?
3. Ask students to think of someone they know who has been affected by unemployment. What are some of the consequences of being unemployed? See Debriefing Student Responses for Reasons for Unemployment.

### **Extension**

1. Ask students to consider who may benefit from high unemployment rates. Whose interests might high unemployment rates and low wages serve?
2. Ask students to investigate how federal government definitions of unemployment have changed over time. How has what constitutes full employment changed over time? [See below for information].

**Debriefing Student Responses for Reasons for Unemployment:**

Students responses may include stereotypes such as the unemployed are too lazy to work, women are taking men’s jobs, the unemployed lack the initiative to create their own jobs by going into business. Simply list students’ responses without debriefing them. Help the students see that the responses given are opinions, but some are verifiable by facts. Others may be based on limited information about a situation.

It is important to note that many explanations offered blame individuals rather than looking at structures. Reintroducing the triangle from LP #2 (power made up of institutions/structures, ideas and individual actions) may be useful. Point out to students that since unemployment rates fluctuate quite a bit over time, it is very likely that societal factors play a significant role in putting individuals out of work. Also remind students of earlier stereotypes and discussions about poverty. Is their information about unemployed people based on stereotypes or is it accurate?

If there is time, list beside each response given by the class, information that would support the opinion, as in the example that follows. Encourage participants to be imaginative.

Response	Information Required
Unemployed people are unmotivated to work	Interview with unemployed people to determine their attitudes toward work.  Studies showing that unemployed people do not really try to find or keep work

**Reasons for Unemployment**

There are additional explanations for high levels of unemployment in Canada that are often identified by specialists and are supported by research:

1. The orientation of our economy towards exporting natural resources (gas, timber, coal, and other minerals) rather than manufacturing them into finished products in Canada, which results in a loss of job opportunities.
2. The concentration of economic power in the hands of a small number of corporations has made it difficult to develop industrial strategies to create new jobs.
3. The high level of foreign ownership and control of Canada’s principle industries put Canadian workers in a vulnerable position (layoffs and plant shutdowns) during times of economic recession.

## Who is Unemployed?

Put an **X** beside the people who would be considered 'officially' unemployed by the government.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ John, 24 years old, who has given up looking for work after 2 years of unsuccessful job hunting. He is living on welfare.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Xia, 28, who lost her job at the General Electric Plant because of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). She could not find any other work and has decided to return to school.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Alberto, 42 years old, who was permanently laid off from the General Motors car plant and has been actively looking for another job.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Martin, 68, who would like to work but is considered too old.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Bairu, 33, who is on temporary lay-off from the Hotspots Hospital and is collecting Employment Insurance because he is guaranteed to be called back to work in another two weeks.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Kareem, a broke 17 year old Grade 12 student who does not have a job, and is planning to go to university.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Gordie who won the lottery, quit his job, and is living comfortably on his winnings.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Eliza who is temporarily laid-off, guaranteed to be called back in two weeks, but is actively looking for another job and would accept another position if one was offered.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Benisha, 25, who is training to be a doctor, needs the money to finance her education and therefore would like to work but is not allowed to according to the university's rules.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Bob, who is at home taking care of his 2 young children and would like to be working. His wife Jana is an electrician and the family makes do on her income of \$35 000 alone.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Emma, who is staying at home looking after her 6 month old baby.





# Lesson #26 Investigating the Uneven Effects of Poverty and Unemployment

**Time: 90 minutes**

## **Overview**

This lesson examines the impact that race, gender and ability have on class location.

## **Purpose**

Students will explore their assumptions about where in the world poverty and oppression exist. Students will critically examine unemployment and poverty rates in Canada with respect to race, gender and ability.

Students will explore reasons for the connections between race, gender ability, unemployment and poverty.

## **Preparation**

### **Materials**

7 statements on “Poverty and Unemployment” copied 7 times each on slips of paper

7 atlases or 7 photocopies of a labeled world map

Overhead or 7 photocopies with the list of 20 “Countries for Consideration”

### **Background Information:**

The use of the term racial minority to describe non-whites is in a national context, as non-whites constitute a world majority.

## **Main Activity**

### **Step A**

1. Divide students into 7 groups. Assign a station number to each group from #1-7.
2. Give each group an atlas and a slip of paper with 1 of the statements from “Poverty and Unemployment” written on it.
3. Ask students to take the statement and rewrite it in plain language. For example, statement 1 might read, in this country, racial minorities are much more likely to be unemployed compared to Europeans.
4. As a group, their second task is to fill in the statement with the name of the country from the accompanying list, Countries for Consideration that they think the statement best describes. If students are not familiar with a particular country, they can find it in their atlas or the group that selected it can help the class to locate the country. They should try to reach consensus within the group and be able to articulate a reason for matching a particular country with a statement.
5. Students will have about 8 minutes at each station and when asked, the group will move to the next station where they will repeat steps #3 and 4 for each statement. Sometimes it can be good to get students’ feet and brains moving but if space is a constraint, you can also write all of the statements on one piece of paper and ask them to fill in the blanks. Depending on time constraints, students can be asked to go to fewer stations and report back to the class.

## Step B

1. As a class, starting with statement 1, ask each of the groups to report back on the country they selected and explain why they chose it. Make a list of the countries selected under each statement.
2. Find out what information students used to match a statement to a particular country. Did the class agree or were different answers offered?
3. Ask:
  - a) How did you feel about the facts on the paper?
  - b) What do you think some of the impacts are of these employment/educational opportunities and standards of living for the individuals as well as the countries?
  - c) What kinds of barriers do racial minorities and Aboriginal people in the countries you chose face?
  - d) Are the barriers different for men and women, for people from different racial minority groups?
  - e) Why do you think this is the case?
4. This is a useful place to reintroduce the triangle of power/oppression (Lesson #2) to look at race/class/gender/ability, where they meet and institutional examples of racism, classism, sexism and ableism. Review the triangle with students and ask them where most of the examples fit

## Post-Activity

Read each statement to the class individually with the name of the country that corresponds with the facts:

In Canada...

In Canada...

In Canada...

In Canada...

In Canada...

In Canada...

In Canada...

Are the students surprised? Why?

Is this information about Canada different from the information students expected and normally receive? Explain.

How do students feel about the facts now that they know they are based on Canadian realities?

## Extension

Students can research and gather similar statistics from different countries in North America or Western Europe. Have them question whether there is a consistent pattern in terms of class/race/gender/ability in different countries? Is it easy/difficult to find the information?

## Poverty and Unemployment

1. In (name of country), unemployment rates vary from less than 6% among white Europeans to more than 40% in some racial minority groups. These disparities are still evident when individuals from racial minority groups have comparable or higher levels of education than white Europeans.
2. In this country, the youth unemployment rate was 14.5% in 1998 almost double that of adults. However for racial minority youth, the unemployment rate was 23.1% and for Aboriginal and black youth, almost 32%. Name this country.
3. In this country, women make an average of \$0.73 for every dollar a man earns. If the woman is aboriginal, a member of a racial minority or a woman with a disability, it is more likely to be \$0.50 to the male dollar. In this same country, women from racial minority groups make an average of \$13,800, \$1800 less than the average for white women of European origin who make \$15,600. The average income for racial minority men was \$22, 608, \$6769 less than the figure for white men of European origin who make an average of \$29,377. Which country am I?
4. In (name of country), 35.6% of racial minorities live in poverty compared to the general population at 17% even when the racial minority population is equally or more highly educated than the general population.
5. In this country, people from Ethiopia, Ghana, Afghanistan and Somalia have poverty rates ranging from 52.2 to 70%. They often have low paying jobs even though many of them have a high school education. Can you guess the name of this country?
6. In (name of country), aboriginal peoples, Central Americans, Jamaicans, West Indians and South Asians experience poverty rates of about 50%.
7. In this country, 30.8% of people with disabilities live in poverty compared to 17% of the general population.

Statistics are taken from the following sources:

Galabuzi, Grace-Edward. *Canada's Creeping Economic Apartheid*. The Centre for Social Justice Foundation for Research and Education, 2001.

- Lindsay, Sheryl, Joan Grant-Cummings, Armine Yalnizyan, and Dionne Brand. *Common Occurrence: Women's Homelessness, Poverty and Marginalization, Sistering*, 2000.
- Ornstein, Michael. *Ethno-racial inequality in Toronto: Analysis of the 1996 census*. City of Toronto Access and Equality, 2000.
- Saidullah, Ahmad. *The Two Faces of Canada: A Community Report on Racism*. National Anti-Racism Council, 2001.

## **List of Countries for Consideration**

1. Bangladesh
2. Canada
3. China
4. Colombia
5. Egypt
6. Ethiopia
7. France
8. Guatemala
9. India
10. Iran
11. Japan
12. Kuwait
13. Malaysia
14. Mexico
15. Morocco
16. Russia
17. Somalia
18. South Africa
19. United Kingdom
20. United States of America

**Part VI:**

**Global Connections**

## Lesson # 27      Poverty and World Resources

**Time: 70 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson provides a visualization of global population and wealth distribution using an interactive activity with maps and role-playing.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will become familiar with inequities in the global distribution of wealth. Students will be able to ask questions to explore the reasons global economic inequities exist.

### Preparation

#### Materials

11x17 inch maps of the world for each pair of students  
25 chips of 1 colour for each map  
25 chips of another colour for each map  
25 slips of paper with “I was born in (name of continent based on chart)”  
25 chocolate chip cookies  
Playground map, or signs with names and continents taped on walls to distinguish boundaries  
Overhead transparency of “World Population and Wealth by Continent” chart  
Paper for each ‘continent’ to record what they think of the wealth distribution

### Getting Started

1. Give each student or pair of students a world map.
2. Have students identify the continents and other places that you may have studied.

### Main Activity

#### Step A

1. Ask students: How many people do they think are in the world?
2. After students have guessed, share with them the estimate. See World Population and Wealth by Continent for all answers.
3. Ask students: If we represent all the people in the world with 25 chips, how many people are represented by each chip? (Each chip represents approximately 200<sup>2</sup> people.)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from “Poverty and World Resources,” by Susan Hersh and Bob Peterson, pp.92-93 in *Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching For Equity and Justice*, A Special issue of *Rethinking Schools*, 1994.

<sup>2</sup> EDITOR: This number should be ore like 250 million people since the population on the planet is over 6 billion nowadays. ... chose not to change it until the chart is updated. I've found raw data on GDP across countries from the UN Human Development Report, but have not done the hours of math to combine it into a single chart by region (which my minimal



4. Give 25 chips to each student/pair and have them distribute them by continent where they think people live.
5. Discuss student estimates and then tell them the accurate figures.
6. Have students rearrange their chips to reflect the facts.
7. Based on population distribution, discuss with students how they think wealth might be distributed. Step B explores this wealth production and distribution.

### Step B

1. Explain to the students that you are now going to give them another 25 chips of a different colour. These chips represent all the wealth produced in the world (the worth of all the goods and services produced every year -- from health care to automobiles).
2. Ask students to put the chips on the continents to indicate their estimate of who gets this wealth. (Each chip represents 1/25 of the world's total amount of goods and services produced).
3. Discuss student estimates and record them on the chalkboard.
4. Ask students what they notice about the different stacks of chips representing population and resources? Collect the chips.
5. Tell students that with their help, you are going to demonstrate how population and wealth are distributed by continent.
6. Have each student pick a slip of paper from a container. (The "I was born..." slips) They may not trade what continent they are from. As you distribute the slips listen for any stereotypical reactions to the continents -- these may indicate possibilities for future lessons.
7. Have students go to an area in the room that you have designated to represent that continent.
8. After the students are in their areas, remind them that they each represent about 200 million people<sup>1</sup> and that you are going to distribute the world's riches.
9. Use a popular treat -- rice crispy bars or chocolate chip cookies -- and distribute them according to the percentages given in the chart.
10. Announce the number of treats you are giving to each continent as you do so.
11. Allow students to divide their share within the group.
12. Don't encourage intra-group sharing, but don't forbid it.
13. Ask each continental group to discuss and record what they think of the wealth distribution.

### Post-Activity

1. Bring the students back together and discuss how they felt about the distribution of the treats? Did how they feel change depending on their group and the number of treats they received? Have continents and individuals report-back about their thoughts and feelings on the wealth distribution.

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exposure to statistics tells me is a statistically questionable methodology given the difference in calculating GDP from country and region to region).

<sup>1</sup> see note above

2. Show students the information from the chart via a transparency.
3. Ask students if they feel that the distribution of wealth and resources seems fair to them.
4. Additional debriefing questions could include:
  - a. How did the distribution of wealth get to be so unequal?
  - b. Who do you think decides how wealth is distributed?
  - c. Should wealth be distributed equally?
  - d. Do you think that within a particular continent, wealth is distributed fairly?
  - e. How do you think the unequal distribution of wealth affects the power that groups of people hold?
  - f. Within our community is wealth distributed fairly? <sup>1</sup>
  - g. What can be done about the unequal way wealth is distributed?

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<sup>1</sup> Can reference a listing of “The 50 Richest Canadians” (as of August, 2000) compiled by the National Post by David Olive and David Akin.

## WORLD POPULATION AND WEALTH BY CONTINENT

Continent	Population			Wealth		
	(in billions) 1992	% of world	# in class of 25	Per capita GNP in U.S. \$	% of world	# of treats out of 25
Africa	.682	12.5%	3	630	3	1
Asia*	3334	61%	17	1680	22	5
Australia	.027	0.5%		3380	0.4	0
Europe	.695	13%	3	12990	39	10
N. America	.283	0.5%	1	21580	30	7
S. America	.458	8%	2	2170	6	2
World Total	5479	100%	25	-----	100	25

Sources: Population figures are from the united nations population fund, *The State of World Population 1993*, quoted in the *Universal Almanac, 1994*. GNP figures are from the World Bank, Quoted in *the Universal Almanac, 1994*. GNP is defined as the total national output of goods and services. Percentage of world wealth is an estimate based on total GNP. (Not shown in the graph.)

\* Note: The figures for Europe and Asia are estimates because the available data segregates data from the USSR. For purposes of this lesson the authors folded the figures from the former USSR into Europe and Asia based on a 2 to 1 ratio.

## Lesson #28 Supermarket Exercise

**Time: 70 minutes**

### Overview

The lesson enables students to connect the food they eat with global processes of production and consumption.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will be able to trace the origin of the food they eat.

Students will be exposed to the implications of certain eating habits and processes of food production and consumption (e.g., trade policy, labour practices, nutritional value, environmental impact)

### Preparation

#### Materials

1 copy of each of the Detector Cards

1 large food label of the following for each station: Bananas, Canned Soup, Bread, Grains, Meat, Chocolate (the list may change depending on dietary restrictions of class members)

(Optional) 1 of each of the above food items

Class set of “Alternatives” handout

### Getting Started

1. Ask students to recall and list on a page all of the food they eat in a day. (also see Lesson #4: “Food Record”)
2. List on the board or chart paper, some of the foods that class members eat.
3. Ask students if they know anything about where the food comes from, how it is made or the company that grows/makes it?
4. Record student responses in the “K” column of a KWL chart (what we Know - what we Want to learn - what we Learned),
5. Ask students what they would like to learn and/or questions that they have concerning the food that we eat. Record their responses under the “L” column of the KWL chart.

### Main Activity

1. Divide students into 6 groups.
2. Near each group, post 1 of the large labels with a food item listed and give each group 1 detector card. If you are able to bring in the food items, also give each group the food item that corresponds to their food label.
3. Instruct each group that they are going grocery shopping. They have 6 items on their list - a

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<sup>1</sup> Modified from *Global Teacher, Global Learner*, Pike and Selby, 1988 and further adapted by Diane Vanderulist (teacher at Glen Ames, Toronto Board of Education).

banana, canned soup, bread, grain of some sort, meat of some kind and chocolate.

4. They have to move to each “aisle” or station to get the next food item. In each aisle, there is a detector card, telling them something about the food item, its nutritional value, where it was made, labour conditions, environmental impact etc.
5. At each station, direct students to read the detector card out loud.
6. After a few minutes at each station, ask students to move to the next “aisle” to get another food item on their list. Repeat until students have been to every aisle/station.

### Post-Activity

1. Report back as a class if students were surprised by the information on the detector cards? What information was new? With what issues do they have some familiarity?
2. Can students brainstorm any alternative food sources, rather than the supermarket?
3. Distribute and read the 1 page Alternatives handout with students. What are some of the ideas and suggestions for alternative sources of food or affecting change as consumers?
4. Revisit the KWL chart and fill in column “L” column with what students “Learned” as well as revisit the “W” section to see what questions remain unanswered. You may wish to write down additional questions that student have now that they’ve completed the activity.

### Extension

Ask students to research a food company or product that they eat regularly. What can they find out about where it comes from, the conditions in which it is made or grown, the nutritional value etc? Ask students to make their own illustrated detector card for this food item to share with the class and to use as part of a bulletin board display.

## **Detector Cards**

### **Bananas**

The media and our government have told us that international trade is beneficial for everyone. For example, Honduras grows bananas and we trade them tractors. However, trade is not equal and favours one side or another. Many countries lack sufficient economic and/or political power to negotiate fair terms. For example, in 1970, it took the income from selling 11 tons of bananas to buy 1 tractor; in 1982, it took the income from 25 tons of bananas to buy 1 tractor.

Also, some countries dedicate a large portion of their economic energies to paying off debt owed to richer countries. To earn foreign currency, they must produce what is desired in the international market place. In the example of Honduras again, many people do not have enough to eat yet much of their land is dedicated to farming. They farm bananas for export to countries such as Canada. The workers on the banana plantations do not earn enough to feed themselves or their families.

### **Canned Soup**

There are thousands of items available in every grocery store and several grocery stores in every Toronto neighbourhood. But is there choice? It is more limited than you would think. For example, in 1990, one company, Campbell's, controlled 82% of the canned soup market. It is clear that when just a few companies control major portions of any market, they have economic power. They can shop around for the best ingredients at the cheapest prices. This practice may encourage growers to underpay workers. These companies also have political power as they bargain with governments who are interested in promoting jobs. Sometimes this means that they get around environmental regulations. Campbell's is listed as one of the top polluters in the Great Lakes Region.

### **Bread**

Whole wheat bread is clearly more nutritious than white bread. There are 22 ingredients removed when flour is refined and bleached. The vitamin content is reduced to one-fifth. The nutrient content is so low that the Canadian government requires all white flour to be enriched with iron, niacin, riboflavin and thiamin. There is also very little fibre in white bread. Increased fibre is linked to decreasing the following health risks: heart attack, obesity and cancer. In fact, some white bread is so fibre poor that wood pulp is added.

The connection to class revolves around cost. White bread simply costs less. It is also used as a loss leader (advertised at a substantial reduction in order to draw people into a particular store in

the hope that they will also buy other products). Whole wheat and “health” breads cost more and are marketed to people who can afford to pay more for their nutrition.

## **Grains (Rice, lentils, wheat, corn, etc.)**

Grain is a direct source of nutrition for both humans and animals. If we eat 1 kg of grain, we have access to 1 kg of nutrition. In order for an animal to provide us with 1 kg of meat, it must eat on average, 8 kg of grain. As the world population increases and more people suffer from inadequate access to food, greater reliance on grains may prove a more efficient method of providing enough food for all.

## **Meat**

More resources are needed to produce enough food for a person who eats a diet that relies heavily on meat as opposed to meat substitutes, such as grain. The meat counter also provided us with an opportunity to debunk a major food industry myth. Many consumers believe that rising food prices are due to increases in the wages paid to food company employees. However, labour often represents less and less of the cost of food. Employees are not gaining wage increases. In fact, many areas of the food industry have experienced substantial lay-offs. The meat packaging industry is a good example. As more of the meat packaging is done by machines and at the plant, less work is being done at the deli counter by humans. More and more, we buy our meat in sealed packaging. Canada Packers, for example, laid off 2,500 people between 1982 and 1987.

## **Chocolate / Coffee**

Nescafe (Nestle) is an international chocolate and coffee company. It also produces baby formula. Nestle earned a lot of money marketing their baby formula in developing countries such as India. Parents were very susceptible to their advertising campaign which suggested that formula was superior to breast milk. However, the cost of the formula was high, sometimes as much as 60% of a family's income. Unfortunately, once a baby becomes dependent on formula, the mother stops producing breast milk and the family has to continue buying formula. Often the formula was diluted to make it go further. Sometimes, clean water was not readily available and as a result, many children became sick and died. It is widely acknowledged today that mother's milk is the best form of nutrition for infants. In the 1970's, many people across the world became outraged at the advertising campaigns used to convince families to switch to formula, particularly when those campaigns focused on people with very limited incomes and poor access to clean drinking water. An international boycott (consumers refused to buy Nestle products) was organized and focused on Nestle as the largest manufacturer. In 1984, the boycott ended successfully, with Nestle agreeing to follow the International Code of Marketing.



## **Alternatives**

If every food dollar you spend is a vote for the practices of the company you buy from, you may want to take your money and your vote elsewhere.

### **Alternative trading organizations**

Companies that purchase commodities cheaply in the developing world and resell these products to us in the store make the largest profits in the food industry. Coffee and tea are just two examples. A number of Canadian groups are now trying to cut these marketers and distributors to ensure a fair deal for producers. The best known is Bridgehead Trading, owned by OXFAM-Canada, which buys teas, coffees and other products from co-operatives in developing countries, has them processed either in that country or at a Dutch co-operative, and sells them at a profit. Unlike other companies, Bridgehead returns the profit to the producer countries in the form of aid projects.

### **Buy locally**

You will have much bigger impact spending your dollars at the local food co-op or small store. Locally based outlets are more likely to respond if you don't like a particular product, or you would like to see other products in stock. Buying locally also decreases the environmental (as well as economic and social) costs involved with long-distance transportation of goods (especially those goods that are needing to be refrigerated en route. Buying locally also helps to promote a healthy, diversified economy.

### **Shop with a conscience**

Consider more than just the price the next time you buy a product. Does the company use ethical promotions, treat its workers well, treat the environment well, etc? If you don't agree with the company's practices, boycott its products. Write a letter letting the company know how you feel and the kinds of changes you would like to see happen in company practices. Alternatives ways of purchasing food in an ethical way may include food co-ops, as well as food share programs and other programs that seek to provide affordable food to the community by making connections with local producers (e.g. the good food box program in Toronto and across Canada: [www.foodshare.net/goodfoodbox02.htm](http://www.foodshare.net/goodfoodbox02.htm)).

### **Shop clean**

Consider the environment whenever you buy a product. Is the product environmentally sound? Is the package reusable or recyclable?

### **Buy less**

The greatest challenge affluent consumers could issue is simply to buy less.

### **Support citizens' groups**

Volunteer time or money to grassroots organizations that work on food issues. Getting involved can make you not just a supporter, but a participant in the process of change.

# Lesson #29      Global Clothes Hunt

**Time: 40 minutes**

## **Overview**

This lesson provides an introductory exploration to connect the things we purchase to global patterns of production and consumption. <sup>1</sup>

## **Purpose**

Students will identify where in the world many consumer items are manufactured.  
Students will identify patterns in the global division of labour and their location as consumers.

## **Preparation**

### **Materials**

Class set of world map handouts  
Atlases for students to use individually or in groups  
Magazines  
Scissors  
Glue sticks

## **Getting Started**

1. Ask students to find 5 items from their homes, such as toys, clothing or sports equipment (pants, shirts, coats, shoes, baseballs, soccer balls, dolls, puzzles etc.)
2. Ask students to make a list of the items and the countries where they are manufactured.
3. In class, ask students to choose one of the items on their list and in a few lines, describe the object.

## **Main Activity**

1. Distribute a world map to each student.
2. Individually, ask students to indicate on their world map handout where the items they found at home were made. They can do this by drawing a picture of the item that was manufactured directly onto the map or cutting a picture out of the magazines. Make atlases available if students do not know the exact location of the country.
3. Post the individual maps around the room and give students an opportunity to walk around and look at the other maps. Have them think about: a) Which kinds of goods are produced in which countries? b) What patterns do they notice?

## **Post-Activity**

1. As a class, ask students to identify any patterns that they noticed. Possible responses might include:
  - a. Electronic toys and goods tend to be produced in Taiwan and Korea.
  - b. Many of the items are made in China.
  - c. Some expensive items such as Doc Martens are often made in Great Britain or Italy.

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<sup>1</sup> Activity adapted from Bill Bigelow, "The Human Lives Behind the Labels: The Global Sweatshop, Nike and the Race to the Bottom," in *Rethinking Schools*, Summer 1997.

- d. Athletic shoes are made mostly in Indonesia or China.
2. Ask students why these patterns exist. Ask: “Why do you think companies have their clothes made in countries so far away?” Point out to students that many products are manufactured in countries where there are high concentrations of people and because there are so many people who are poor, companies can often pay workers much less than they would in other parts of the world.
3. Ask students whether they noticed the label indicating where their item was made when they described it in the preparatory activity.
4. Questions:
  - a. Do we notice where our clothes and things that we buy are made?
  - b. From looking at the label, do we know anything about the working conditions of the people who make them? How about the environmental impacts?

### **Extension**

Lesson # 30 Behind Our Labels.

## Lesson #30 Behind Our Labels

**Time:** 90 minutes

### Overview

This lesson promotes an analysis of global processes of production and consumption, particularly of clothing and shoes.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Explore the working conditions of individuals, particularly women in developing countries, that are behind our clothing labels.

Identify patterns in the global division of labour and their location and responsibility as consumers.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of atlases

8 maps with tour countries

Overhead of map with tour countries

8 cue cards with tour stops written on them individually

Overhead or chart paper with vocabulary list

Overhead of sweatshop profiles from *No Logo*

### Getting Started

1. As a class, ask students what qualities they would hope to have in their jobs in the future. (Responses might include good pay, safe working conditions, challenging work, being treated fairly by one's employer and co-workers, the ability to make decisions about how the workplace functions, etc.)
2. Display student responses on the board, overhead, or flipchart.

### Main Activity

#### Step A

3. Divide students into 8 groups.
4. Give each group 1 tour stop, a world map, and several atlases.
5. Ask the group to read the tour stop together, referring to the overhead or chart paper with the Vocabulary List. Direct students to use their atlas to locate the country that they are touring on their maps.
6. Ask each group to answer the following questions in relation to their tour stop:
  - a. Describe the working conditions at your stop.
  - b. If there is a specific company in your stop, have you heard of it before? Do any of your labels have that company name?

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<sup>1</sup> Parts of this adapted from *Women's Education in the Global Economy* (WEDGE), 2000.

- c. How comfortable was your tour stop? Would you like to stay a bit longer or come back again? Explain.
- d. How do the working conditions compare to the conditions you want in future employment?

### Step B

7. Ask 1 person in each group to read their tour stop to the class and another student to summarize the working conditions in their own words. On the overhead, display a map and ask a third member of each group to circle their tour destination.
8. As a class, discuss the following in relation to the tour stops:
  - a. Have students in the class heard of the companies in the tour stops? Do any of their clothes have these labels?
  - b. How were the tour stops similar or different from one another?
  - c. How do the working conditions on the tour compare to the working conditions we want in our own jobs?
  - d. How do students feel about the tour stops?

### Post-Activity

9. Display the overhead chart on sweatshop profiles from *No Logo* in order to reinforce to students the widespread nature of sweatshop practices. Read the chart out loud with students or give them time to read the chart individually.
10. What are some of the actions students can take in relation to this information?
  - a. What can our role be here in Canada to support workers? Responses could include educating other students, writing letters to companies to pressure them to change their labour practices, choosing not to buy certain products (boycotts), demonstrations, protests, research on the internet to find out what others are doing.
  - b. Encourage students to assess the strengths and limitations of each approach. For example, boycotting products without also working to pressure companies to improve their labour practices may mean that workers do not have access to jobs that they need to survive.
11. Ask students to choose 1 specific strategy that they are interested in learning more about. Students can form groups depending on these areas of interest. This can be an ongoing project that students undertake in their groups in relation to a particular company and sweatshop/labour practices. Students can be encouraged to develop a project that focuses on learning about and/or participating in a particular action and reporting back to the class. There are very good Internet resources listed in the extension section for student reference.
12. (Optional) As a creative writing project, students can be asked to write from the perspective of an item of clothing or shoe whose label they now know more about.
  - a. What would that item tell us about life in the factory? What observations could it make about working conditions, the workers, what it feels like etc.
  - b. What would the item tell us about life in the home where they have been purchased, most likely in Europe or North America. What observations would it make about the home, the person or family who had purchased it, living conditions etc.

- c. How would this item describe how life has changed from the point it was manufactured to the place it was purchased?

### Extensions

13. In groups, students can look at how one particular company advertises its products in newspapers, magazines, and on television. What message does it convey about its product? Using alternative sources such as [www.corpwatch.org](http://www.corpwatch.org), [www.maquilasolidarity.org](http://www.maquilasolidarity.org), [www.behindthelabel.org](http://www.behindthelabel.org), ask students to research where these products are made and create their own anti-ads based on this information. What information do these companies not want us to know about? Students can look at alternative ads on such sites as [www.adbusters.org](http://www.adbusters.org).
14. Ask students to go to [www.aflcio.org/home.htm](http://www.aflcio.org/home.htm). Ask students to click on the executive paywatch box and choose 3 companies whose products they use on a regular basis. Companies are listed in alphabetical order. Ask students to record the name of the CEO of the company and how much money s/he earns. Compare this to how much the average worker in that same company earns. Do they notice a consistent pattern in all 3 companies?

## **Tour Stop 1**

The tour goes to Thailand. In Southeast Asia, women represent up to 80% of workers in export processing zones where companies get big tax breaks and prevent workers from organizing unions. Young women from poor rural families often work in these factories and send money home to support their families. They work mainly in toy, shoe, garment and electronic sectors for long hours at low wages under unhealthy conditions. Many get sick from chemicals used in the factories.

## **Tour Stop 2**

Let's fly to the warm, beautiful waters of the Caribbean to more export processing zones. 95% of these workers are female and the majority are teenagers. They work inside giant factories, called maquilas, where all the goods are exported, mostly to North America and Europe. Union organizing is violently opposed. Let's stop in Honduras where teenage girls sew for such brand names as J.C. Penny, Fruit of the Loom, Eddie Bauer, OshKosh, Wrangler, J. Crew, Gap and Levi's. Many of these teenagers quit school to help support their families. Many complain that they are mistreated and harassed by managers and are always tired because they work more than 12 hours every day. The seamstresses are paid an average of \$0.56 an hour. They get paid only \$0.12 for a t-shirt that the Gap sells for \$20!

## **Tour Stop 3**

Let's stop in Haiti where workers sew Pocahontas pyjamas and Hunchback of Notre Dame t-shirts for Disney for only \$0.28 an hour. Garment workers in Haiti are paid about \$2.40 a day. A Pocahontas t-shirt sells at Wal-Mart for \$10.97 but the worker who makes it gets only \$0.08! Workers labour 12-16 hours in hot, dusty factories. Those who get pregnant are forced to quit so employers don't have to pay maternity benefits. Workers who speak up or try to form unions are fired. Disney has contracts to produce its clothes and toys in countries such as Haiti, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. In contrast to these workers, Michael Eisner, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Disney earned about \$189 million in 1996. That works out to about \$100,000 an hour! It would take a Haitian worker sewing Disney garments 29,000 years to make what Eisner makes in one year.



## **Tour Stop 4**

At the Tianjin Yuhua Garment Factory in China a young woman earns \$0.23 an hour. For over 60 hours a week, she sews clothing to be sold in Wal-Mart stores in North America. She works in a sweatshop. Soon, she may be laid off as Wal-Mart moves to a factory in the south of China with even fewer regulations and lower wages. There, workers make as little as \$0.13 an hour to sew the same garments. Wal-Mart is the largest retailer in the world and selling goods made in sweatshops helps Wal-Mart to make even bigger profits. In 1998, their revenue was \$119 billion, \$4 billion more than Canada's 1998 revenue.

## **Tour Stop 5**

Here, we stop at the home of Barbie. In China, young female workers leave home and rural areas to find a job so they can send money to their families. They make \$1.81 a day. 2 factories in China, 1 in Malaysia and 1 in Indonesia make over 100 million Barbie dolls a year. Mattel, the company that makes Barbie dolls, made \$3.6 billion in 1995. Of that money, Barbie brought in \$1.4 billion.

## **Tour Stop 6**

In 1990 in San Antonio, Texas, Levi's laid off 1150 garment workers, most of whom were Mexican-American women. Levi's moved the plant to Costa Rica where workers earned in a day what the average San Antonio seamstress would have made in 30 minutes. During the 1980's and 90's, Levi's put 10,400 people out of work as it moved their production from the United States to over 50 other countries worldwide. Worker groups protested the closing of plants, pointing out that in 1996, Levi's made \$7.1 billion!

## Tour Stop 7

Let's stop in Indonesia! Women here are paid \$0.26 hourly to make Nike sneakers that sell for \$70-\$100. Meet Cicih Sukaesih who used to work in a factory making Nike shoes. On this stop, Cicih shares with us some of her experiences. "The factory was very hot, because the machines were so close together. We had to work with glues in those hot conditions. It was very dangerous to our health. We had no gloves and were only given very thin masks. My job was to dip a rubber sole into a chemical, then slap on a cushioned sole. We were expected to produce 2500 of these soles an hour. If we did not meet our quota, we had to work overtime until we finished. The pace of work was very fast. We were always being punished to meet production demands...we worked from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. If they wanted us to work overtime, they would tell us to continue until 9:00 p.m. By 1992, I was making \$1.45 U.S. a day. On this salary I had to pay \$0.50 a day for rent and \$0.75 for food. If I missed the factory bus, I would have to use the remaining \$0.20 for transportation. If you made a mistake on only one pair of shoes, you would be fined \$0.50...right now we are not making enough to survive. We are unable to save even a little bit for our families or for our dreams for the future...that is why we have to work so much overtime, even when we are not being forced to do so. The choice is to work overtime or not eat." (Excerpts from interview, *Maquila Solidarity Network Wear Fair Action Kit*)

Compare this stop to Nike headquarters in Oregon where CEO Phil Knight makes \$1,678,000 yearly or to Chicago where Michael Jordan is paid \$20 million a year to endorse Nike. This is more than all of the Indonesian workers make in one year putting together our Nike shoes! In 1997, Nike made a profit of \$795.8 million!

## Tour Stop 8

Let's return to our point of departure, Toronto, Canada. Here, women sew clothes for Northern Traditions, Northern Reflections and Northern Getaway. They get paid for each piece of clothing they sew and this works out to rates well below the minimum wage. Women sewing in small factories or at home earn as little as \$4.50 an hour and some workers reported receiving wages as low as \$2.50 an hour. These women are denied overtime pay, vacation pay, statutory holidays and other minimum benefits guaranteed by law. Welcome home! (From Labour Behind the Label Coalition Wear Fair Sheet, 1997)

## Vocabulary List

<b>export processing zones</b>	(EPZ), areas in countries where companies get tax breaks so they don't have to give much of their money to the government in taxes and they can make even bigger profits. In EPZ's, union organizing is very difficult as workers are often fired, threatened or even harmed if they try to organize unions.
<b>maquila</b>	giant factories where many women work producing goods for export
<b>union</b>	an organization that workers form to negotiate fair wages for their work, safe working conditions and benefits
<b>sweatshop</b>	workplace where workers are subject to extreme exploitation, including poor wages and benefits, poor working conditions and arbitrary discipline such as physical and psychological abuse.

Company / Label	Factory in China	Wages per Hour	Hours per Week	Conditions
Wal-Mart/Kathie Lee handbags	Liang Shi Handbag Factory	\$0.13 to \$0.23	60-70; 10-hour shifts; 6-7 days a week	No factory fire exits; dirty, cramped dorms, 10 to a room; for 70 hours a week, warehouse workers earn \$3.44; no benefits; no legal work contract; workers have never heard of a Code of Conduct
Wal-Mart/Kathie Lee handbags	Ya Li Handbag, Ltd.	\$0.18 to \$0.28	60; plus overtime up to 16-hour shifts	Forced overtime — stiff fines for refusal; overtime premium of 2 _ cents an hour; some workers not paid 3-4 months; 12 to a dorm room; no benefits, no work contract; never heard of a Code of Conduct
Wal-Mart/Kathie Lee	L Wen Factory	\$0.20 to \$0.35	84; 12-hour shifts; 7 days a week; mandatory 24-hour shifts during rush times	Forced overtime, severe fines for refusal to comply; no benefits, no overtime rate; no fire exits in dormitories; no work contract; workers have never head of a Code of Conduct
Wal-Mart	Tianjin Yuhua Garment Factory	\$0.23	60	Wal-Mart is pulling out of this factory and other large publicly owned plants in the north to relocate its work to unregulated lower-wage privately owned sweatshops in the south of China
Ann Taylor and Preview	Kang Yi Fashions Manufacturers	\$0.14	96; 7 days a week; 7 a.m. to midnight	Workers have never heard of a Code of Conduct; 6 to 10 workers in dorm rooms
Ralph Lauren; Ellen Tracy/Linda Allard	Iris Fashions	\$0.20	72-80; 12- to 15-hour shifts; 6 days a week	No union; workers paid a \$0.06 an hour premium for overtime; paid \$0.02 for each shirt collar sewn
Esprit Label (Esprit Group)	You Li Fashion Factory	\$0.13	93; 7:30 a.m. to midnight; 7 days a week	No overtime pay; no benefits; sometimes employees need to work 24-hour shifts; 6 to 8 people to a dorm room; dorm is dark and dirty; workers afraid; under constant surveillance; never head of a corporate Code of Conduct
Liz Clairborne and Bugle Boy	Shanghai Shirt 2d Factory	\$0.25	66; 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; 6 days a week	Employees fined if they don't work overtime; no union
Liz Clairborne	Shanghai Jiang District Silk Fashions Ltd.	\$0.28	60-70; 11.5-hour shift; 6 days a week	
J.C. Penney	Zhong Mei Garment Factory	\$0.18	78; 11-hour shifts; 7 days a week	No union; no benefits; workers have never heard of J.C. Penney Corporate Code of Conduct
Kmart	Shanghai No. 4 Shirt Factory	\$0.28	70	
Cherokee Jeans	Meiming Garment Factory	\$0.24	60-70	No benefits; workers have never heard of monitoring; 8 to a dorm room
Sears	Tianjin Beifang Garment Factory	\$0.28	60	Sears is pulling out to relocate its production in lower-wage, unregulated sweatshops in the south
Structure/The Limited	Aoda Garment Factory	\$0.32	70	No union; 6 workers to a dorm room
Nike Athletic Shoes	Wellco Factory	\$0.16	77-84; 11- to 12-hour shifts; 7 days a week	Workers fined if they refuse to work overtime; overtime rate not paid; most had no legal work contract; humiliation, screaming, some corporal punishment; arbitrary fining of pregnant women and older (25 years old and up) women; fines if talking at work; approximately 10 children in the sewing section; most workers have never heard of Nike's Code of Conduct
Nike and Adidas Athletic Shoes	Yue Yuen Factory	\$0.19	60-84	Forced overtime, no overtime premium paid; excessive noise pollution, fumes in the factory; no worker had heard of Nike or Adidas Corporate Code of Conduct
Adidas Garments	Tung Tat Garment Factory	\$0.22	75-87.5; 12.5-hour shifts; 6 or 7 days a week	Employees fined if late/resting/found talking; forced morning calisthenics; 8 workers to a dorm room

Sources: "Company Profiles/Working Conditions: Factories in China Producing Goods for Export to the U.S.," "Made in China: Behind the Label," Charles Kernaghan of the National Labor Committee, March 1998. Wages are in U.S. dollars. No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies, *Naomi Klein, 2002.*

## Lesson #31      Child Labour

**Time:** 70 minutes

### Overview

This lesson helps students to develop a definition of child labour and explore the conditions under which child labour occurs.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will explore their own attitudes and beliefs regarding labour, child labour in particular. Students will be able to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable types and conditions of child labour.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Chart paper

Markers

Glue sticks or tape

1 copy of the Job Card handout cut into strips and placed in envelopes for each group

Class set of “What is Child Labour?”

### Background Information

Many people who live in Canada, the United States or Europe think of child labour as a horror from the past. We see it as an evil that was caused by the Industrial Revolution but has now been abolished in industrialized countries. When we hear stories about the small children who make matches or carpets in South Asia or load charcoal onto hot kilns in Brazil, we think that it will only be a matter of time until developing countries will also be able to get rid of child labour. However, the reality is that there is still child labour in industrialized countries. It is true that we no longer see thousands of ragged children at work from dawn to dark in filthy textile factories. Yet, here too, children work in jobs where they are exploited and in unhealthy conditions for long hours. Recall that Classism is defined, in part, as an economic system that creates significant inequality and causes human needs to go unmet. In a competitive market place, firms seek to maximise profit; this can be done, in part by reducing costs to the firm, such the “costs” of paying for labour and maintaining good working conditions for workers. The situation of children in developing countries is not just a problem that will work itself out with time or increased industrialization. The main reason that children work is because they are poor and extreme poverty is a global problem. Child labour must be situated and tackled within this global context. (Adapted from *Talking Union*, Education Department, Ontario Federation of Labour, 1999)

### Main Activity

#### Step A

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Stolen Dreams: Portrait of the World's Working Children*.

- a) Divide students into working groups of 4-5 students.
- b) In their groups, ask students to divide the chart paper into quarters with the following sections:
  1. Jobs youth under 14 should be allowed to do
  2. Jobs youth between 14-18 should be allowed to do
  3. Jobs only adults should do
  - Jobs no one should have to do
1. Ask students to pull out a job from the envelope, discuss it and glue or tape each job card in the most appropriate section of the chart. In cases where more than one section is considered equally appropriate, students can use the markers to write the job in other categories. Below each job card, ask students to write a brief explanation of why the card was placed in that particular category (hours of work, working conditions etc.). Continue until all job cards have been matched with appropriate categories.
2. Ask each group to post their completed chart on the wall and present it to the class, explaining their choices. The following should be considered in the class discussion:
  - a. Did students assume that all jobs under consideration were paid?
  - b. Should there be a pay differential between children and adults engaged in the same work?
  - c. To what extent were student categorizations of work based on their own or their parents/guardians experience of work?

### Step B

1. As a whole class, read the handout “What is Child Labour?”
2. Stop periodically during the reading and ask questions to check for comprehension and to explore some of the ideas being presented. Some focus questions include:
  - a. Are jobs like baby sitting or taking out the garbage child labour or are they important in preparing children for life?
  - b. What are the different types of child labour?
  - c. In which kinds of labour have you participated? Have your experiences been valuable and fair?
  - d. How do you think you are connected to the issue of child labour?
2. As a class, begin to generate a definition of acceptable and unacceptable types and conditions of child labour. Have students create criteria to explain what makes a child’s job fair or unfair. (E.g., work that prevents children from receiving an education is unfair.) Document student responses on chart paper or overhead.

### Post-Activity

1. Ask students to return to their original working groups. Would they make any changes to their categorisations based on the information presented in What is Child Labour?
2. Ask each group to write a paragraph about what constitutes fair and unfair child labour conditions. Paragraphs can be written on chart paper and posted around the room for reference in the next lesson.

### Extensions

1. Ask students to compare their criteria of fair and unfair child labour to rights of children as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. How are the criteria similar and different? See [http://erc.hrea.org/Library/First\\_Steps/index\\_eng.html](http://erc.hrea.org/Library/First_Steps/index_eng.html) - click on Part Five.
2. Ask students to summarize the experiences of 2 child labourers, 1 in Canada and 1 in another part of the world. It is important to frame the issue of child labour as requiring attention in this part of the world as well as others. An excellent resource is the on-line New Internationalist at [www.oneworld.org/ni/index4.html](http://www.oneworld.org/ni/index4.html). Ask students to find the July 1997 issue (through on-line magazines that are indexed by year of publication) that focuses child labour. It also includes related sites and links to follow.

## Job Cards

<b>Textile worker</b>	<b>car washer</b>
<b>street vendor</b>	<b>pop star</b>
<b>cleaner</b>	<b>executioner</b>
<b>truck driver</b>	<b>agricultural worker</b>
<b>shoeshiner</b>	<b>carpet weaver</b>
<b>coal miner</b>	<b>actor</b>
<b>fire fighter</b>	<b>shop assistant</b>
<b>soldier</b>	<b>tennis player</b>
<b>window cleaner</b>	<b>auto mechanic</b>
<b>babysitter</b>	<b>prostitute</b>
<b>police officer</b>	<b>gardener</b>
<b>glassmaker</b>	<b>dancer</b>
<b>dishwasher</b>	<b>surgeon</b>
<b>fireworks maker</b>	<b>teacher</b>
<b>sewage worker</b>	<b>bartender</b>



## What is Child Labour?

### Important Terms

*Developing countries* are also called “underdeveloped,” “less developed,” “newly industrializing,” the “Third World” or the “South,” and include most countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

*Industrialized countries* are also called “developed countries,” the “First World” or “the North,” and include the United States, Canada, the countries in the European Union, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. The “West” or “western countries” are also commonly used to refer to these countries, except for Japan.

The *Industrial Revolution* refers to the rapid changes associated with the rise of capitalism, manufacturing (the use of machinery on a large scale), and the factory system of production in England in the late eighteenth century. With the new machinery work became simpler and physically lighter, allowing children to be drawn into factory work. Weaving cloth on a hand loom, which used to be done at home, was now done in factories on mechanical looms. Employers were eager to use children because their wages were so much lower than men’s or even women’s. It was at this time that the notion of child labour was born. It referred to children working for low wages for long hours, under hazardous conditions and outside the home, as opposed to children working as they had always done, at home or on the farm.

### The Question of Age<sup>1</sup>

In order to define child labour, we need to decide when children become adults. Do they become adults when they can leave school or marry without their parents’ permission? When they can vote, hold a full-time job or legally have sex? What is the dividing line? The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as anyone under eighteen. Yet in most countries, children are permitted to leave school or to work much earlier. The official ages for these activities vary between countries and even within countries.

Added to this problem is the fact that in many countries, people do not know exactly how old they are. In some parts of the world, people mark maturity according to biological events — like puberty — rather than a specific number of years. In Nepal, for example, workers at one school found that none of the ninety-five students had birth certificates or even knew their birthdays. While most could guess their ages within a year or two, they usually said they were older than they actually were.

### Types of Child Labour

Children have worked throughout history, all around the world. The children of peasants or farmers have always worked in the fields, or helped care for animals. In most cases, however, they start with small tasks and only gradually take on heavy work. And there’s still lots of time for

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Listen to Us: The World’s Working Children, Jane Springer, 1997.

play, at least until the age of ten or twelve.

In the pre-industrial world, children learned a family craft or skill from an early age. Or children served as apprentices to master craftspeople in order to learn a skilled trade. As an apprentice to a potter, weaver, carpenter or baker, a child would learn the tradition knowledge of craft. This might include training in mathematics, in science and in drawing. An apprentice was “bound” to the “master” for up to seven years, working for free in exchange for being taught a skill. While children no longer apprentice in industrialized countries, they do in some developing countries. Often, however, the term apprenticeship disguises what is really a form of forced labour. The children are doing repetitive, unskilled labour, not learning a skilled craft.

Most kids in North America and Europe today do chores around the home. They make meals, wash dishes, take out the garbage (or give their parents lessons in how to use the Internet!). This work is usually unpaid, but many kids get an “allowance” to pay for some of their school or entertainment expenses. Others are paid for odd jobs they do outside their homes, like babysitting. Some deliver papers or work in fast-food restaurants. Some have left home and now live on the streets, making a living any way they can.

Is any of this child labour? Or is it work that prepares children for life work that is usually for oneself or others? It depends on a number of factors. Do the children or teenagers have any choice about the work they do? How many hours do they work? How much are they being paid? Do they go to school? Is the work dangerous to their physical or mental health? Are they any better off doing the work? What, if anything, are they learning from their work? Who is benefiting from the work — the child, the parents, or just the employer?

Some experts have outlined three basic types of child labour. There are children who work with their families — on the farm, in the home or for a family business. Second, there are those who are paid to work in factories or who have been hired out or even sold by their families to do farm work, domestic work or to work as soldiers. There are those who have been thrown out of their homes by their parents, or who have run away and who will do any kind of work in order to survive — street children.

In general, the worst and most exploitative types of child labour are found where children are working in profit-seeking enterprises outside their homes. But children who work at home may be exploited as well. Families are not always the safe places we would hope they are. Children who do work that is too hard, that takes too much time or is harmful to their health are being exploited — whether they are doing housework or factory work.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that there are 250 million children between the ages of five and fourteen working in developing countries. One-half of them work full time. One-third of them work in extremely dangerous conditions. If the large numbers of exploited children (mainly girls) who work with their families, plus all street children were added, the total would swell by several hundred million.

## Lesson #32      Child Labour Case Studies

**Time:** 70 minutes

### Overview

Through case studies, this lesson helps students to explore the experiences of child labourers around the world.

### Purpose

Students will investigate the specific experiences, working conditions and demands of child labourers.

Students will begin to challenge their stereotypes about child labour, particularly as being an issue only in developing countries.

Students will explore the kinds of changes that need to take place to improve the quality of life and choices available for working children.

### Preparation

#### Materials

1 copy of the Selected Articles from the Convention on the Rights of the Child for each group, cut into strips and placed in an envelope

1 copy of “We, the working children of the Third World, propose...” for each group

3 or 4 copies of each of the 8 case studies (enough so that each student has a copy of 1 of the case studies)

1. As a large class, ask students what kinds of things they and other children need and should have? Record responses on the board or flip chart.
2. Examine the list to differentiate needs or rights from wants. What do all children need and have a right to and what are some of the things on the list that children may want? Write need or want beside each of the items listed from question 1.
3. Explain to students that a right is something that all children need and are entitled to have. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child outlines these rights. Ask students if they have heard of or know about the United Nations Convention?
4. Ask students to form groups of 4 or 5.
5. Distribute an envelope to each group containing the Selected Articles from the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In their groups, ask students to read each of the articles out loud. Do the articles and the protections that children are supposed to enjoy surprise them? Are some of the rights the same as the ones they had listed earlier?

### Main Activity

1. Distribute multiple copies of 1 case study to each group and 1 copy of “We, the working children of the Third World, propose...” to each group. Each group should have a different case study of a child worker.

2. Ask the group to read the case study out loud and consider the following questions:
  - a. Describe the child worker – age, name, gender etc.
  - b. Where does the child worker live?
  - c. What kind of work do/did they do?
  - d. What hopes do they have?
  - e. Why are they working?
  - f. How do they feel about their situation?
  - g. Which of the rights of the child worker are being denied or upheld?
  - h. What specific changes need to take place in order to improve the choices and quality of life of child workers? Brainstorm as many as possible and also use the handout, *We, the working children of the Third World*, propose... to think about the changes that working children are articulating and demanding.

### **Post-Activity**

1. Ask each group to present a portrait of their child worker to the rest of the class. It may be useful to create a large chart to compare the working conditions and life circumstances of child workers.
2. Are students surprised by who is among the world's working children?
3. What concerns do working children from developed and developing countries have in common and how are their experiences different?
4. Brainstorm what kinds of things could be done to help protect the rights of child workers.



## Selected articles from the Convention on the Rights of the Child

### **Article 24**

Children have the right to the highest possible standard of health, and access to health and medical services.

### **Article 30**

Children have the right, if members of a minority group, to practise their own culture, religion, and language.

### **Article 38**

Children have the right, if under the age of 15, to protection from taking part in armed conflict.

### **Article 28**

Children have the right to education

### **Article 31**

Children have the right to rest, leisure, play, and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

### **Article 33**

Children have the right to protection from the use of drugs, and from being involved in their production or distribution.

### **Article 32**

Children have the right to be protected from economic exploitation, from having to participate in work that threatens their health, education, or development.

### **Article 27**

Children have the right to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

**Source: *Education for Development: A Teacher's Resource for Global Learning*, Susan Fountain, 1995.**

## **“We, the working children of the Third World, propose...”**

Working children are starting to organize all over the world to protect themselves from exploitation — but also from international action which they fear might deprive them of their livelihood.<sup>1</sup> The most exploited child labourers of all — those most in need of protection — will never be able to recognize or find a voice in this way and must never be forgotten. But it is still important to listen to the perspective of this burgeoning activist movement, which last November held its first international conference, with child delegates from 33 countries, in Kundapur, India — and formulated the following ten demands.

1. We want recognition of our problems, our initiatives, proposals and our process of organization.
2. We are against the boycott of products made by children.
3. We want respect and security for ourselves and the work that we do.
4. We want an education system whose methodology and content are adapted to our reality.
5. We want professional training adapted to our realities and capabilities.
6. We want access to good healthcare for working children.
7. We want to be consulted on all decisions concerning us, at local, national or international levels.
8. We want the root causes of our situation, primarily poverty, to be addressed and tackled.
9. We want more activity in rural areas so that children do not have to migrate to the cities.
10. We are against exploitation at work but are for work with dignity, with hours adapted so that we have time for education and leisure.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *New Internationalist*, July 1997.

## The Shoe-Shiner – Senegal

### Assane's Story<sup>1</sup>

*Assane Diallo is a 10-year-old shoe-shine boy in Ziguinchor, the capital of Senegal's southern region. Like hundreds of other children from the north of Senegal, he has fled not war, but a bad agricultural policy. The French Government is trying to get the Toucouleur people to grow rice. But their Futa Toro region is too dry and the result is that the Toucouleur, traditionally nomadic cattle herders, are becoming more impoverished.*

I came from the village of Bronkagne in the Futa Toro. I used to work for my Uncle Demba cultivating rice, tilling the soil and sowing rice seeds. But we didn't produce enough and he sent me away.

Uncle Demba told me that it would be hard in the city. But it will be good for me whether or not I bring him back money one day. "With travel you gain experience," he said. It is good for a child to know suffering. Then I will appreciate life when I am older. This is the Toucouleur way.

Of course I was scared to leave but I also wanted to go. I am proud that he has sent me. I hope I make lots of money. I hope I can come back to my village and give all my relatives presents. And I'll be wearing jeans and sneakers. I already have this nice T-shirt.

In the village I just wore rags. Sometimes there wasn't enough food to eat. We worked very hard but there was never enough rain. And rice needs lots of rain. Still, we Toucouleur always find a way to survive. If we can't make money from farming then we go out and become traders. That is what my family wants me to do.

I already did it last year. We went to the town of Bakel for three months between the sowing and harvesting seasons. I sold boabab and bissap juice on the street for a market woman. I came back to Bronkagne with new clothes and gave my uncle money. He was very happy with me. That's why he wanted me to go again this year.

My aim in life is to be a big trader. As my father died when I was a baby, Uncle Demba inherited his land instead. So now his sons will inherit it from him, not me. That is why I must be a trader. I want to travel to Bangkok and bring back textiles and jewellery to sell here. Then with the profits I will open my own store. That is what we Toucouleur do. If you go to any town in Senegal you will find us with our little stores. My friend's uncle has a big store in New York.

I am now on the third step of my life goal. The first step was working for my uncle cultivating rice. The second step was selling drinks on the street. Now the third step is being a shoe-shine boy. It is not easy. You have to find people who look like they have a little extra cash and convince them that they need their shoes shined. And sometimes they won't pay you. They say

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *New Internationalist*, July 1997.



“Oh, I don’t have the change, I’ll pay you next time,” and you never see them again. They also won’t pay if you get any shoe polish on their socks.

That’s why I don’t want to do this for long. I want to learn how to repair shoes. Then I can work for the older boys who are shoe traders. They go to Dakar [Senegal’s capital] and bring back broken shoes which we younger boys repair for them. I have already begun helping to repair shoes and my friends are impressed at how fast I am learning.

So my fourth step will be repairing shoes and my fifth step will be to be a shoe trader like the older boys. But when I go to Dakar I won’t just bring back broken shoes, I will bring all sorts of things. That is how I will get rich.

I don’t need to go to school. What can I learn there? I know children who went to school. Their family paid for the fees and the uniforms and now they are educated. But you see them sitting around. Now they are useless to their families. They don’t know anything about farming or trading or making money. Even though I have never been to school, I can count and quickly give the correct change. I also know how to bargain with customers and always make a profit.

The only thing I need to learn is to read and write. But I have started. People from ENDA [a Dakar-based agency] teach me and my friends every Tuesday evening. That’s good because it doesn’t mess up our work schedule.

My friends told me that a white woman came to talk to them once and told them it is bad that children have to work. She said she would put them all in school but she never came back, and I am glad. If anyone tries to put me in school I will run away. I wouldn’t be making any money. Then I would be ashamed ever to go back to my village.

## The Runaway – Nepal

### Kumar's Story<sup>1</sup>

*Kumar Subba left his village home in eastern Nepal at the age of eight. He crept out of his house before dawn and walked 30 kilometres to a small country town. He was escaping a family catastrophe. His father, a peasant farmer, had lost his land to a local moneylender and left for India to look for work. While his mother laboured for a pittance in other people's fields, Kumar was trapped at home minding younger brothers and sisters.*

When I left my only thought was escape. I got a job in a hotel. I had to fetch water and wash the dishes. The water was icy. Sometimes I was sent to a nearby forest to collect firewood. I was not paid — just given two meals a day. I slept on the tables after the customers left, I got bad sores on my hands and fell sick. Sick or well, I had to work.

After a year, I left and walked to the next town where I worked as a street porter, living on the streets. But the older boys would bully and rob us. One day a man told me he could get me a job in Kathmandu. I would be trained to weave carpets and have a chance to go to school. I would be given very good meals. Once trained, I would earn a lot of money. I saved for six months for the bus fare to Kathmandu. But this agent was another cheat.

The factory he took me to was very big and full of working children, mostly girls. It was like a prison. We were locked in. I was ten years old but not the youngest. We worked from 5:00 a.m. to midnight knotting carpets. We slept among the looms. Many of the children suffered pains in their fingers because of the work. We were given very low-quality rice and thin watery lentils twice a day. Those were the only breaks and no one spoke of paying us.

Supervisors checked that we didn't fall asleep. They also had informers among us who would report us if we fought or broke the hammers, needles or scissors we used. Then we would be thrashed. There was some bullying though not as bad as on the streets. The older boys in the factory were very bad to the young girls. They would toss [sexually abuse] them.

When others slept some of us would talk about how we landed up there and the promises made us. We had all been cheated by the labour contractors.

After six months I was exhausted and had pains in my hands, stomach and chest. One day, I spotted a half-broken window in the lavatory. I broke out and ran away.

After that I worked as a ragpicker and slept on the streets. It was better than the factory — at least you could have some fun. Other young children taught me were to collect rags and sell them. There were also older boys who were into pickpocketing and thieving. They ordered me to strip valuable metals from the buildings. If I refused I was beaten.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *New Internationalist*, July 1997.

The worst thing on the streets was that nobody treated us well and everyone, police and other adults, all behaved like thieves and cheats. We were often arrested and beaten or tortured for no reason. The police kicked or beat us with special ribbed sticks; sometimes we were bound by ropes and beaten. At first I was very innocent but then I thought: “Whether I steal or not, I get arrested and beaten; better get beaten with thieving than without.” So I started stealing things as well.

I ended up being jailed for six months and put in a cell with adults, including a monitor chosen by the prison staff. Everyone had to make him happy because if he reported you to the warders you lost your right to parole. The warders also let him beat you up. You had to make tea for the adults and wash their clothes. There was also sexual abuse.

Back on the street, I was the youngest of a group who were getting seriously into thieving. Some would even take on security guards who caught them in the act. One day I had a head injury. My friends took me to the health clinic at Child Workers in Nepal.

There, for the first time, I found adults who cared about me and shared things with me. I stayed on in a night shelter they have and got involved in their activities. That was in 1992, so I was 11. If it wasn't for that accident I would probably be a big thief by now.

*Increasingly recognized as a talented artist, Kumar — now 16 — plans to be both a painter and street educator so that he can help other working children realize some of their aspirations. He has also been reconciled with his family.*

## The Prostitute – England

### Paula's Story<sup>1</sup>

*Paula is 15 and lives in Middleborough in the north-east of England, an area with high unemployment. She is happy to tell her story on condition that her name is changed.*

I haven't been to school for ages — about two years. I stopped when I was 13. Why? It did my head in. I guess I was always a bit rebellious. At first I kept quiet about not going to school but when my Mum found out she just said, “stay home so I know where you are”. The school used to chase me up and I'd go back in for an hour then bunk off again with my friends. They gave up in the end.

I left home. I live with a friend now. I got involved with prostitution about six months ago. I knew someone who was already doing it and making easy money. She was about 17. I asked if she was scared of going in cars on her own — “how do you know the phoney ones, the ones that are going to batter you or rape you?” She said “you know the dodgy ones, you just have a feeling” — and most of the time she's right, you know. Mind you, one time I was raped and battered when a client went loopy.

Was it frightening the first time with a client? No, I was with a friend 'cause he wanted two girls. It was scary when I did eventually go on my own but it was all right — it wasn't half as bad as I expected it to be.

Yes of course I was terrified when I got attacked but you can't feed a drug habit with nothing. I started smoking gear [heroin] about a year ago, same time I started this — that's why I needed the money. All my friends were doing it and I was the only one that wasn't. Instead of changing my friends I joined in — daftest thing I ever did.

I want to get off this soon — I'm hoping to start detox next month. I'm looking to go back to college to learn all the things I should have done in school. I'm not doing this because I enjoy it. Do my Mum and Dad know? No, they'd be shocked — I weren't brought up to do this. I hope I'll never have to tell them. In ten years' time I hope I'll be settled down with a family and be happy.

Why do so many kids do heroin? Cause there's nowt to do. Even if you did go to school and got qualifications there wouldn't be any jobs at the end of it. What would I say to Tony Blair [Britain's newly elected Labour Prime Minister]? Give us more to occupy us kids so we don't get so bored.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *New Internationalist*, July 1997.

## The Street Seller – Colombia

### Pablo's Story<sup>1</sup>

*At first glance, 14-year-old Pablo looks every inch the fresh-faced teenager. But his coarse and calloused hands are more those of a middle-aged labourer — the result of seven years of tough manual work. His behavior too is a curious mix — at times boyishly aggressive and enthusiastic, and at others alarmingly dry and adult in his perceptions. “El Pato” or “The Duck”, as he is known to his workmates, lives with his mother and four brothers and sisters in the impoverished south of the Colombian capital, Bogotá. His mother, on who he dotes, works full-time in a coffee factory. His father is a violent alcoholic who recently disappeared from home.*

I was born in Cali [Colombia's third city] but we didn't spend more than a year in one place until I was seven. Wherever we went my father could never keep his job. We moved eight times, and it was always down to my mother and us children to earn money to live. If we didn't bring home enough, he beat us — hard and frequently. Now he doesn't come home any more. One time he hit me so badly that I couldn't work for several days.

While we were moving around, I went to school from time to time, but I didn't get on with the other children. I had a lot of discipline problems. Then when I was seven we finally settled in the coffee-growing region of Armenia, where I started work with my mother. I picked coffee on the plantations, and worked in the packing factory for five years.

When I was 12 we moved again, this time to Bogotá. A lot of children in my neighbourhood were working as porters and vendors at Paloquemao [the biggest of Bogotá's sprawling street markets] so I went along with them. There are about 200 of us in all.

I get up at 5:30 a.m. It takes nearly two hours on the bus to get to the market, and I start work at eight, unloading the trucks. I try to get the fruit trucks, because I don't like carrying meat. The drivers pay us, or if we choose they give us fruit and other goods to sell. Some of my friends just get paid and go home. But I take the fruit and work all day. I can make much more selling than carrying.

I like my job and I have lots of friends on the market. But I only do it because I have to — help my mother and pay my own way. I think my father should pay for my education, so I wouldn't have to work on the market. I want to go to school. I want to be a systems engineer, but how can I?

The stall-holders don't like us because we offer better prices than them, so they throw rotten vegetables and try to chase us off. Sometimes, the security guards don't let us work at all, because officially we are too young to get a permit. If we try and sneak in, they hit us with batons until we run off — but it's easy to lose them in the market. We work in pairs — one sells and the other looks out for men and sticks.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *New Internationalist*, July 1997.

It's wrong that children have to work, but we do. It's even more wrong that they try to stop us working. If I can work all day and finish around seven in the evening, afterwards we play football to relax. It's exhausting, but I enjoy myself. I earn between \$5 and \$8 a day, which I spend on clothes and food. I don't drink or take drugs. I would like to save money for school, but for now I can't because my mother is sick: she has a problem with her breasts.

When I get home, I have to help clean and make dinner. I don't get much free time.

*Despite the tough life he has already endured, Pablo is an optimistic and resilient teenager. This is the more remarkable, considering something that Pablo himself doesn't reveal or even refer to, but which is likely to restrict his development far more than his lack of education. According to social worker, Lisbeth Ospina, he is going blind. He has a deteriorating eye condition which without corrective surgery will rob him of his sight before he turns 20. He is already unable to see detail, and has trouble following fast-moving objects. "When Pablo tells you he is saving for school, in his heart he is saving for an operation," she explains.*

## The Garment Worker – Thailand

### Sawai's Story<sup>1</sup>

*Sawai Langlah, of Srisaket Province in north-east Thailand, had to find work at the age of 13 when her father, a construction worker, suddenly became paralyzed. There was no work locally so she had to leave school and get a job in the capital, Bangkok, through a cousin who was already working in a small garment factory.*

We think my father's paralysis was to do with overworking. One day he came home exhausted and fainted. When he woke up again he was paralyzed. I was very miserable at leaving home and frightened of going to the city, but I also knew it was my only hope to continue with my schooling. Because I knew nothing about sewing I had to learn everything from scratch. My employer said I would have to do domestic work to repay him for the training I would receive.

It was a very small family business — a three-storey house which was also the owner's home. I was paid very little — 500 baht (\$25) a month. Out of that I had to pay back 100 baht for my housing and my food; though they gave us only cooked rice and if we wanted anything with it, we had to buy it.

There were six people in the factory and we all shared one room. The room we worked in was very narrow with about five machines in it and the lighting was very poor. I worked from eight in the morning to midnight. This was a privilege. My cousin often stayed up sewing until two in the morning.

I was supposed to be an apprentice but I wasn't really given any training. I had to do a lot of housework. I washed clothes and cleaned the house and kitchen. I could be called to do it at any time. I was lucky to have my cousin there: when my employer was out she would teach me and I would also watch how the others worked. That's how I got trained. I learned quickly. Usually it takes eight months. Within a couple of months my sewing was in demand.

I don't think the owner was a bad man. He did not abuse me. He shouted at me only if I yelled at his child. Sometimes he let me watch TV. He was just stingy.

After I was there two-and-a half months he took a big order from a factory making clothes for little children and needed more labour. He said I was ready to take on bulk work. If I agreed I would make a little more money. But my cousin was worried: I would have to work seven days a week and stay up late, sometimes working right through the night, going without sleep for 48 hours. My cousin feared that the pressure of bulk work would be too great for a child of 13. She advised me to take a job in a bigger factory, where I might also have an opportunity for education on Sundays.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *New Internationalist*, July 1997.

It was a medium-sized factory with 20 machines. From outside you could hardly tell it was a factory — the windows were high up and barred and we were not allowed to open them. It was very closed; no one could see inside. There were 20 workers. Most of the others were between 15 and 17. We worked six days a week. It was a registered factory and so had to meet government regulations. However, the owners had no kindness. They were very stingy, too; the pay was very low and they never raised our salary. They didn't care.

There were several organizations in Bangkok providing activities for working children but most operated during the day when I couldn't attend. Then I heard of the Child Labour Club, whose activities are on the weekend. So I started attending non-formal education on Sundays. They also provide shelter and health care for children with problems. I'm 16 now and in January I quit my job to work for the Club part-time, reaching out to other working children. The Club pays me 3,000 baht (about \$150) a month and they give me a room without rent which I share with two other girls.



## Farm Worker, Age 17 – United States

### Susana's Story<sup>1</sup>

Susana Vasquez was born in Mexico and migrated with her family to the U.S. when she was seven. By the time she was nine, she was working with her parents in the fields of Pennsylvania, picking fruit and vegetables. She dug potatoes, picked apples, peaches, cucumbers and green peppers. She worked on hot dry days when there was no water available except costly bottled water. She worked on cold rainy days when the fields were muddy. During one season, she worked after school from 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. picking twenty huge buckets of tomatoes. On the weekends she picked sixty buckets between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. She was paid \$1 a bucket, which the grower then sold for \$12 each. Susana also picked strawberries. "I liked picking the strawberries because I could eat them if I was hungry," she says.

At every new place and new job, Susana translated for her father as he negotiated with the farmer over work, pay and living arrangements. Like other migrant farm workers, Susana's family often stayed in camps with poor cooking and food storage facilities. There was often no access to drinking water or toilets in the fields. "Talking about all those things scared me," she remembers. However, she admits she is stronger and more mature as a result than the other kids she knows.

"There was no time for going to movies or to do homework. I often fell asleep in class," Susana says. She changed school three times a year as her family travelled to find work, and her grades were low. "Just as I adjusted, it was time to move again."

Susana is now seventeen and in grade ten in Salisbury, Maryland. She has been held back two grades because of the many interruptions in her studies. "How I wish my parents could have gotten other jobs." She says, "It isn't easy for me, but it's certainly not easy for them either... Next time you buy a tomato think of me as a nine-year-old."

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *New Internationalist*, July 1997.

## Solder, Age 18 - Mozambique

### Naftal's Story<sup>1</sup>

When Naftal was twelve years old, soldiers from the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) attacked his village in southern Mozambique on Christmas Eve. They killed seventy people, including his older brother. They kidnapped his mother, his four-year-old brother Alberto, and Naftal himself.

His mother and Alberto dragged behind the end of the line of captured villages and managed to escape. But Naftal was at the front. "I walked for two days and nights carrying a 24-kilo bag of maize," he said. "Three of the elder women in my collapsed. The soldiers beat them to death with sticks.

When they reached the base, Naftal was given an AK-47 assault rifle. "The soldier just said, 'You shoot like this. The rest you learn as you go along.' I didn't want to kill anyone. But if I didn't shoot, I would have been shot myself."

After two years of military operations, Naftal was shot in the leg by government soldiers. "There was no health worker at the base, so I just tied a cloth to stop bleeding." The bullet remained in his leg for two years, and he was unable to walk.

"I lost hope of ever returning home," says Naftal. "I felt that because of my leg, I would stay in the base all my life."

Renamo allowed Naftal to go home after the General Peace Accord of 1992. By mid-June 1994, more than 850 children who had been in Renamo military bases were reunited with their families.

But even back at home, Naftal was frightened. "I had to sleep with him at night" says his younger brother Castigo.

Naftal explains, "I kept dreaming that soldiers came to my home and were shooting. They were coming to collect me again. I still get the dream, but less often now. And I am no longer afraid to sleep by myself."

When asked how the experience affected him, Naftal replies, "I feel now that the war has passed, we must forgive and forget."

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Listen to us: *The World's Working Children*, Jane Springer, 1997.

## Sex Worker, Age 16 – Canada

### Christine's Story<sup>1</sup>

Christine Andrews was born in Guyana in South America. She was only five when she was sexually abused by her fourteen-year-old stepbrother. Her father beat her mother, and Christine was relieved when they left him for good in 1986 and came to Canada.

Christine began working in her new stepfather's clothing store in Toronto's Eaton Centre when she was twelve. If anyone asked, she said she was sixteen. One evening, on the way home from work, her stepfather raped her in his car. Her mother didn't believe her until her stepfather admitted what had happened, and then she blamed Christine for "leading him on."

"I started to act out in a rebellious way, and to skip school," says Christine. Three months later she ran away with a girlfriend and began hanging out with "tough kids, fighting with teachers and with each other." During this time, she says, "I always had good marks and kept up with my schoolwork."

After a fight with another girl, Christine had the first of many encounters with the police. A few months later, she was charged with assault and went to jail for two weeks. She was expelled from school. Like many young offenders Christine's time in jail led her to increased criminal activity.

"I met this girl in custody. She introduced me to the street scene." Christine moved in with a friend downtown and was soon dealing crack and cocaine and "weed."

Christine returned home once and got into a fight with her mother, who had found out she had robbed somebody. Her mother called the police. "Eight cops came. They handcuffed me to the door!" At the time, there were three warrants out for her arrest.

Eventually, Christine was made a ward of the court and sent to an assessment home, where her case was evaluated by social workers. "It was hard," says Christine, "but it was there or jail." She started therapy. "They used to take me to a quiet room where I could yell and scream. I was really mad at my mom."

Christine gave a statement to the police, who arrested her stepfather for sexual assault. After a two-year trial, he was sentenced to a year in jail.

Christine was finally returned to her mother's custody. She was sent home on a Thursday, but was gone by Sunday, back downtown. Soon she was living with Rosa, a prostitute. She needed money, so she began hooking. She was fifteen.

"It was the hardest thing I've ever done. It brought me down — caused me to lose my confidence. I did it for the money. Starting in May, I worked two weeks straight every night. I

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Listen to us: The World's Working Children*, Jane Springer, 1997.

promised myself I'd be off by the end of June but all the money went to clothes and drugs." Christine was an independent hooker, a "renegade," but she usually worked on a buddy system with another woman for safety reasons. Hooking was degrading work, tough and hard to do.

"I started drinking, getting really high before going out to the street. I did cocaine five or six times. I smoked weed every day. I paid rent and bought food and clothes. I made about \$400 a night, sometimes \$800, sometimes only \$200."

Christine did move back home in June but it was hard not to have all the cash she was used to having. "I was hooked on the freedom of the streets, which even without the drugs is addictive," she says. At the end of the summer she went to jail for three weeks for car theft.

"I was very lucky," she says, because of her previous record. "And I promised myself I'd never do it again." She got a part-time job at an adolescent resource centre as an editor and design person on youth magazine. She also went back to school and "tried to turn my life around." It's not been easy.

Now Christine is sixteen and in grade ten. She continues to work on a magazine and writes for Young People's Press. Her stories have been picked up by many Canadian newspapers, including the *Toronto Star*. There are similarities between Christine's story and the stories of child prostitutes in developing countries. There too, girls may be sexually abused by a relative. Working underage at a service job, like selling clothes or food, or weaving carpets, makes them more likely to be drawn into prostitution, simply because they are working unprotected outside of their homes.

But there are also many differences. Christine lived with her family until she was twelve. She went to school full time, except during her worst times on the street. For the short time she was hooking, she did not have a pimp taking a large portion of the money or abusing her. She knew the danger of AIDS and refused to have sex without a condom. She and her family had access to a range of social services — to therapy, to foster homes, to programs for troubled adolescents. She was treated with respect and caring, and her writing skills were recognized and given a chance to develop.

**Part VII:**

**Working For Change**

## Lesson #33      Givens and Changeables

**Time: 55 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson encourages students to think of injustice as changeable, rather than inevitable and fixed, and to view themselves as agents of change for social justice.

### Purpose

Students will be able to distinguish between things that are given and things that can be changed. Students will acknowledge and move from feeling overwhelmed to the recognition that there are things that they and others can do to create a more just society.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Large sign that says GIVENS

Large sign that says CHANGEABLES

Tape these signs at different ends/corners of the classroom.

Ensure that the room is cleared/arranged for students to move freely between the signs.

If space is very limited, you can modify this activity by giving each student 2 different coloured cards and ask them to indicate their response by holding up one or the other.

11. Ask students what it means if something is given and changeable? Explain that givens cannot and will not change, they are absolutely necessary and unchangeable. Changeables are not absolutely necessary, do not have to be that way and can be changed.
12. Explain that in the activity, students will be giving their opinions and it is likely and okay that there will be a wide range of different opinions.

### Main Activity

11. Students will vote with their feet. They will move to one end of the room or another when the teacher reads aloud an item from the list below. If they think the item is a GIVEN, they move to the end of the room with the GIVEN sign posted. Similarly, they move to the other end of the room with the CHANGEABLE sign if they think the item is CHANGEABLE. If they are undecided, they can remain in the centre of the room.
12. Allow one or two minutes of discussion time between each item for participants to say why they moved where they did. Try to elicit responses from different participants each time, including the undecided.
13. Emphasize that there are different ways of seeing the same thing. Ask a couple of people from different perspectives to explain their position.
14. Allow students the opportunity to change their minds and move after they have heard others' ideas.
15. The list of Givens and Changeables are only a sample. You can modify them, shorten the list or add some of your own. Stop this activity when the pace of movement begins to slow.

### **Post-Activity**

11. Once the activity is finished, ask students to pick 2 of the items that they listed as changeable.
12. In pairs, have students think about the action steps needed to change these things. Remind students to draw on previous case studies and class discussions for ideas.

Suggested Items for GIVENS and CHANGEABLES activity:

11. Homelessness
12. Racism
13. Cancer
14. Disease
15. Pollution
16. Poverty
17. Death
18. Good music
19. Love
20. Crime
21. War
22. Taxes
23. Hunger in the world
24. Drug abuse
25. Drunk driving
26. Human nature
27. Differences between males and females



## Lesson #34      Feeling Overwhelmed?

**Time: 60 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson emphasizes the need to work through feeling overwhelmed by injustice in order to examine the ways in which it can be challenged and changed.

### Purpose

Students will be able to move from feelings of frustration and helplessness to recognition that there are things they and others can do to challenge injustice.

Students will explore effective strategies to work for social justice.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of the “Breakfast Program Case Study”

Chart paper or overhead with questions “Feeling Overwhelmed...Personal Reflections”

11. Ask students to think of an example of a situation in which they tried to improve something in their life but failed (e.g. something that was not fair at home or school). Have each student answer the questions Feeling Overwhelmed...Personal Reflections individually.
12. Without disclosing the specifics of their example, ask students to share the lessons they learned from this experience. Lessons might include, change can take a long time, sometimes people don't want the same change, change is difficult, change might be easier if I work with other people, sometimes the problem feels too big to change, I didn't use the best strategy, I gave up too easily etc.

### Main Activity

11. Divide students into small groups and ask them to read the “Breakfast Program Case Study”.
12. Using the ideas and lessons from their efforts to change a specific situation in their lives, ask students to work in their groups to answer the discussion questions.
13. One student in each group should record responses and another student is responsible for reporting back to the whole class.

### Post-Activity

11. As a class, debrief the discussion questions.
12. Based on their personal experiences as well as the “Breakfast Program Case Study,” ask students to generate a list of factors to consider in trying to improve a situation. Some examples could include:
  - a. Clear objective and reason - what am I trying to change and why?
  - b. Strategies to use – how can I persuade people to support my goals?
  - c. Groups involved – who is involved or affected by this decision?
  - d. Public opinion – who will agree, disagree with my goals and why?

- e. Information – what other information do I need to understand this issue?

## **Feeling Overwhelmed...Personal Reflections**

1. Describe the situation you tried to improve.
2. What specific actions did you take to change the situation?
3. Who else was involved?
4. How did you feel? How do you imagine that others involved may have felt?
5. Why do you think your attempt to change this situation was unsuccessful? Did you have a well thought out plan? Did you work alone or with others?
6. What could you have done differently to bring about the change you wanted?
7. What lessons can you take with you from this experience when you think about changing other situations?

## **Breakfast Program Case Study**

At Nobel Primary School, there has been a breakfast program for 3 years. The program is used by many students every morning and provides an important and nutritious start to their day. Many people help to make the program a success. The breakfast program involves a lot of work and organization on the part of cooks, teachers, support staff, volunteer parents and food donors. Since the breakfast program started, teachers have noticed that the academic performance of some students in the breakfast program has improved and disruptive behaviour has declined. Teachers attribute this partly to the fact that students aren't hungry in the morning and are able to concentrate during class. Because of funding cuts, there is no longer enough money or adequate resources to continue the breakfast program and just recently, it was cut. Parents, students and teachers all believe that the breakfast program is important for the success of students and are working desperately to restore funding for the breakfast program.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Are the students and staff at Nobel Primary School trying to change something that is a GIVEN or CHANGEABLE?
2. Does your group think that their request is realistic? Do you agree with their position? Why or why not?
3. How could you persuade people who don't agree with the staff and students of Nobel Primary School?
4. Why do you think the breakfast program was cut?
5. What do you need to consider before acting in this case?
6. Who are all of the people involved in this situation?
7. What are the obstacles that students or staff may encounter in trying to restore funding for the breakfast program?
8. Where can you find support?

9. Make a list of all the strategies that the students and staff could engage in to restore funding for the breakfast program. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the different strategies?

## Lesson #35      Using Privilege for Change

**Time: 60 minutes**

### Overview

This lesson helps students to explore how privilege can be used to bring about a more just and equitable world.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will learn about people who have used their privilege responsibly to challenge inequities. Students will be able to assess different risks for individuals engaged in working for social change. Students will think of concrete ways in which they can use the privileges they have to challenge classism and inequality.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Copy of “Using Privilege for Change” worksheet per group of 4

1. Introduce the lesson by discussing the word privilege. A privilege is a special advantage, benefit, or bonus that some people or groups have. People don't always earn privileges; often they are born with them. With these privileges comes responsibility to act in ways that are fair. Also introduce the concept of risk. A risk is the possibility that there may be a negative consequence as a result of our actions.
1. Have students share some examples of privileges they have in the school, their family, or community. For example, because they are older they may have certain school privileges that others don't.
2. Explain that some groups of people often have more privileges because society gives that group more chances/opportunities than others. For example, white people's skin colour is a privilege because it keeps them from facing the racism that people of colour experience.

### Main Activity

1. Divide students into groups of 4 and give each student 1 example from “Using Privilege for Change.” Each account is an example of a person or group of people who had privilege and used it responsibly to help create change. (examples 2 and 5 are true while the others are based loosely on incidents that have happened in schools)
2. Some readings are more difficult than others so distribute sections accordingly.
3. Each student first reads her/his account silently.
4. In their groups, students take turns reading their accounts to each other.
5. After students have read their accounts, have them discuss each account using the following focus questions:

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from pp. 134-154, *Open Minds to Equality*, by Nancy Schniedewind and Ellen Davidson, 1983.

6. What are the different privileges that individuals in each account have? How were they similar or different?
7. What did the individuals/groups in the stories gain from using their privilege for change?
8. What did other people gain through their actions?
9. What are other possible actions that could be taken in this situation?
10. Who are all of the people in each of the accounts? How are the risks of acting for change different for the people in the stories? For example, in the first account, how are the risks different for George compared to the girls/young women organizing to stop violence against women?
11. Regardless of students' backgrounds, remind them that we all have privileges, though they may be different, based on age, sex, ability, class, race, gender etc.

### **Post-Activity**

1. Ask students to brainstorm the concrete ways that we can use our own privileges responsibly to act for improvements in our school and communities? Students can use examples from the case studies to generate ideas of other creative ways and places that privilege can be used for social change.
2. What are some of the risks we would need to think about and who could benefit from our actions? Emphasize to students that while we all have to decide how to use our privileges to act for change, the risks and benefits may not be the same for everyone.
3. How could we put some of these ideas into practice?

### **Suggested Possible Accommodations**

Depending on the level of learners, this activity can be easily adapted by changing or editing the examples provided to students or discussion questions. For more advanced teaching, you could modify this activity by not providing students with the entire account but provide the preliminary part of the account (marked by a bold asterisk), describing the situation and privilege being negotiated. Students can identify the privilege as well as brainstorm possible actions that each person might take and write an ending to the account of one such possible action. As a large group, they can share how their examples reflect responsible uses of privilege and also appreciate the many creative ways in which individuals can use privilege to bring about change. (Also see Appendix E for Sample Special Education Accommodations.)





## Using Privilege For Change

1. Every December 6<sup>th</sup>, there are activities at George's school to remember the 14 women who were killed in the Montreal Massacre. It is also a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada. Every year, George sees bulletin boards in the school and events organized throughout the city. He is not sure what to do as most of these events are organized by women and girls and as a young man, George is unsure of his role and responsibility.

\*He decides that he wants to talk with other young men about December 6<sup>th</sup> and how they can work to end violence against women. As part of the white ribbon campaign, George wears a white ribbon as a symbol of his commitment to end violence against women and starts talking with the boys in his class about how they can be part of the work to end violence against women. They start by talking about how they can treat the girls/young women in their class respectfully and at home as well. George also starts to think about all the privileges that he gets because he is a guy, including not thinking a lot about safety issues or feeling afraid when he walks around at night.

2. Craig Kielburger is a student at a Thornhill school. He read an article about child labour in different parts of the world when he himself was a child. There are an estimated 250 million children who work in very difficult and dangerous conditions around the world. Craig was very upset by this fact and started to think about how he could participate in helping children in his part of the world become more aware of the situation of millions of children from around the world and also help the child labourers.

\*Craig started to do research to learn as much as he could about child labour, made a flyer and talked with anyone who would listen. He also realized that there were many individuals and groups that had been working for many years to raise awareness and bring an end to the exploitation of child workers around the world. Craig and Alam Rahman, another young person involved in this work, took a tour of South Asia and met with many children who worked as child labourers. Since then, they have started an organization called Free the Children and met with leaders from around the world to further this cause, including Prime Minister Chretien and Mother Theresa. Craig and many other young people continue to work to make children in this part of the world aware of the many children who make items, such as carpets, toys and clothes that we use. According to Craig, children like himself "needed to be freed from the misconception that we were not smart enough, old enough, or capable enough to contribute to social issues" (*The Toronto Star*, November 8, 1998).

3. Many schools in the city have activities for Black History Month in February and Asian Heritage Month in May. These include learning about the history and contributions of Blacks and Asians. Some of the white students in the school don't understand why there are special months for Black and Asian history month but not to celebrate the history and contributions of White people. Sometimes, this leads to conflicts between groups at school.

\*Jane and Erin are white students at a racially mixed school who are part of the Stop Racism Now club and they are trying to understand why their school has these special months. They make a list of all the books and stories they read in English and realize that most of them are written by white men and women. When they look at their History books, they see a similar pattern of who writes the books and gets the credit for contributing to the history of Canada. Jane and Erin decide that it is their responsibility to talk with the white students who are angry about these months and help them to think about it from a different perspective. They decide that it is not only the job of Black and Asian students to educate them but that they also have to work to think about what they are learning throughout the year.

4. During lunch, Allison eats with Jennifer, Cathy and Mary. Jennifer and Cathy in particular, often make jokes about the clothes that other students wear or the food they eat. They say things like, "didn't you just wear that yesterday" or "do you have to eat the same smelly food every day?" One day, Hannah overhears Jennifer and Allison making these hurtful remarks about her in the cafeteria. Hannah asks them to stop being so mean but Jennifer and Cathy only laugh and start to bother Hannah even more. Although Allison is uncomfortable with these comments, she doesn't say anything to Jennifer or Cathy. Allison also tries very hard to make sure that she doesn't wear the same clothes 2 days in a row so that they don't make fun of her.

\* Allison decides to go and talk with her teacher and explain what is happening. Because she is afraid of talking with her friends about how she feels, the following week, Allison's teacher does some lessons with the class about respect and also brings in some current events about increasing poverty in Toronto for their morning current events updates. Allison also notices that during lunchtime, her teacher is around the table where she eats more often. When she overhears the comments that Jennifer and Cathy are making, she sits down and speaks with all of us about respect and tells us that these comments are unacceptable. Allison is relieved because she didn't have to confront her friends and happy that she spoke with her teacher.

5. A group of Aboriginal youth in British Columbia are concerned about poverty and land claims in aboriginal communities. Some of them are also frustrated at seeing the stereotypes of their communities as lazy and drunk.

\*Since many of them are talented and aspiring performers, they decide to use hip-hop to spread messages of pride and reach out to aboriginal communities, particularly youth. They call themselves The Wisdom of Youth and perform in various communities throughout Canada and are recording their first CD.

## Lesson #36      Actions People Can Take

**Time:** 60 minutes

### Overview

This lesson provides exposure to actions taken by people to challenge and change injustices locally and globally.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose

Students will recognize the many ways in which people have acted in their lives to bring about social justice.

Students will explore the ways in which they can also be actors for social justice in their lives and contexts.

### Preparation

#### Materials

Class set of “Global Actions”

Class set of “Actions People Can Take”

File cards

Large piece of cardboard for Action Mural

Crayons

Glue

Newsprint

### Getting Started

1. Introduce this activity by pointing out that very often people do not act to change things that concern them because they feel there is nothing they can do. Ask: Has anyone in the class ever felt that an unfair situation in your own life was too overwhelming to change? How about unjust conditions in the world (e.g. poverty)?
2. Explain that this activity introduces some things that ordinary people all around the world have done to bring about change.

### Main Activity

1. Divide students into groups of 3.
2. Give each group 1 or 2 Global Action cards and 1 or 2 blank file cards. The task of each small group is to create a symbol that describes the action(s) and to draw this on the file card.
3. Each group should be ready to present their symbol and to describe the action(s) it represents to the rest of the class.
4. (Optional) Students might be given time to research and find out more about the actions that most interest them.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from pp. 277-285 of *Rich World/Poor World*, by Alyson Huntly, et al., 1987.

5. Ask each group to describe their action to the class and paste their picture onto an action mural.
6. Make a list of the actions that people took in order to bring about changes (from the mural activity). Are there other things people can do? Add these to the list.
7. Are there other examples of global actions that students have read or heard about?

### **Post-Activity**

1. Write out (or photocopy enlarge and tape up) the list of “Actions People Can Take” on chart paper and put it up in the classroom or create a bulletin board of the action murals and other ideas. Have students discuss the items. Which actions do they like best? Why? Which items have they heard of people doing?
2. Help students review the different actions that took place and to identify any changes that resulted from these actions (change of laws, something new created, something bad ended etc.)
3. Help students to distinguish immediate short-term changes from gradual or larger scale social change (e.g., the difference between the successful changing of the rule that blacks must give up their seat on buses and the longer term struggle against racism). Impress upon students that change often happens slowly and small changes are the building blocks of larger social change.



## Global Actions

1. Molly was a Toronto high school student who was concerned about nuclear war. She began to look for more information about nuclear war and the more she found out, the more she decided that it was important for other high school students to know as well. After all, they would be the people who would one day be making decisions about the future. Molly got some friends together and they decided that every school in the city should have information in the library about nuclear war and nuclear weapons. They met with school board and presented a plan for a file system. The school board agreed to the plan and agreed to spend money to help set it up. Molly and her friends began to do the work.
2. In 1975, the United States war against Vietnam came to an end. Thousands of American people had protested against the war. Many had refused to fight, written letters, demonstrated, refused to pay taxes to support the war, and gone to jail for their beliefs. These actions did not bring a quick end to the war, but they did significantly affect the United State's decision to pull out of Vietnam. The actions also made many more people aware of how the United States was acting around the world and built a strong base for movements against war and nuclear weapons. On 12 June 1982, a million people demonstrated in New York City against nuclear weapons.
3. In the 1950's, a disease that had affected ten million Chinese people was brought under control. The disease called "Schistosomiasis" (sounds like it looks) was caused by a parasite carried by snails. The campaign to end the disease included pulling out and killing the individual snails by hand in an extraordinary campaign involving millions of people.
4. In 1975, the people's liberation organization in Mozambique (Africa) succeeded in freeing their whole country from Portuguese colonial rule. The struggle was helped by massive popular support and the fact that the organization fighting for freedom provided health care and education in liberated areas. The people of Mozambique then began the task of rebuilding their country after years of foreign control.
5. In 1980 in the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk, Poland, a remarkable movement was born. The Solidarity Union received worldwide support. The story that started with the firing of a woman shipyard worker grew into a giant opposition to the heavy hand of Soviet Communism. In spite of arrests, treats, and detentions of its members, Solidarity grew to be ten million strong. Solidarity has held fasts, strikes, work slowdowns, and demonstrations. The union helped the people of Poland to become more involved in deciding the future of their country.

6. Before 1979, over half the adults in Nicaragua could not read and write. A campaign was started to teach people literacy skills. The country had almost no money so books and supplies were given from around the world. School children in Quebec, Canada raised enough money to buy all the notebooks needed for the campaign. Thousands of Nicaraguan school children from cities volunteered to go out into the countryside to help people to learn how to read and write.
7. In Montgomery, Alabama, there was a law that blacks must give up their seats on a bus if a white person wanted it. One day, a black woman, Mrs. Rosa Parks, refused to give her seat to a white man and was put in jail. Because of her action, thousands of blacks in the city boycotted the bus company and chose to walk rather than take the buses. The bus company began to lose money and public attention focused on what was happening. Finally, the rule was changed. This protest started a movement for black civil rights that swept across the country and made a hero out of a local minister, the Reverend Martin Luther King. Although racism did not end, some laws were changed and people began to become more aware of the injustices, which existed, and how they might be changed.
8. Black children in South Africa were right at the front of the battle against apartheid (the separation of black and white people and control by the whites) in their country. School children as young as five years took part in demonstrations, facing a police force and ruthless army. Even though thousands of children were put in jail or killed by police and the army, they continued to protest. More than one million South African students demonstrated against their government in 1984. One of the things the students protested is that the South African school system gives a white student almost ten times as much government money a year as a black student.
9. Many people around the world agreed to stop buying anything made by Nestles Co. (tea, coffee, chocolate, etc.). This was because of Nestles' advertising baby formula as a substitute for breast-feeding in Third World countries. Breast-feeding is safer and healthier for babies but many mothers switched to baby formula because of ads, which told them their babies, would be stronger and healthier with Nestles milk. Many babies died because of formula, which was not properly prepared (poor families do not have equipment to sterilize bottles or boil water, for example). Because people in North America and Europe stopped buying Nestles, the company began to lose money and agreed to change its advertising practices. Nestle now tells people that mothers' milk is best for babies.

10. In 1955, a twelve-year-old girl, Sadako Sasaki, died of radiation disease in a Japanese hospital. But the world still remembers her. She died because of the radiation from the nuclear bomb dropped on her city of Hiroshima by the United States. Sadako didn't want to die. There was a legend that if someone made a thousand cranes (a crane is a swan-like bird) out of folded paper, whatever he or she wished would come true. Sadako folded 643 cranes, but never reached a thousand. Sadako's friends and Japanese school children across the country saved their money. They built a monument to Sadako and all other children who died in that nuclear explosion. Sadako stands on top of the statue, still folding cranes as she did in life. The monument reminds people around the world that nuclear bombs must never again be used.
  
11. The women of Jamalpur, Bangladesh are learning to read, write and fight the causes of poverty and disease around them. They are teaching one another about farming and weaving, health and medicine and taking public leadership roles. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, aided by funds from Oxfam, agreed to support a program where 15 women would plan, manage, and implement to serve 24 villages. The idea is to make villages economically independent. The women are organizing co-operatives, education, and family health programs—all run by the village women themselves. Rice husking was the first success of the program, primarily because it produces quick cash. The rice can be sold at a reliable profit and the husks are used as poultry feed.
  
12. In 1999, Dita Sari, chairwoman of the Centre for Indonesian Workers Struggle was released from prison after serving 2 years of a 5 year sentence. A leader for women's rights and labour justice, Sari was arrested in July 1996 for organizing two rallies involving 10,000 factory workers in the Tandes industrial estate in Surabaya, East Java. According to Amnesty International she was imprisoned solely for her peaceful work on behalf of labour rights and social change. Her release is seen as a result of pressure on the president of Indonesia, Habibie, from labour and human rights organizations, individuals and some corporations doing business in Indonesia.
  
13. In February 1987, a group of 8 women in Victoria, British Columbia who were very worried about the dangers of nuclear weapons decided to get their message across by singing protest songs. Dressed in dazzling hats and granny like clothes, they continue to draw attention to issues of concern in such as poverty, war and pollution in creative and peaceful ways. These women call themselves the Raging Grannies. Other groups of women also joined together and Raging Granny groups now exist in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Kamloops, Halifax and even in other countries!



14. Medha Patkar has been one of the main organizers of the people's movement in the Narmada Valley in India. The group calls itself Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) or Save the Narmada and they are trying to stop the construction of a series of dams in India along one of the largest rivers called the Narmada. Already, more than 35,000 people have lost their homes because of this project. In 1985, Patkar began to organize marches and rallies against this project. Although the protests were peaceful, she has been repeatedly beaten and arrested by police. In 1991, she almost died during a 22-day hunger strike. She continues to work so that people who have already lost their homes and farmland will be fairly compensated and to stop the building of other dams that have been planned. Patkar has helped to establish a network of people throughout India and the world to make others aware of what is happening so that people everywhere can work together for social justice. Friends of the Narmada is a group that works internationally to educate others about what is happening in the Narmada and to support the efforts of NBA worldwide.
  
15. On November 8, 1946, Viola Desmond, a beautician and business woman in Halifax decided to watch a movie at the Roseland Theatre in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. Viola was black and at this time, there were laws that segregated blacks and whites, that is blacks were not allowed to have access to many of the services available to whites. In this segregated theatre, Blacks were not allowed to sit in the downstairs seats, but only in the balcony. She decided to sit downstairs despite this "no-Blacks" rule and was arrested. She was charged with defrauding the government of the 1% amusement tax on the higher-priced downstairs seat, even though she offered to buy the higher priced ticket. She was thrown in jail for 12 hours, fined \$20 and sentenced to 30 days in prison. Eventually her case was successfully appealed on a technicality and with the help of the Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NSAACP). Viola's case didn't end racism in Canada but it did draw attention to the racism of Canadian laws and the treatment of Blacks and people of colour in Canada.
  
16. Students Against Sweatshops-Canada (SAS-C) was formed following a student conference held at the University of Toronto in 1999. The network links student activists across Canada in their efforts to end abuses of workers in sweatshops. Their main goals are to raise awareness of sweatshop issues and support the efforts of sweatshop workers to negotiate fair wages and working conditions. They are asking their schools not to put their names on garments made in sweatshops and to pressure companies to have codes of conduct in workplaces and allow human rights groups and other agencies to inspect factories. They work with other groups such as the Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN), a Canadian network that also supports the rights of workers in Mexico, Central America and Asia to improve working conditions and receive fair wages.

17. Over the past five years, Edward de Gale has helped over 20,000 people in Ontario to heat and light their homes during winter. The charity he helped to found, Share the Warmth, is based in Ontario and helps low-income families, seniors and disabled people to pay for heat and lighting. After the inability to pay rent, the lack of money for utilities is the second leading reason why people can't afford housing or lose their apartments and homes.
  
18. Cathy Crowe is a nurse who works on the street, providing care to people who are homeless. She co-founded Nurses for Social Responsibility and helped to create the Toronto Coalition against Homelessness, an umbrella group of 28 organizations. In 1998, the Toronto Disaster Relief Committee, of which she is also an active member, declared homelessness a national disaster. This committee is working hard to convince all levels of government to put 1% of their budgets to affordable housing so that all people have access to safe and affordable housing.
  
19. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) is a non-profit organization whose focus is to look for effective solutions to drinking, driving and underage drinking problems. MADD also works to support families who have been involved in accidents or had a family member die or experience severe injuries as a result of being hit by a drunk driver. Since its start in 1980, more than 2,300 anti-drunk driving laws have been passed in the United States of America. MADD started with a loosely assembled group of broken-hearted mothers whose children had been severely injured or killed by drunk drivers. Today, it is the largest crime victims' assistance organization in the world with more than 3 million members and supporters. In 1990, MADD Canada was formed to create a national network of victims and concerned citizens working to stop drinking and driving in Canada. MADD Canada groups are local organizations of volunteers that deliver MADD Canada services and support victims of impaired driving in communities from coast to coast. Local groups also participate in awareness programs and community services. As a national victim support organization, MADD Canada trains volunteers and provides resources and support to victims and their families as well as fighting drinking and driving.

20. The smiling Rugmark label offers hope that in the future, fewer and fewer children will be forced to work as bonded carpet weavers. The Rugmark label attached to hand-knotted or hand-woven carpet indicates that no children have been involved in making it. International groups concerned about bonded child labour in carpet industry set up the Rugmark Foundation in 1994. Members include hundreds of organizations in South Asia, Europe and North America, UNICEF, the German Development Agency and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. It is financed by these organizations and by a fee paid by carpet manufacturers who want to use the label. So far, about 150 Indian and Nepalese carpet manufacturers (the biggest have up to two thousand looms) have applied to use the child Rugmark label. To qualify, they must agree to produce carpets without child labour, pay adult workers minimum wages that are set by the government, register all their looms with the Rugmark Foundation and allow inspectors into their factories at any time to make sure that no children were working there. Business people who import Rugmark carpets are asked to increase their price by 2 percent. The surcharge is returned to Rugmark Foundation to help former child weavers. The funds provide children with an allowance and daily supply of rice to support them and their families so the children can afford to go to school. (Adapted from *Listen to Us: The World's Working Children*, Jane Springer, 1997).
21. The Foul Ball Campaign was launched in the United States in June 1996 by the Washington-based International Labour Rights Fund. It enlisted kids' help to protest the sale of soccer balls and other sports equipment made by Pakistani and Indian children. Pakistan makes 80 percent of the world's soccer balls. Thirty-five million balls a year are produced for multinational companies like Nike, Adidas and Reebok. A *Life* magazine article in June 1996 showed a three-year-old Indian girl whose hands were so small, she couldn't even handle a pair of scissors. But she was helping her mother and four sisters stitch soccer balls. Together they earned 75 cents a day. When American children learned that the soccer balls they played with were made by children often younger than themselves, they reacted. In response to this publicity and pressure from different organizations, in the summer of 1996, the International Football Federation (FIFA), the organization that ensures the quality of soccer balls, decided it would allow only balls made with no forced labour. They said they would only use balls made with no child labour, limits on the hours of work, fair wages, freedom of association (meaning workers can meet with other workers to discuss their rights) and the right to form unions. It also required a contribution to the former child stitchers' schooling. In 1997, the Pakistan sporting goods industry, United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations and international sporting goods associations announced a project to eliminate child labour in Pakistan's soccer ball industry. More than fifty companies, including all the major brands, have promised to purchase soccer balls only from manufacturers who participate. This is the first time that local manufacturers, global brands, and children's organizations have worked together to address child labour. (Adapted from *Listen to Us: The World's Working Children*, Jane Springer, 1997).

## Actions People Can Take

- put pressure on leaders (phone, write or visit them)
  - go on strike
  - not pay taxes
  - work on or vote in elections
  - refuse to buy or use certain products (boycott)
  - make posters, signs, banners, leaflets
  - have a parade
  - write to the newspaper
  - create your own newspaper
  - change banks if the bank you are using lends money to repressive regimes
  - conscientious objection to military service
  - hold a demonstration
  - have an art display or exhibition
  - write a song, a book, a poem, or a play
  - distribute leaflets
  - petitions
  - prayer and worship
  - wear a symbol, a ribbon, or a button
  - assemblies (meetings) of protest or support
  - take out a newspaper ad
  - make a resource centre
  - silence
  - hold an information meeting
  - sit-down or sit-in
  - phone calls, letters, or telegrams of support or protest
  - create alternatives (alternative schools, alternative stores, alternative manufacturing or trading...)
  - speeches (soap-box)
  - humorous skits
  - slogans
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## **APPENDICES**

- (a) Policy of the Toronto District School Board
- (b) Policy Statement on Class Bias—Toronto Board of Education, 1992
- (c) Sensitive Discussions
- (d) Ways & Products to Demonstrate Learning
- (e) Special Education Accommodations
- (f) 40 Questions to Evaluate Learning Materials For Class Bias
- (g) Facts about the Growing Gap between the Rich and the Poor
- (h) Myths about Poverty
- (i) Know Your Rights, An abbreviated Guide to Ontario’s Workplace (March 2002)
- (j) Elementary Course Expectations
- (k) Select Secondary Course Expectations
- (l) Print Resources



**Policy of the Toronto District School Board**

**Number B.03 Equity Foundation**

**Statement**

The Toronto District School Board values the contribution of all members of our diverse community of students, staff, parents and community groups to our mission and goals. We believe that equity of opportunity, and equity of access to our programs, services and resources are critical to the achievement of successful outcomes for all those whom we serve, and for those who serve our school system.

The Board recognizes however, that certain groups in our society are treated inequitably because of individual and systemic biases related to race, colour, culture, ethnicity, linguistic origin, disability, socio-economic class, age, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, religion, faith, sex, gender, sexual orientation, family status, and marital status. Similar biases have also impacted on Canada's aboriginal population. We also acknowledge that such biases exist within our school system.

The Board further recognizes that such inequitable treatment leads to educational, social and career outcomes that do not accurately reflect the abilities, experiences and contributions of our students, our employees, and our parent and community partners. This inequitable treatment limits their future success and prevents them from making a full contribution to society.

The Board is therefore committed to ensuring that fairness, equity, and inclusion are essential principles of our school system and are integrated into all our policies, programs, operations, and practices.

The Board will therefore ensure that:

- (a) The curriculum of our schools accurately reflects and uses the variety of knowledge of all peoples as the basis for instruction; that it actively provides opportunities for all students to understand the factors that cause inequity in society and to understand the similarities, differences and the connections between different forms of discrimination; and that it helps students to acquire the skills and knowledge that enable them to challenge unjust practices, and to build positive human relationships among their fellow students, and among all members of the society.

- (b) All our students are provided with equitable opportunities to be successful in our system; that institutional barriers to such success are identified and removed; and that all learners are provided with supports and rewards to develop their abilities and achieve their aspirations.
- (c) Our hiring and promotion practices are bias-free, and promote equitable representation of our diversity at all levels of the school system; that all our employees have equitable opportunities for advancement; that their skills and knowledge are valued and used appropriately; and that they have equitable access to available support for their professional development needs.
- (d) The contributions of our diverse community of parents and community groups to our schools are valued and encouraged; and that they are provided with equitable opportunities for working with staff and with each other for the benefit of all students.
- (e) Students, employees, parents and community partners are provided with effective procedures for resolving concerns and complaints which may arise from their experiences of unfair or inequitable treatment within the school system.
- (f) Financial and human resources are provided to support the work of staff, students, parents and community groups, and for staff development, in promoting equity and inclusion in the school system.
- (g) Procedures are in place at all levels of the system for implementing, reviewing and developing policies, programs, operations and practices which promote equity in the system, for assessing their effectiveness, and for making changes where necessary.

...

## **Commitment to Equity Policy Implementation Section 4: Anticlassism and Socio-economic Equity**

The Toronto District School Board mandates that all persons in schools, workplaces, and meeting places associated with the Board abide by its Commitments to Equity Policy Implementation. This applies to all persons on Board premises, persons working on Board business (either on or off Board premises), and persons involved with Board-sponsored programs at other premises. This includes students, trustees, parents, volunteers, visitors, permit-holders, contractors, and corporate partners.

### **4.1. Board Policies, Guidelines, and Practices**

The Toronto District School Board has approved an Equity Policy Statement which requires that ideals related to anticlassism and socio-economic equity be reflected in all aspects of



organizational structure, policies, guidelines, procedures, classroom practices, day-to-day operations, and communication practices.

The Toronto District School Board policies, guidelines, and practices shall ensure that the needs and safety of all students, employees, trustees, parents, volunteers, visitors, permit holders, contractors, and partners are addressed. These shall reflect the diverse viewpoints, needs, and aspirations of community members, particularly those of socio-economic groups whose voices traditionally and systemically have been marginalized and excluded.

The Board shall provide an appropriate mechanism to ensure accountability for achieving these goals by:

- 4.1.1. articulating clearly the Board's commitment to the principles of anticlassism and socio-economic equity in all Board policies, guidelines, day-to-day operations, protocol, and practices;
- 4.1.2. identifying and eliminating socio-economic class biases and barriers in Board policies, guidelines, day-to-day operations, protocol, and practices;
- 4.1.3. identifying the many diverse sectors within the working class, the socio-economically marginalized communities, and the historically-disadvantaged groups within the jurisdiction of the Board and involving these communities in partnership activities;
- 4.1.4. assessing the effectiveness of community consultation and partnership involvement;
- 4.1.5. establishing accountability processes to document progress and ensure continuous implementation of the Anticlassism and Socio-economic Equity Commitments to Equity Policy;
- 4.1.6. allocating resources to provide compensatory education and ensure policy implementation.

## **4.2. Leadership**

An informed leadership identifies individual discriminatory attitudes and behaviours as well as systemic inequities and barriers, and demonstrates accountability for their removal with the goal of achieving equity for all, irrespective of socio-economic status. Communication is an integral part of leadership, and includes the ability to listen to equity-seeking groups. All system leaders and decision-makers play a crucial role in identifying and addressing systemic inequities or barriers.

The Toronto District School Board shall provide informed and committed leadership at all levels by:

- 4.2.1. assisting trustees, administrators, staff, and student leaders to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours required to implement the Equity Policy in the area of Anticlassism and Socio-economic Equity;
- 4.2.2. ensuring that policy directions, priorities, and day-to-day implementation of programs and services are consistent with the aims of Anticlassism and Socio-economic Equity;

- 4.2.3. identifying expectations for those responsible for implementation and incorporating these expectations into performance-appraisal processes, including: the ongoing evaluation of teachers, support staff, and administrators; annual plans; and year-end reports;
- 4.2.4. ensuring that educational practices are inclusive and reflect the contributions of diverse socio-economically marginalized people, and that all forms of stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, and violence against these groups are challenged and eliminated.

### **4.3. School-community Partnerships**

Effective school-community partnerships enable representation and active participation from diverse communities and ensure the inclusion of the perspectives, experiences, and needs of working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities to enhance educational opportunities for all.

The Toronto District School Board is committed to ongoing, constructive, and open dialogue in partnership with working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities to increase cooperation and collaboration among home, school, and the community-at-large. The Board shall work to create school-community partnerships that ensure effective participation in the education process by:

- 4.3.1. identifying and involving working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities, and representative and inclusive organizations within the jurisdiction of the Board;
- 4.3.2. requesting labour, working-class, and socio-economically marginalized organizations and communities to identify representatives for the purpose of establishing school-community partnerships;
- 4.3.3. assessing the effectiveness of community consultation and partnership involvement and developing guidelines for effective partnership that respect the rights of students in an environment free of commercial intrusion and economic exploitation in accordance with Policy E.06 on External Partnerships;
- 4.3.4. encouraging and assisting school councils, home and school organizations and parent-teacher associations to reflect the diversity of the working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities that they represent;
- 4.3.5. ensuring effective and appropriate communication with community partners in their languages, as required;
- 4.3.6. ensuring students, parents, and staff access to supportive community resources, as appropriate for use in TDSB schools.

### **4.4. Curriculum**

Curriculum is defined as the total learning environment including: physical environment, learning materials, pedagogical practices, assessment instruments, and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

A curriculum that strives for socio-economic equity provides a balance of perspectives. The Toronto District School Board acknowledges that inequities have existed in the curriculum; therefore, the Board is committed to enabling all students from working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities to see themselves reflected in the curriculum and to provide each student with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to live in a complex and diverse world by:

- 4.4.1. ensuring that the principles and practices of anticlassism and socio-economic equity permeate the curriculum in all subject areas;
- 4.4.2. examining and challenging curriculum that has excluded the contributions and experiences of working-class and socio-economically marginalized people and communities in order to ensure inclusivity;
- 4.4.3. developing a process to determine whether discriminatory biases related to socio-economic class are present in existing learning materials, programs, or practices;
- 4.4.4. ensuring the review and/or modification of materials that promote stereo-typing; the review and modification of programs that promote stereotyping, discrimination, or classism; and the removal of materials or programs that promote hatred or violence against socio-economically marginalized people;
- 4.4.5. providing adequate resources and training to assist all staff in becoming agents of change; to use materials effectively to promote critical thinking skills about class; and to challenge classism and class bias;
- 4.4.6. ensuring that classrooms, resource centres, school libraries, audio-visual collections, and computer software contain materials and resources that accurately reflect the range of socio-economic classes and communities;
- 4.4.7. developing guidelines to ensure that displays and visual representation in all schools and workplaces of the Toronto District School Board reflect the heritage of and include the contributions of working-class and socio-economically marginalized people and communities;
- 4.4.8. supporting student leadership programs in anticlassism education and equity;
- 4.4.9. developing and providing both academic and service programs and supports to meet the needs of socio-economically disadvantaged students and communities in all curriculum areas, including early intervention programs to encourage all students to have high expectations and to consider non-traditional roles and work;
  - 4.4.9.1. ensuring that the contributions to Canadian and world history and to historiography from working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities, including efforts by groups such as the labour movement to create a more equitable society, are included accurately in all aspects of the curriculum;
  - 4.4.9.2. ensuring that curriculum materials and learning resources are allocated to challenge classism, class biases, violence against socio-economically marginalized people, and hate propaganda based on socio-economic status, and/or any social identity.

## **4.5. Language Learning**

Language proficiency is the foundation of academic success. Working-class and socio-economically marginalized students come from all language backgrounds. The Toronto District School Board recognizes and affirms the value of students' first/indigenous languages while ensuring proficiency in one or both of Canada's official languages by:

- 4.5.1. ensuring that students achieve literacy in at least one official language;
- 4.5.2. providing appropriate classroom support for language learning;
- 4.5.3. affirming and valuing students' first/indigenous language;
- 4.5.4. supporting the learning of languages in addition to English and French;
- 4.5.5. ensuring that students from all socio-economic backgrounds are valued and affirmed in such language learning;
- 4.5.6. committing to using clear, inclusive language, and design that promotes understanding;
- 4.5.7. ensuring that resources are available to facilitate appropriate communication with students/parents/guardians.

#### **4.6. Student Evaluation, Assessment, and Placement**

The Toronto District School Board is committed to evaluation, assessment, programming, and placement processes that are sensitive to students' socio-economic background and family experiences by:

- 4.6.1. identifying, reviewing, and changing practices that lead to the disproportionate streaming of working class and socio-economically marginalized students into academic programs that narrow their choices and life opportunities or limit participation in their local community;
  - 4.6.2. ensuring that bias based on socio-economic status does not adversely impact on programming, placement, and academic decisions and that students, with the support of their parents/guardians(as appropriate), are able to consider and make informed programming, placement, and academic decisions;
  - 4.6.3. ensuring that evaluation, assessment, programming, and placement meet individual student needs and offer them opportunities to reach their highest potential. This process must consider the impact of socio-economic factors and their inter-connections to cultural and linguistic factors, faith, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, abilities/disabilities, personal/family experiences, previous education, students' future expectations, and students' rights to continuity, stability, and community belonging;
  - 4.6.4. re-evaluating annually, placement decisions that are jointly considered by the student/parent/guardian and the school, to ensure that placement decisions are consistent with Board policies, are flexible to meet needs, and do not limit education and life opportunities.
- 4.7. Guidance

The Toronto District School Board recognizes that informed counsellors, teachers, and staff in counselling roles can help to remove discriminatory barriers for students in the school system and in work-related experiences. The Board shall respond effectively to the needs of students from working-class and diverse groups of socio-economically marginalized communities by:

- 4.7.1. providing counselling services that are culturally-sensitive, supportive, and free of socio-economic class bias;
- 4.7.2. providing proactive strategies to ensure that students from working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities are not underestimated on the basis of stereotypical assumptions, and to assure that all students experience personal growth and reach their full potential in their academic and life paths;
- 4.7.3. eliminating discriminatory biases related to socio-economic status in educational and life planning programs;
- 4.7.4. encouraging and supporting students from working-class and socio- economically marginalized communities and their families in the identification of non-traditional career options;
  - 4.7.4.1. working with students from working-class and socio-economically marginalized communities and their families to identify career options that historically have excluded them and help them to choose academic paths that will allow them to reach their full potential and succeed in a traditionally classist society;
- 4.7.5. ensuring that communication strategies are in place to keep all parents/ guardians informed about their children’s current educational achievement, progress, and their plans for the future, in a language they understand, including the provision of translations where necessary.

#### **4.8. Employment and Promotion Practices**

The Toronto District School Board recognizes that there are barriers to employment and promotion that historically have had a discriminatory impact on communities of lower socio-economic status. The Board is committed to equity for all these communities in hiring and promotion practices.

The Board is committed to the development and maintenance of employment and promotion policies, practices, and procedures that are designed to employ a work-force that at all levels reflects, understands, and responds to a diverse population. The Board will respond to and support this work-force and its diverse population by:

- 4.8.1. ensuring that equitable employment and promotion practices exist;
- 4.8.2. identifying and eliminating systemic barriers in the employment and promotion system;
- 4.8.3. ensuring that employment and promotion strategies focus on under-represented communities;
- 4.8.4. establishing out-reach activities and affirmative action strategies (e.g. encouragement, mentoring, training, and staff development) that focus on diverse groups of socio-economically marginalized people in order to ensure that schools and other workplaces within the Board achieve equitable representation at all levels;

- 4.8.5. ensuring that the Board's commitment to anticlassism and socio-economic equity is communicated throughout the Board, and that staff, students, and community are aware of this commitment;
- 4.8.6. eliminating barriers and encouraging diverse groups of socio-economically marginalized people to apply for teaching and non-teaching positions.

#### **4.9. Staff Development**

The Toronto District School Board is committed to on-going staff development on anticlassism and socio-economic equity for trustees and Board staff and will assist them to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours to identify and eliminate class biases and discriminatory practices by:

- 4.9.1. identifying staff development needs to improve employee's knowledge, skills, and sensitivity in anticlassism and socio-economic equity;
- 4.9.2. establishing opportunities for employees to acquire the critical knowledge, skills, sensitivity, and behaviours that will support the creation and maintenance of an education system that empowers all students regardless of their socio-economic status, to learn, to achieve success, and to participate responsibly in a diverse, global society;
- 4.9.3. improving staff's knowledge, skills, and expertise in anticlassism and socio-economic equity in order to help them understand how to identify and challenge prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, and classism, so that they are better able to meet the needs of all students;
- 4.9.4. training teaching and support staff in anticlassism and other critical methodologies to enable them to deliver an inclusive curriculum;
- 4.9.5. training and empowering employees to deal effectively and confidently with issues of classism;
- 4.9.6. supporting initiatives that foster dialogue to create understanding and respect for diversity, which will result in a safe learning environment for all students;
- 4.9.7. promoting the expectation that all employee practices will reflect anticlassism and socio-economic equity policies and practices and by establishing criteria for accountability and evaluation;
- 4.9.8. involving, as appropriate, working-class organizations and socio-economically marginalized communities in the design and implementation of staff development programs.

#### **4.10. Harassment**

Harassment on the basis of socio-economic class, whether intended or not, is demeaning treatment. (Please refer to the Board's Human Rights Policy for the policy and procedures with regard to harassment.)

## **Appendix B**

# **Policy Statement on Class Bias—Toronto Board of Education, 1992**

### **A. Overview and Rationale**

Educators are becoming increasingly aware that socio-economic class bias - like bias based on gender and race – should be a significant concern of all educational systems. It is incumbent upon educators to address the issue of socio-economic class bias because, within an educational system, excellence cannot exist without equity.

Class bias is an attitude which leads to discrimination based on educational background, occupation, social status and/or economic means. An individual's socio-economic class position in society generally makes an enormous difference in terms of the power they have to determine their life. Examples of socio-economic class bias in education are:

1. The assumption that intellectual work is inherently superior to physical labour;
2. The omission within the curriculum of the contribution of working-class people including the efforts of such groups as the labour movement to create a more equitable society;
3. The attachment of stereotypes to socioeconomic class;
4. The assumption that academically successful students should pursue professional careers rather than skilled trades; and,
5. The undue emphasis on competition as opposed to collective and co-operative efforts in student activities and in evaluation procedures.

Educators are aware that socio-economic class bias has significant implications for what students learn, how they learn, their sense of self worth and the skills and information they need to overcome both individual forms of discrimination and structural inequities. Many studies, including the former Toronto Board of Education's Every Student Survey (1970-1992), document the strong link between socio-economic background and academic success.

It is crucial that the Toronto District School Board make a clear and forceful statement against socio-economic class bias and implement policies and programs that endeavour to mitigate and eventually eliminate socio-economic class bias in the TDSB system.

### **B. History**

Historically, the Toronto Board has demonstrated a strong commitment to overcoming various forms of social inequity including socio-economic class bias. A sample of board policies and programs that have addressed socio-economic class bias include:

1. Equity policies that promote equity of outcomes, as well as equity of opportunity for all students;
2. Inner-city programs designed to promote equity of outcome for students who are disadvantaged by poverty;
3. The formation of the Labour Education Committee, staff positions in Labour Studies and the development of curriculum and in-service programs related to socio-economic class bias; and,
4. The work done on the issue of the Economic Order and the Impact of Technology on the World of Work.

### **C. Policy Statement**

The Toronto District School Board promotes equity of outcome for all students and the right to an education that values the socio-economic class, racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds of all students. Therefore, the Toronto District School Board condemns all expressions of socio-economic class bias in any form by its trustees, administrators, staff, students and all persons who have an ongoing relationship with the Toronto District School Board.

In order to provide an education that values the socio-economic class background of all students, the Toronto District School Board is committed to ensuring that:

All educational experiences respect the fundamental human dignity and worth of working-class and socio-economically marginalized people and their organizations.

Attention is given, within the curriculum, to the contributions and concerns of working-class and socio-economically marginalized people and their organizations.

Students' education experiences will enable them to understand various perspectives on the economic system. Students' education about economic systems should include aspects such as how benefits and costs are distributed and the efforts of working people to address inequities in the economic and social system.

Students' educational experiences encourage them to think and act critically with respect to the contemporary world of work and workers.

Students' educational experiences encourage them to act collectively and cooperatively, as well as individually, to influence decisions that would result in a more equitable society.



Learning strategies and evaluation techniques incorporate co-operative learning.

Students' educational experiences situate their understanding of socio-economic class bias within a context which acknowledges the interrelations among various inequities based upon "race, ethnicity, creed, colour, nationality, ancestry, place of origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, and age." (Board Minutes, 1992)

## Appendix C

### **Sensitive Discussions<sup>1</sup>**

Discussing sensitive and personal issues can cause students to respond emotionally and/or with negativity. During your work with this material you will need to feel more comfortable with such responses and help students turn them into positive and constructive energy.

#### **What can you do if...**

##### **Someone cries**

- Reassure participants that tears are okay.
- Allow the person to continue crying.
- A student might be asked to sit beside him or her to lend support
- Help the person who is crying to determine why he or she is reacting this way; for example, are the tears caused by happiness or sadness?
- Don't make the situation into a group counselling situation.
- Keep the objectives of the exercise in focus.

##### **Someone refuses to be involved**

- Encourage the person to cry, but don't force the issue; avoid a power struggle by being supportive. In these kinds of discussions, recognize that a refusal is probably based on fear of some kind, (e.g., seeming different, revealing unpleasant or painful past experiences, previous negative experiences in classroom discussions).
- Make the goal more accessible to the student by simplifying or restating it.
- Use your own judgement to determine whether or not the person is able to be involved at this time.
- Be aware that a student may come from a culture in which the process of participation is different from what has been agreed to in the class. Talk with the student to see how she/he might be more comfortable being involved.

##### **Someone shows hostility toward the facilitator or toward you**

- Hostility may be due to outside circumstances and may need to be discussed later on a one-to-one basis.
- Recognize that his reaction may be due to fear of failure and gently encourage the student to cry.
- You may be perceived as 'an adult who cannot understand'; show by your behaviour that this is not an accurate picture.

##### **Someone shows hostility toward other class members (often in the form of putdowns)**

- Stress that negative statements are not acceptable.

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: Adapted from A Manual For Group Facilitators, Centre for Conflict Resolutions, Wisconsin, USA, 1978. Used with permission.

- Help the student construct positives; suggest that most negative traits can be seen in a positive light (for example, the negative trait 'stubborn' can also be interpreted as 'determined').
- Stress that it is possible to say something positive about a person without actually liking that person.
- Ask for clarification of statements that seem to be negative yet may be meant in a positive way (for example, 'You're crazy' might really mean 'You make me angry').

### **An argument breaks out**

- Acknowledge the argument; don't deny or ignore it. The argument can become a rich source for learning about both the process and content of what is being discussed.
- Keep the discussion away from personalities. Remain focused on the actual problem or on the question at hand.
- Rephrase the comments made into general questions for the class.
- If only a few people are involved in an exchange, ask the rest of the class to comment on the exchange. "What do others think/feel about this?"
- Restate the issue, clarifying it and giving a breathing space. Ask "Are you saying...?"
- Focus a question toward one of the involved parties, asking for more specific reasons for a particular point of view; then ask someone else to comment.
- Ask each of the students involved in the argument to summarize the other's point of view. Sometimes simple misunderstanding of each other's position is at the base of the argument: "What do you think Phillippe said (or meant)?" "Phillippe, is that what you said (or meant)?"
- If one person constantly picks minor points and continues to argue, ask class members if they want to pursue this question further or if they prefer to move on to other questions.

### **Someone behaves disruptively**

- Inform the student that disruptive behaviour is not acceptable.
- Talk about how this behaviour affects others.
- Realize that this behaviour may result from nervousness. Help the student feel more involved in (and therefore more responsible for) the discussion.

### **Participants interrupt**

- Intervene by asking the original speaker if she/he has completed the thought that was interrupted.
- Remind students of the objectives of the discussion and/or review the question at hand; ask others for input on this particular question.
- If interruptions are fast paced and emotionally charged you might ask for a moment of silence to give others time to collect their thoughts. You can also establish a practice of one person speaking at a time by passing an object, such as a pencil, from speaker to speaker; only the person with the object in hand is allowed to speak.

### **There are subgroups within a group**

- If you are working with small groups, avoid putting close friends in the same group.

- Separate clique members, for example, by reorganizing seating during a discussion. This should be done regularly and consistently rather than only in response to one situation.
- Monitor the reaction of the group, telling them how you see their behaviour. Talk about the consequences of the subgroup's actions on the progress of the discussion and on the ability of the class to achieve its goals.

## Appendix D

### Ways & Products to Demonstrate Learning

Build a model  
Choose music to accompany reading  
Compile a photo essay  
Complete a Venn diagram of similarities and differences  
Conduct a debate  
Conduct an environmental impact study  
Conduct an interview  
Create a “five wrench tool kit” for fixing a problem (e.g. the environment)  
Create a board game  
Create a book jacket  
Create a comic strip  
Create a commercial  
Create a crossword puzzle  
Create a docu-drama  
Create a dramatic monologue  
Create a joke  
Create a mural  
Create a pamphlet  
Create a specialized dictionary  
Create a three dimensional representation of a character or a person  
Create a time capsule  
Create an illustrated time line  
Decorate a container that symbolizes a character  
Design a bumper sticker  
Design an advertisement  
Do a role-play  
Draw a cartoon  
Draw a plan  
Draw some graffiti  
Illustrate a poem  
Keep a diary or journal  
Make a film  
Make a poster  
Make a slide show  
Make a video  
Make an artifact that a character or a person might have used  
Plan a scavenger hunt  
Prepare a brief for a public hearing  
Prepare a skit  
Present a panel discussion

Run a mock parliament  
Write a campaign speech  
Write a farewell speech or valedictorian address  
Write a human-interest story  
Write a letter  
Write a letter to the editor  
Write a memoir  
Write a newspaper article  
Write a personal history  
Write a poem  
Write a radio play  
Write a sermon  
Write a song  
Write a TV script  
Write an autobiography  
Write an editorial  
Write an eulogy  
Write an inaugural speech  
Write some newspaper headlines  
Write, administer, and analyse a questionnaire  
K-W-L Chart  
Think-Pair-Share  
Etc.

## Sample of Suggested Special Education Accommodations<sup>1</sup>

### INPUT ISSUES

**(Trouble Getting information – e.g., reading, hearing...)**

Visual organizers:

- Venn diagrams;
- mind maps.

Note-taking and lecturing accommodations:

- have handouts or handouts with words missing that students have to fill in;
- write on the board;
- use auditory and visual channels at the same time;
- create multiple associations (key words, visualization, visual association);
- check your pace;
- use different colour chalk;
- simplify language use.

Reading accommodations:

- enlarge text;
- remove pictures from text;
- suggest student use a see through ruler.

General accommodations:

- be relevant - students with ADHD, language delays, etc. may not be able to determine what is relevant. Highlight relevant passages with students.

### PROCESSING ISSUES

**(Trouble using, making connections, and storing information)**

General accommodations:

- provide extra time to complete tasks;
- provide handout with key notes and definitions;
- review previously taught material;
- chunk material into teachable elements;
- explicitly tell students what they need to do;
- work with students to enhance their memory skills.

### OUTPUT ISSUES

**(Trouble demonstrating learning – e.g., presenting, writing...)**

General accommodations:

- give the student the part they will read out loud the day before;
- be aware of association and affect (i.e. if a student hates standing in front of the class, they will do anything to try and avoid it);
- Retrieval from memory - teach students to use information both in the order that it was learned, and in different orders;

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Evelyn Freedman's workshop presentation by Jenny Chen.

- teach students how to relax and reduce anxiety, which will help them retrieve information.

**Remember: You cannot OUTPUT more than you INPUT!**



Appendix F

<b>40 Questions to Evaluate Learning Materials For Class Bias</b>  In the depiction of working people, or in the selection of information, and the omission of other information, <b>does the learning material convey, or is it informed by</b> any of the following:	Y E S	N O	N O T  S U R E
<b>Values, Attitudes and Perspectives</b>			
1. Everyone is equally affluent, with equal access to goods, services, education, healthcare, productive work, recognition and respect.			
2. People are responsible for their own poverty and problems.			
3. People are important or valuable if they have 'good' clothes, live in 'good' homes and demonstrate 'good' attitudes, behaviours, and speech patterns.			
4. Happiness is related to the accumulation of possessions.			
5. 'Civilization' is synonymous with wealth and industrial development.			
6. Capital is more important than labour.			
7. Only decision-makers and powerful people are worthy of consideration			
8. People who work with their hands don't need to think.			
9. People whose job is to think don't need to dirty their hands.			
10. People who are not paid for their labour are not working.			
11. Change is made by unknown forces for unknown reasons.			
12. Labour and Management have the same interests.			
13. Employers mainly make decisions in the interest of everyone.			
14. When conflict arises in the workplace, it is usually the worker's fault.			
15. People who try to change things are acting subversively and against the interests of most people.			
16. Technology and its development is synonymous with progress.			
17. Competition is a natural human trait.			
18. Competition is the only way to 'make it'.			
<b>Depiction</b>			
19. Are negative judgements made or implied about the value or type of work they do?			
20. Are negative references made or inferred about their appearance, for example, ragged, shabby, gaudy, dirty?			

21. Are negative references made to intelligence, for example, stupid, limited, lacking in judgement?			
22. Are negative references or inferences made about language and speech patterns?			
23. Are negative references or inferences made to character, for example, untrustworthy and shiftless; or violent and unthinking, or passive and accepting; or 'at home in taverns'?			
24. Are negative attitudes to work attributed to them, for example, irresponsible, careless, greedy, lazy, wasting time?			
25. Are working people only depicted as getting ahead if they obey the employer, have 'good work habits', 'adapt to the work environment'?			
<b>When employers are identified as such and described, in learning materials:</b>			
26. Are they always reasoned and fair?			
27. Are they always acting in the interest of workers?			
<b>When unions are mentioned in learning materials:</b>			
28. Are they portrayed as useful in the past, but not in the present?			
29. Are unions and workers responsible for violence in the workplace and on the picket lines?			
30. Are actions of protest by working people – mainstream, minorities, and women – depicted as senseless, unreasonable, ugly, violent, inconvenient, or unproductive?			
<b>Workers</b>			
31. Are products emphasized, but not the people who make them?			
32. Are decision-makers featured, but not the people who carry out the decision?			
33. Are heroes only drawn from upper class, political, corporate, or military sectors, and not from unions, Native, women's and minority struggles?			
<b>Lives Outside of Work</b>			
34. Are children who live in detached houses with yards shown, but no those who live above stores, in shared accommodations, apartments, subsidized housing, and reserves?			
35. Are problems of families centred around what they will buy, where they will go, what they will do, but those problems related to employment, money, surviving with dignity?			
36. Is pride shown in the work some people do, but no in the work of			

others?			
<b>Conditions at Work</b>			
37. Are pleasant working conditions alluded to but not those which are unpleasant – low pay, unsafe, poor lighting and ventilation, temporary, stressful, undignified?			
38. Is technology examined but not its impact on workers and the workplace?			
39. Is getting a job discussed, but not the problem of unemployment?			
40. Are worker responsibilities mentioned, but not those of the employer to the worker?			

## **Facts about the Growing Gap between the Rich and the Poor<sup>1</sup>**

- Number of dead lakes in Canada: 14 000
- Number of countries that finished the 1980s poorer in per capita terms than when the decade began: 45
- Percent by which Canadian sales of luxury cars increased in 1991: 22
- Percent by which real wages have dropped in Mexico since 1982: 50
- Number of manufacturing jobs lost in Canada between June 1989 and March 1991: 435 000
- Minimum hourly wage in Mexico: \$0.68
- Percent of Canada's debt due to interest payments on the debt: 50
- Percent of Canada's debt due to tax breaks for high-income Canadians: 44
- Percent of Canada's debt due to social program spending: 6%
- Number of Canadian for-profit businesses that paid no tax in 1993: 63 000
- Profit reported by Royal Bank of Canada in 1994: \$1 billion
- Amount of taxes paid by Royal Bank of Canada each year since 1991: \$0
- Amount of deferred corporate taxes owing to the Canadian government (public) at January 1994: \$36 billion
- Number of companies owing \$5 million or more to Canadian government in deferred taxes: 382. (In 1996 working people paid 43% of their income in tax to federal coffers but wealthy corporations contributed a mere 10%. 90 415 corporations paid no income tax whatsoever and Statistics Canada shows that the combined profits of these corporations in 1995 was \$18 566 billion.)
- Ratio of aid \$\$ going to Latin American to \$\$ sent to industrialized nations in interest payments, profits and capital flight: 1:6

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: Canadian Labour Congress: *Toolkit for Global Solidarity*, OXFAM Canada, Statistics Canada, Canadian Federal Department of Finance, Ontario Federation of Labour, Generation X

## Myths about Poverty<sup>1</sup>

**MYTH: Poverty is the failure of the individual.**

**FACT: Unemployment, low-wage jobs, and cuts to social programs such as welfare and Employment Insurance explain the high rate of poverty in Canada.**

- All net job growth between 1989-1998 came in the form of low paid part-time jobs and self-employment;
- The lack of work and having a disability are the two most common reasons people go on welfare, accounting for three-quarters of all welfare cases;
- The proportion of unemployed people eligible to receive EI benefits has declined significantly from 87% in 1990 to 36% in 1998 due to changes in the program;
- Having a job does not always insulate a person from poverty: 26% of all poor single people under 65 in 1997 worked between 49 and 52 weeks.

**MYTH: The poor do not want to work.**

**FACT: Earned income is often the major source of income for poor people.**

- Most poor people do work full or part-time – 79% of couples with children, 50% of single mothers heading poor families, 53% of single women and 58% of single men;
- On average in Canada, a single parent with one child, working full time at the minimum wage falls \$7500 below the poverty line.

**MYTH: Poor people don't pay taxes.**

**FACT: Canadians at all income levels pay taxes.**

- The income taxes paid by the poorest families in the 1990s rose by 40% while income taxes paid by the richest families rose by only 4.7%;
- Although people do not pay income tax on their social assistance, they still pay provincial sales tax, GST and property taxes;
- The real value of tax credits, which primarily benefit low and middle-income taxpayers, falls each year because tax credits are not indexed to inflation.

**MYTH: Working hard will prevent poverty.**

**FACT: One third of Canadians will be poor sometime during their working lives.**

- Poverty is often brought on unexpectedly because of loss of employment, the death or disability of a family breadwinner, family break-up, or increased costs because of a major illness or mishap in the lives of people.

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<sup>1</sup> Used with permission from the: National Anti-Poverty Organization – Organization Nationale Anti-Pauvreté 440-325 Dalhousie St., Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7G2, Tel: 613-789-0096, Fax: 613.789.0141 email: [napo@web.netweb](mailto:napo@web.netweb) site: [www.napo-onap.ca](http://www.napo-onap.ca)

**MYTH: Welfare rates are too generous.**

**FACT: All welfare rates are well below the poverty line.**

- Welfare benefits have significantly eroded over the last decade. For example, the welfare income for a single employable person in Newfoundland fell from 32% of the poverty line in 1989 (\$3796) to only 9% of the poverty line in 1998 (\$1323);
- A single parent with one child receiving welfare in Alberta received \$11 088 in 1998, only 50% of the poverty line.

**MYTH: Poor people need to be taught basic life skills like budgeting.**

**FACT: Poor people know how to budget.**

- Many live far below the poverty line and must spend all or most of their income on basic needs. Anyone who manages to feed and clothe a family on a very limited income already has budgeting skills.

**MYTH: Poor families are poor because they have too many children.**

**FACT: On average, poor families have the same number of children as non-poor families.**

- Families led by single-parent mothers had fewer children on average than two-parent families. In 1997, poor single-parent mothers had an average of 1.68 children under 18 while non-poor couples had 1.82 children;
- 27% of those receiving social assistance are single-parent mothers while 55% are single people.

**MYTH: The welfare system is rife with cheating and fraud.**

**FACT: The rate of fraud in the income tax system is approximately 20 times higher than the rate of fraud in the welfare system.**

- Only 1.7% of investigated welfare cases in Ontario resulted in conviction, representing only 0.43% of the total caseload;
- A BC study in 1990 found less than one-quarter of 1% of recipients were involved in fraud;
- Fraud in the income tax system is in the order of 20%.

**MYTH: We cannot afford the social programs needed to eliminate poverty.**

**FACT: High interest rates and tax breaks to corporations and wealthy individuals were the prime culprits for Canada's deficits, NOT social spending.**

- Spending on Canada's social programs contributed only 6% to the increase in Canada's deficit;
- According to the GDP, Canada is more prosperous (\$21 916 per capita) than the average of the top ten European countries (\$21 395 per capita). Yet Canada spends less on social programs as a share of GDP than most European countries;

- As a percentage of the GDP, federal government program spending is at the same level today as it was in the 1940's.

**Note: For the complete version of this helpful guide to Ontario's Workplace, please visit the following web site: <http://www.yorku.ca/crws/>**

<b>KNOW YOUR RIGHTS</b>
<b>An abbreviated Guide to Ontario's Workplace (March 2002)</b>

**A. Employment Standards**

*i. Minimum Wage*

Ontario's **minimum wage** can differ depending on the employee's classification:

**General Minimum Wage** \$ 6.85

**Liquor Server Minimum Wage** \$ 5.95

*Applies to those employed to serve liquor in licensed premises. Tips are not to be calculated as part of an employee's minimum wage.*

**Student Minimum Wage** \$ 6.40

*Applies to students who are under 18 years of age who work 28 hours per week or less and who are not working as homeworkers during the school year (including the summer, Christmas and March break). Those students who work more than 28 hours per week are entitled to the General Minimum Wage.*

**Harvest Workers Minimum Wage** \$ 6.85

*Harvest workers are defined as those working on a farm to harvest fruit, vegetables and/or tobacco for marketing or storage. Harvest workers are not considered farm workers whose work is directly related to the primary production of farm crops. Students doing harvest work are entitled to the Student Minimum Wage. Some harvest workers are paid by the amount of work they do (piece-rate) and not by the number of hours they work, however, only if it is higher than the minimum wage.*



## Homeworker Premium Minimum Wage

\$ 7.54

*Homeworkers are defined as employees who work out of their residence, but does not include independent contractors, and usually perform such jobs as: sewing, or other manufacturing, stuffing envelopes or other packaging, food preparation, and assembly, repair or alterations. Homeworkers earn a premium of 10 per cent above the General Minimum Wage (i.e., \$6.85 + 10%). This premium also applies to all full-time and part-time homeworkers and to students under 18 who are employed as homeworkers.*

## Domestic Workers Minimum Wage

\$ 6.85

*Domestic workers are persons employed by householders to provide services in the household or to provide care, supervision or personal assistance to children, senior or disabled members of the household. Sitters who provide care, supervision or personal assistance to children on an occasional, short-term basis are not included. Domestic workers are hired to work in or around a private home, doing such jobs as housekeeping, helping to care for children and for the elderly, ill or disabled.*

Employees' gross pay must add up to the minimum wage (including the value of room and board if used by the employee).

Employees **called into work** for less than 3 hours must be paid for a minimum of 3 hours at the minimum wage or their regular wage for the time they actually worked, whichever is higher ("**three-hour rule**"). This three hour rule does not apply to students regardless of age), to workers whose regular shift is less than 3 hours long, and in emergency or extenuating circumstances (i.e., a fire on the premises).

Employees who earn a **commission**, either partially or completely, must have their pay amount to at least the minimum wage for each hour worked.

Employers can deduct **room and/or meal expenses** only if they obtain written authorization from the employee for such deductions and the wages paid to the employee after room and board deductions but before deductions for Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and Income Tax, are equal to or greater than the minimum wage. The following maximum rates apply when room and board are included in calculating the minimum wage:

Room (weekly): Private	\$31.70
Meals: Each meal	\$2.55
Weekly maximum	\$53.55

Room and Meals (weekly maximum):

Private room: \$85.25

Non-private \$69.40

Non-private Domestic \$53.55

Harvest Workers (only)<sup>1</sup>

Weekly Housing Maximum:

Unserviced: \$73.30

Serviced: \$99.35

<sup>1</sup> Employer must pay for heat, light, water, gas and electricity.

### **Exemptions for Minimum Wage include:**

- crown employees
- farm employees
- fishers (commercial)
- professionals
- registered real estate salespersons
- sales persons (commission)
- **students employed:**
  - to instruct or supervise children, or
  - at a camp for children, or
  - directly in a recreation program operated by a charitable organization
- superintendents, janitors and caretakers

### *ii. Hours of Work*

- The daily limit on hours of work is 8 hours a day or the number of hours in the regular workday established by your employer. Therefore, an employer cannot make their employees work more than this amount except in the case of **accidents or emergencies** which are defined as *urgent situations that have not been planned for*.
- The weekly limit on hours of work is **48 hours** per week.
- **If an employee agrees in writing**, an employee can be required to work more than 8 hours in a day (up to a maximum of 13 hours) and 48 hours in a week (up to a maximum of 60 hours). Also, an employer can request special approval from

the Director of Employment Standards to extend beyond 60 hours a week where the employee agrees, or in certain circumstances where the employer has a permit issued under the previous legislation.

- An employee has the right to refuse to sign any agreement that extends the maximum hours of work. If an employer penalizes an employee for refusing to sign an agreement the employee can bring a complaint against the employer to the Ministry of Labour.
- If an employee agrees at the time of hiring to work in excess of the maximum hours of work, and this agreement is approved by the Ministry of Labour, this agreement cannot be revoked without mutual consent.
- An employer must give an employee at least 1 day off in 7 or 2 days off after working 12 days.
- Employees in the retail sector have the **right to refuse to work on public holidays** without being penalized unless they work in the hospitality industry (i.e. places which sells meals, accommodations, or are open to the public for educational, recreational, or amusement purposes). They also have the right to refuse work on Sundays, unless they agreed otherwise, in writing, at the time of hiring and their hiring took place on or after September 4, 2001. Employees may refuse to consent to working on Sunday even at the time of hiring for religious reasons.
- Employees in the retail sector must be given at **36 continuous hours of rest** per week unless they work in the hospitality industry.
- The hours of work provisions do not apply to certain employees including agricultural workers, fishers, construction workers, supervisory personnel, landscape gardeners, apartment superintendents who reside on the premises and information technology professionals.

### *iii. Vacations*

- Every employee is entitled to an **annual 2 week** vacation.
- Employees are entitled to their vacation after they have been employed for a minimum of 12 months, which includes both active and non-active employment. This would include any time that was spent away from work because of layoff, sickness or accident, approved leave, pregnancy and parental leave.
- Employees must receive their vacation no later than 10 months after the 12 month period in which they have earned it.
- Employers are free to determine when an employee takes a vacation. Vacation is to be scheduled either 2 weeks in a row or 2 periods of one week each. However, an employer and employee may agree in writing that a vacation be taken in smaller time blocks.
- **Vacation pay** must amount to, at the very least, 4 per cent of an employee's annual earnings, including all overtime pay, but does not include vacation pay, tips, discretionary bonuses that are not related to work, productivity or efficiency, expenses or travel allowances, and money paid to a benefit plan.

- **Public holidays** do not count as part of an employee's vacation. If a public holiday falls during an employee's annual vacation, she/he is entitled to another day off with pay or instead to be paid regular wages for that day if the employee agrees in writing.
- **Vacation pay** must be paid to the employee upon termination.

*Certain employees including the following are exempted from the vacation provisions:*

- Qualified professionals such as architects, doctors and certain other health care professionals, veterinarians, lawyers, public accountants, surveyors;
- Students training in the above profession(s);
- Teachers as defined in the *Teaching Profession Act*;
- Commercial fishers;
- Registered real estate salespeople;
- Crown employees;
- Salespeople who receive a commission and sell away from the employer's place of business;
- Farm workers who deal directly with the production of certain food and other products;
- Co-op programs, workfare, and persons in prison;
- Drugless practitioners and domestic workers (in limited circumstances);
- Managerial employees.

#### *iv. Public Holidays*

- There are 8 **paid public holidays** in Ontario: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day (December 26).
- To **qualify** for a paid public holiday, employees must have worked their regularly scheduled day before and after the holiday unless they have reasonable cause for not working. Employees who have agreed to work or were required to work on a public holiday and fail without reasonable cause to work their shift are not entitled.
- Holiday pay is paid in accordance to the amount of an **employee's total amount of wages** in the four work weeks before the week in which the holiday occurred divided by 20 (i.e. an employee working 80 hours in the four work weeks before the holiday will be paid on the basis of 4 hours on a paid public holiday).
- Where a public holiday falls on a working day the employee is entitled to the day off work with pay as calculated above.
- Where the holiday falls on a non-working day an employee is entitled to another day off with public holiday pay. This substitute day off must be scheduled for a

day that is no later than three months after the public holiday, or, where the employee has agreed in writing. The substitute day off may be scheduled up to 12 months after the public holiday. Instead of the substitute holiday, the employee may agree in writing to receive holiday pay in a lump sum with no corresponding day off.

- Where an employee agrees in writing to work on a public holiday the employee will ordinarily be paid his/her regular rate and be given a substitute holiday. However the employer and employee may agree that the employee is entitled to public holiday pay and premium pay (1.5 times the normal rate for the holiday) rather than the substitute day off. The substitute day off must ordinarily be granted within three months of the holiday, although the employer and employee may agree to extend the time to twelve months.
- Retail employees (except those in the hospitality industry) have the **right to refuse to work** on a public holiday.
- Employees employed in hotels, motels, tourist resorts, restaurants and taverns, hospitals or nursing homes, or in continuous operations that operate 24 hours a day (i.e. oil refineries, security companies, etc), **may be required to work on a public holiday** and may either be paid one-and-one-half times their regular wage for all hours worked on the public holiday plus a regular day's pay, or be paid their regular wage for all hours worked on the public holiday and given a substitute day off with pay. The employer may choose which of the two options to apply.

#### *v. Termination of Employment*

An employer cannot terminate an employee for enforcing his/her rights under the ESA including refusing to work excess hours, refusing to take a lie detector test, or, as a result of taking a pregnancy, parental or emergency leave.

The statute provides for the minimum notice entitlement for employees. Employees may be entitled to greater notice at common law and are free to take legal action through "wrongful dismissal" actions in court. It should be pointed out however, that employees who decide to take actions in court forfeit their right to have the Employment Standards branch enforce their rights under the Act.

Similarly, an employee who files a claim under the Act cannot file a court action unless the employee withdraws their ESA complaint within two weeks after it is filed. Court actions may also involve legal costs that may be prohibitive in light of the amount claimed.

**Notice of termination** is required in writing when the employer:

- dismisses an employee,

- "constructively" dismisses the employee by significantly altering fundamental terms and conditions of employment and the employee resigns as a result,
- where the employer lays-off employees if the lay-off is not temporary in nature.

A layoff is considered temporary if:

- It is not more than 13 weeks in any period of 20 consecutive weeks OR
- It is greater than 13 weeks but less than 35 weeks in any period of 52 consecutive weeks: the employee continues to receive substantial payments from the employer; the employer continues to make payments for the benefit of the employee under a legitimate group or employee insurance plan (such as a medical or drug insurance plan) or a legitimate retirement or pension plan; the employee receives supplementary unemployment benefits; the employee would be entitled to receive supplementary unemployment benefits but is not receiving them because he or she is employed elsewhere; the employer recalls the employee to work within the time frame approved by the Director of Employment Standards, Ministry of Labour; or the employer recalls the employee within the time frame set out in an agreement with an employee who isn't represented by a trade union;

OR

- A layoff longer than a layoff described above where the employer recalls an employee who is represented by a trade union within the time frames set out in an agreement between the union and the employer.
- Employers are **not legally required** to tell their employees why they are being laid off except in mass lay off situations.
- Outside of the seniority provisions of a collective agreement (in a unionized workplace), employers are not legally required to consider **length of service** when deciding which employees to lay off.

### **Length of Notice of Termination**

- The employer must provide employees who have been employed for 3 months or more with a **written notice** of employment termination.
- If no notice of termination is provided, the employer must pay the employee in-lieu of such notice. This **"pay in lieu" or termination pay** is a lump sum payment that is equal to the regular non-overtime wages the employee would be paid during the period of notice. The employer must also continue to make whatever benefits plan contributions the employee would have been entitled to had the employee continued in employment during the notice period. If the employer fails to make such payments the amounts that have not been paid are deemed to be unpaid wages owing to the employee.

- Employers must continue to pay their employees' regular wages and benefits, after having received written notice of termination, until the end of the notice period. So long as the employee continues to work, the employer cannot alter the rate or any other condition of employment.

The **length of advance notice** for termination depends on the length of employment:

Period of Employment	Notice Period
Less than 3 months	0
More than 3 months, but less than 1 year	1 week
More than 1 year, but fewer than 3 years	2 weeks
More than 3 years, but fewer than 4 years	3 weeks
More than 4 years, but fewer than 5 years	4 weeks
More than 5 years, but fewer than 6 years	5 weeks
More than 6 years, but fewer than 7 years	6 weeks
More than 7 years, but fewer than 8 years	7 weeks
8 years or more	8 weeks

### Mass Termination

- **Mass termination** is a termination of 50 or more employees in any 4-week period in any establishment. Employees who are part of a mass termination are given longer notice of their termination, depending on the number of employees affected:

Number of Employees	Notice Period
50 to 199 employees	8 weeks
200 to 499 employees	12 weeks
500 or more employees	16 weeks

- Employers terminating employment on a mass basis must **submit a form** advising the Ministry of Labour of their intention to reduce their workforce, including information concerning the reason for termination and post this information in a conspicuous place in the workplace.

- Employees can perform their **work past the termination date**. In such cases, further notice of termination is not required unless the employee has worked (on a temporary basis) longer than 13 weeks past their original termination date. Employers require the approval of the Director of Employment Standards for extending this deadline beyond 13 weeks. Once temporary work exceeds 13 weeks, employers are required to provide another written notice of termination, which must be based on the length of time the employee has worked for them, including the expired notice period and the period of temporary work, unless the employer received advance authorization from the Director of Employment Standards.

#### vi. Equal Pay for Equal Work

- In addition to rights contained in the *Pay Equity Act* (which provides for equal pay for work of equal value) the *Employment Standards Act* contains measures requiring equal pay for equal work.
- Employers cannot pay a woman less than a man (or vice versa) if she is doing "**substantially**" the same kind of work that the male employee is doing within the same establishment and vice-versa. Duties do not have to be exactly the same but they must involve substantially *the same level of skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions*.
- If the employer has not been paying staff equally for equal work, the employer must take steps to change this by raising the lower wage so that it equals the higher wage. The employer cannot lower the higher wages.
- **Exceptions:** an employer can pay its male and female employees differently for doing substantially the same work in workplaces where the difference in pay is made on the basis of a **seniority system** i.e., where a long-serving employee can earn more than a new employee; a **piece-work system** where an employee can be paid more for producing more work; on a system of merit; or any other factor that is not based on the sex of the employee (i.e. paying employees more for working the night shift).



### *vii. Wrongful Dismissal*

Terminated employees may sue their employers in court for "**wrongful dismissal**". Such actions are based on the principle that an employee is ordinarily entitled to a reasonable notice period prior to dismissal. Such actions may not be open to employees hired for a specific term or who have agreed in advance to a notice period (provided the notice period equals or exceeds the *Employment Standards Act* minimum.)

- Once civil action is taken in a court, employees **lose** their protection under the *Employment Standards Act*. Similarly the filing of an ESA complaint will bar a court action unless it is withdrawn within two weeks. However, civil court action can, in certain circumstances and particularly for long-service employees, result in greater amounts being awarded than would be paid in termination or severance pay, although legal costs may make such actions inadvisable in particular cases.
- Employees in a **unionized workplace** cannot go to court, but must exercise the grievance procedure within their collective agreement. Unionized employees are confined to termination rights specified in the collective agreement and under the *Employment Standards Act*.

## **B. Labour Relations**

*Please refer to the website.*

### **C. Health and Safety**

#### *i. Employees Right to Refuse Unsafe Work*

- Employees have the ***right to refuse unsafe work where the employee has reason to believe any equipment, machinery or physical condition of the workplace is likely to endanger himself or herself or another worker.***
- The right to refuse does not apply to police, firefighters, guards in prisons and other correctional facilities, hospital and other health care workers, workers in residential and group homes, ambulance services, certain medical laboratories, laundry, food services, power plant employees, and other technical services used in connection with the facilities and services which are excluded.
- A worker cannot exercise a right to refuse where the danger is a normal part of the employee's work or where the work refusal would directly endanger the life, health or safety of another person.
- Where unsafe work exists, the employee is obligated to promptly report it to management.

- Upon refusing unsafe work, the employer must ***immediately investigate*** the situation in the presence of the employee, the health and safety representative or another employee with health and safety knowledge.
- If the employee is not satisfied with the results of the employer's investigation, the employee can still refuse to do the work while the Ministry of Labour inspector is notified where he or she has reasonable grounds to believe that the workplace is still unsafe.
- During this time, the employer can ask another employee to do the work which was originally refused. However, the employer must inform this employee why the work was previously refused in the presence of a health and safety representative or another person with health and safety knowledge. This employee also has the right to refuse such work in accordance with the OHSA.
- During this process, the employer must try to accommodate the employee by reassigning alternative work as opposed to just sending the worker home. The employee who first brought forth this unsafe work condition, a representative of the employer, and a health and safety representative representing employees, must all be present during the investigation of the unsafe condition.
- The employee ***cannot be penalized in any manner*** or be disciplined, dismissed or intimidated for exercising a right to refuse to work in accordance with the OHSA, for working in compliance with the OHSA, for seeking to have the OHSA enforced or for giving evidence in proceedings under the OHSA

#### **D. Workers' Safety and Insurance Act**

*Please refer to the website.*

#### **E. Human Rights**

##### *i. Discrimination*

The OHRC protects the right of every person to equal treatment in services, accommodation, and employment without ***discrimination on prohibited grounds***. The *prohibited grounds* include race, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status or handicap. In the case of accommodation, discrimination based upon receipt of public assistance is also prohibited. In employment, discrimination based upon a criminal conviction for which a pardon has been granted and discrimination based on any offense in respect of a provincial law is prohibited.

- Employers may legally be able to treat job applicants and employees differently where it is part of a special program designed to relieve hardship or to assist disadvantaged groups to achieve equal opportunity (i.e., a company that did not

hire visible minorities in the past may pursuant to a special program give preference in hiring to visible minorities).

- The right to equal treatment in accommodation, services or employment is not infringed where religious, educational, philanthropic, fraternal or social institutions engaged in serving the interests of persons identified by prohibited grounds give preference to the target groups that the organization serves.
- An employer must have a very good reason (referred to as a "**bona fide qualification**") for any discrimination in employment and a qualification will not be found to be bona fide if the person discriminated against can be accommodated without undue hardship.
- An employer cannot discriminate in employment advertising, employment interviews or in employment application forms on one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination. For example, a job advertisement asking for "recent graduates" is in effect telling older people not to apply. Similarly, an ad cannot ask for "abled-bodied persons". However, an ad can indicate that heavy lifting or a lot of walking is required.
- **No job application form** can ask for any information, even indirectly, about any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination (including any information about physical or mental health).

## ii. Harassment

The OHRC also protects against harassment in accommodation and employment on prohibited grounds.

**Harassment** is defined as engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably be known to be unwelcome. Harassment can result from insults, jokes, degradation, or discrimination.

- If the employer allows harassment or fails to prevent it from occurring the employer may be liable.

## iii. Handicap and Disability

- Legally, "**handicap**" and "**disability**" mean the same thing. *Both handicap and disability are considered to be any degree of physical disability caused by an injury, illness or birth defect (i.e. blindness, deafness, diabetes, epilepsy, paralysis or the loss of any part of the body); learning disability, mental retardation or mental disorders; and any disabilities resulting from a workplace accident for which WSIB benefits were claimed or received.*
- An employer can only ask about the special needs of disabled persons so as **better to accommodate her/him**. In doing so, the employer is permitted to ask an employee or job applicant about his/her special needs so long as these

pertain to the essential duties of the job. **Essential duties** refer to those skills or abilities that are involved with a job. Even if the employee cannot perform all the essential duties of a job because of his/her disability, the employer must try to accommodate him/her.

- An employer must make every **reasonable effort** to accommodate any disability.
- The only exception is if the accommodation would cause an undue hardship to the employer. **Undue hardship** may involve considerations of cost having regard to outside sources of funding and health and safety requirements. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has indicated that cost concerns will not amount to undue hardship unless they affect the economic viability of the employer.

#### iv. Sexual Harassment

- **Sexual harassment** includes any touching, comments, sexual jokes or unwanted sexual suggestions. Sexual remarks, jokes, touching or requests are harassment if they are **not wanted or welcomed** by an employee.
- All employees have the **right to freedom from harassment** in the workplace as well as the right to **freedom from any reprisal for rejecting a sexual solicitation** or advance by a person in authority.
- It is **illegal** for an employer or supervisor to make sexual suggestions or requests of an employee.
- Your employer or supervisor is legally responsible for **stopping or preventing** sexual harassment or a poisoned work environment from occurring in the workplace.

Adapted from *Know Your Rights – A Guide to Ontario’s Workplace*, published by the Centre for Research on Work and Society.

## Elementary Course Expectations

## PART 1: UNDERSTANDING POWER

	Math	Language	Social Studies
<b>Grade 5</b>	NA	5e1 5e42 5e61	5z44 5z46
<b>Grade 6</b>	NA	6e1 6e44 6e51 6e62	6z10 6z13
<b>Grade 7</b>	NA	7e2 7e21 7e59 7e65	7h14 7h17 7h38
<b>Grade 8</b>	NA	8e2 8e33 8e47 8e2	8h27

## PART 2: NEEDS, WANTS, HAVES

	Math	Language	Social Studies
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<b>Grade 5</b>	5m5 5m10 5m33 5m34	5e2 5e18 5e47 5e61	5z7 5z34 5z39
<b>Grade 6</b>	6m6 6m11 6m35 6m38	6e2 6e19 6e32 6e62	6z11 6z15
<b>Grade 7</b>	7m6 7m12 1m24 7m26	7e1 7e29 7e36 7e57	7h15 7h18 7h20 7h52
<b>Grade 8</b>	8m8 8m16 8m31 8m34	8e1 8e24 8e49 8e56	8h8 8h14 8h28 8h29

### PART 3: UNDERSTANDING CLASS BIAS IN THE MEDIA

	Math	Language	Social Studies
<b>Grade 5</b>	NA	5e63 5e65 5e66	NA
<b>Grade 6</b>	NA	6e36 6e65 6e66	NA
<b>Grade 7</b>	NA	7e67 7e68	NA
<b>Grade 8</b>	NA	8e66 8e67	NA

### PART 4: INVESTIGATING POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

	Math	Language	Social Studies
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<b>Grade 5</b>	5m1 5m25	5e3 5e22 5e32 5e49	5z16 5z34 5z41
<b>Grade 6</b>	6m5 6m19 6m23	6e2 6e23 6e48 6e60	6z21
<b>Grade 7</b>	7m2	7e5 7e25 7e48 7e64	7h17
<b>Grade 8</b>	8m1	8e5 8e32 8e50 8e62	8h9 8h11 8h32 8h38

**PART 5: LABOUR ISSUES**

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>
<b>Grade 5</b>	5m11	5e5 5e25 5e48 5e60	5z14 5z32 5z35 5z36
<b>Grade 6</b>	6m11	6e4 6e32 6e49 6e61	6z25
<b>Grade 7</b>	7m9	7e2 7e28 7e65	7h39 7h40
<b>Grade 8</b>	8m1 8m9	8e2 8e27 8e49 8e63	8h35 8h41 8h50 8h55

**PART 6: GLOBAL CONNECTIONS**

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>
<b>Grade 5</b>	NA	5e1 5e33 5e46	5z35 5z42
<b>Grade 6</b>	NA	6e1 6e34 6e48 6e61	6z25 6Z26 6Z28 6Z33
<b>Grade 7</b>	NA	7e1 7e27 7e37 7e52	7g5 7g11 7g16
<b>Grade 8</b>	NA	8e1 8e26 8e48	8g1 8g6 8g19 8g27



PART 7: WORKING FOR CHANGE

	Math	Language	Social Studies
<b>Grade 5</b>	NA	5e2 5e22 5e46	5z36 5z39
<b>Grade 6</b>	NA	6e5 6e24	6z3 6z15 6z19
<b>Grade 7</b>	NA	7e4 7e26 7e49	7h35 7h39 7h40
<b>Grade 8</b>	NA	8e3 8e25 8e51	8h3 8h6 8h35 8h40

Appendix K

## Select Secondary Curriculum Course Expectations Chart

\*EA = EASILY ADAPTED

COURSE NAME	COURSE EXPECTATION LINKS	SECTION OF DOCUMENT (PARTS I-VII)
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### Grade 9

<b>English, Academic Grade 9</b>	LI1.01D	All
	LI1.02D	All
	LI1.03B	II - VII
	LI1.04D	II - VII
	LI1.05D	III, IV, V
	LI1.06D	II - VII
	LI1.07D	I - V, VI
	WRV.01D	E.A.
	WRV.02D	E.A.
	WRV.03D	E.A.
	WRV.04D	E.A.
	WRV.05D	E.A.
	WR1.01D	I, II, VI
	WR1.02D	E.A.
	WR1.03D	III
	WR1.04D	III
	WR4.01D	E.A.

	WR4.02B	E.A.
	WR4.03D	E.A.
	WR4.04B	E.A.
	WR5.05D	E.A.
	WR5.06D	E.A.
	WR5.07B	E.A.
	WR5.08B	E.A.
	WR5.09B	E.A.
	WR5.10B	E.A.
	WR5.11B	E.A.
	WR5.12B	E.A.
	WR5.13B	E.A.
	WR5.14B	E.A.
	WR5.15B	E.A.
	WR5.16B	E.A.
	LGV.01D	E.A.
	LGV.02B	E.A.
	LG2.01D	E.A.
	LG2.02D	E.A.
	LG2.03D	E.A.
	LG2.04D	E.A.
	LG2.05D	E.A.
	LG2.06D	E.A.
	LG2.07D	E.A.
	MDV.01D	III
	MDV.02D	III
	MD1.01B	III
	MD1.02D	III
	MD1.03D	III
	MD1.04D	III
<b>Canadian and World Studies, Academic,</b>	<b>SSV.05B</b> <b>SS3.03D</b> <b>HEV.02D</b>	I, II, VI All E.A.

<b>Grade 9 (Geographic Foundations: Space and Systems)</b>	<b>HE2.05B GCV.02B GCV.03B GCI.04D GC2.03D GC3.02D UMV.02B UMV.03B UM3.01D UM3.02D UM3.03D UM3.04D MIV.01B MIV.02B MIV.03D MI2.04B MI2.05B MI2.06B MI2.07B MI2.11D MI3.01B MI3.03B MI3.04D MI3.05B</b>	<b>VII VI VI VI VI VI II, VI I E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. VI E.A.</b>
<b>Principles of Mathematics Grade 9 Academic</b>	<b>NA1.01 REV.01B RE1.06 RE2.01 RE3.01</b>	<b>II All E.A. All IV</b>
<b>Individual and Family Living, Open Grade 9 or</b>	<b>SOV.03X SO3.01X SO3.02X</b>	<b>All All II, VI</b>

<b>10</b>	<b>PRV.02X PR1.01X PR1.02X PR3.01X SCV.01X SCV.02X SCV.04X SC2.01X SC2.02X SC3.01X SC4.01X SC4.02X SC4.03X SC4.04X SC4.08X DI1.01X DI1.02X DI1.03X DI1.04X DI2.01X DI2.02X DI2.04X SSV.01X SSV.02X SSV.03X SS1.01X SS1.02X SS1.03X SS1.04X SS1.05X SS2.01X SS2.02X SS2.03X SS2.04X</b>	<b>All E.A. E.A. II, VI, VII All All III, VI I, II, VI All VII VI, III VI III, VI III III, VI IV IV, V I I I I I I E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A.</b>
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	<b>SS3.01X</b> <b>SS3.02X</b> <b>SS3.03X</b> <b>SS3.04X</b>	E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A.
<b>Food and Nutrition, Open Grade 9 or 10</b>	<b>SO1.01X</b> <b>SO1.02X</b> <b>SO1.03X</b> <b>SO2.02X</b> <b>SO2.03X</b> <b>PR1.02X</b> <b>PR1.05X</b> <b>PR2.01X</b> <b>PR2.02X</b> <b>PR2.03X</b> <b>PR2.04X</b> <b>PR2.05X</b> <b>PR2.06X</b> <b>PR2.09X</b> <b>PR2.11X</b> <b>PR2.12X</b> <b>PR3.01X</b> <b>PR3.06X</b> <b>PR3.07X</b> <b>SCI.01X</b> <b>SC2.01X</b> <b>DIV.03X</b> <b>DIV.04X</b> <b>DI1.02X</b> <b>DI3.02X</b> <b>DI3.03X</b> <b>DI4.01X</b> <b>DI4.02X</b> <b>DI4.03X</b>	II II II II, VI II, III, VI II II VI VI VI II III II III, VI VI II, VI IV II II III VII VI VI I VI VI VI All VI

	<b>DI4.04X</b> <b>DI4.05X</b> <b>SSV.01X</b> <b>SSV.02X</b> <b>SSV.03X</b> <b>SS1.01X</b> <b>SS1.02X</b> <b>SS1.03X</b> <b>SS1.04X</b> <b>SS1.05X</b> <b>SS1.06X</b> <b>SS1.07X</b> <b>SS1.08X</b> <b>SS1.09X</b> <b>SS2.01X</b> <b>SS2.02X</b> <b>SS2.03X</b> <b>SS3.01X</b> <b>SS3.02X</b> <b>SS3.03X</b>	VI, VII VI, VII E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A.
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<b>Grade 10</b>		
<b>English, Academic Grade 10</b>	<b>LI1.01D</b> <b>LI1.03D</b> <b>LI1.04D</b> <b>LI1.06D</b> <b>LI1.07D</b> <b>LI1.08D</b> <b>LI2.03D</b> <b>LI3.02D</b> <b>WRV.01D</b> <b>WRV.02D</b>	II - VII II - VII II, VI, VII II, VI, VII Values Auction I, II, VI, VII All II, III E.A. E.A.

<b>WRV.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>WRV.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>WRV.05D.</b>	E.A.
<b>WR1.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR1.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR1.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR1.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR2.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR2.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR2.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR2.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR3.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR3.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR3.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR3.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR4.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR4.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR4.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR4.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.05D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.06D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.07D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.08D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.09D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.10D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.11D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.12D</b>	E.A.
<b>WR5.13D</b>	E.A.
<b>LGV.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>LGV.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG1.01D</b>	E.A.

<b>LG1.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG1.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG1.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG1.05D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG1.06D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG1.07D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.02D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.03D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.04D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.05D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.06D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.07D</b>	E.A.
<b>LG2.08D</b>	E.A.
<b>MDV.01D</b>	E.A.
<b>MDV.02D</b>	III
<b>MD1.01D</b>	III
<b>MD1.02D</b>	III
<b>MD1.03D</b>	III
<b>MD1.04D</b>	III
<b>MD2.01D</b>	III
<b>MD2.02D</b>	III
<b>MD2.03D</b>	III
<b>Canadian and World Studies, Academic, Grade 10 (Canadian History in the Twenty Century)</b>	<b>CGV.01</b> <b>CG2.08</b> <b>CG4.04</b> <b>CG4.06</b> <b>CCV.01</b> <b>CC1.01</b> <b>CC1.02</b> <b>CC1.03</b> <b>CC1.04</b>
	V All All II All E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A.

<b>CC1.05</b>	E.A.
<b>CC1.06</b>	E.A.
<b>CC2.01</b>	V
<b>CC2.04</b>	III
<b>CC2.06</b>	V
<b>CC3.02</b>	II
<b>CHV.01</b>	I, V
<b>CHV.02</b>	V, VI, VII
<b>CH1.01</b>	I, V
<b>CH1.02</b>	V
<b>CH2.01</b>	V
<b>SPV.01</b>	All
<b>SPV.02</b>	II, V
<b>SP1.02</b>	V
<b>SP1.04</b>	V
<b>SP2.02</b>	All
<b>SP2.04</b>	II
<b>SP2.05</b>	All
<b>MIV.01</b>	E.A.
<b>MIV.02</b>	E.A.
<b>MIV.03</b>	E.A.
<b>MIV.04</b>	E.A.
<b>MI1.01</b>	E.A.
<b>MI1.02</b>	E.A.
<b>MI1.03</b>	E.A.
<b>MI2.01</b>	E.A.
<b>MI2.02</b>	E.A.
<b>MI2.03</b>	E.A.
<b>MI2.04</b>	E.A.
<b>MI2.05</b>	E.A.
<b>MI3.01</b>	E.A.
<b>MI3.02</b>	E.A.
<b>MI3.03</b>	E.A.
<b>MI3.04</b>	E.A.

	<b>MI4.01</b>	E.A.
	<b>MI4.02</b>	E.A.
	<b>MI4.03</b>	E.A.
	<b>MI4.04</b>	E.A.
<b>Civics, Grade 10, Open</b>	<b>ICV.01</b>	I
	<b>ICV.02</b>	All
	<b>ICV.05</b>	VI
	<b>IC1.01</b>	I, IV, V
	<b>IC1.04</b>	I
	<b>IC1.05</b>	I, IV, V, VI
	<b>IC2.01</b>	V
	<b>IC2.02</b>	VII
	<b>IC3.05</b>	I, VII
	<b>IC3.06</b>	VII
	<b>IC4.02</b>	II
	<b>IC4.03</b>	V
	<b>IC5.01</b>	VI
	<b>IC5.02</b>	II, VI
	<b>IC5.03</b>	VI, VII
	<b>IC5.04</b>	VII
	<b>PCV.01</b>	Values Auction
	<b>PCV.03</b>	Values Auction
	<b>PC1.01</b>	VII
	<b>PC1.02</b>	VI, VII
	<b>PC1.03</b>	Values Auction, II, VII
	<b>PC2.01</b>	II
	<b>PC2.03</b>	II, VI
	<b>PC3.01</b>	VII
	<b>PC3.05</b>	VI, VII
	<b>ACV.01</b>	E.A.
	<b>ACV.02</b>	E.A.
	<b>ACV.03</b>	E.A.

	<b>ACV.04</b>	E.A.
	<b>AC1.01</b>	II, III, VI
	<b>AC1.02</b>	E.A.
	<b>AC1.03</b>	E.A.
	<b>AC2.01</b>	E.A.
	<b>AC3.01</b>	All
	<b>AC3.02</b>	All
	<b>AC3.03</b>	All
	<b>AC4.01</b>	VII
	<b>AC4.02</b>	VII
	<b>AC4.03</b>	V
	<b>AC4.04</b>	VI
	<b>AC4.05</b>	III

	<b>OR1.01</b>	I, VII
	<b>OR1.02</b>	VII
	<b>OR1.03</b>	II
	<b>OR2.01</b>	All
	<b>OR2.03</b>	I, IV
	<b>OR2.04</b>	I
	<b>ISV.01</b>	E.A.
	<b>ISV.02</b>	E.A.
	<b>ISV.03</b>	E.A.
	<b>IS2.01</b>	E.A.
	<b>IS2.02</b>	V
	<b>IS2.04</b>	II - VI
	<b>IS3.02</b>	II - VI
<b>Canadian Politics and Citizenship, Grade 11, Open</b>	<b>CDV.01</b>	All
	<b>CDV.02</b>	VII
	<b>CDV.03</b>	All
	<b>CD1.01</b>	E.A.
	<b>CD1.03</b>	I, V
	<b>CD2.01</b>	VII
	<b>CD2.02</b>	I, II, IV, V, VI
	<b>CD2.03</b>	I, VII
	<b>CD2.04</b>	VI, VII
	<b>CD3.01</b>	All
	<b>CD3.02</b>	I
	<b>CD3.03</b>	All
	<b>POV.01</b>	All
	<b>POV.02</b>	VI
	<b>POV.03</b>	V
	<b>PO1.01</b>	All
	<b>PO1.04</b>	I, II, VI, VII
	<b>PO2.01</b>	IV, V, VI, VII
	<b>PO2.02</b>	I, V, VII
	<b>PO2.04</b>	VI

<b>Grade 11</b>		
<b>Introduction to Anthropology Psychology, and Sociology, Grade 11, University/ College Preparation</b>	<b>SO1.01</b>	All
	<b>SO2.01</b>	I, II, III
	<b>SO2.02</b>	I, III
	<b>SO2.03</b>	II
	<b>SO3.01</b>	All
	<b>SO3.02</b>	All
	<b>SO3.04</b>	I
	<b>SSV.03</b>	V
	<b>SS1.01</b>	I
	<b>SS1.03</b>	V
	<b>SS2.01</b>	V
	<b>SS2.02</b>	V
	<b>SS2.03</b>	V
	<b>ORV.01</b>	All
	<b>ORV.02</b>	All
	<b>ORV.03</b>	All

<b>PO3.01</b>	V
<b>PO3.02</b>	V
<b>PO3.03</b>	V, VII
<b>DM1.03</b>	I
<b>DM3.01</b>	All
<b>DM3.02</b>	VI
<b>DM3.04</b>	All
<b>DM3.05</b>	All
<b>VBV.02</b>	All
<b>VBV.03</b>	All
<b>VB1.01</b>	I, II, IV, VI
<b>VB1.04</b>	Values Auction
<b>VB2.02</b>	All
<b>VB2.03</b>	II
<b>VB3.01</b>	I
<b>VB3.02</b>	I, III
<b>VB3.03</b>	I, III
<b>PIV.01</b>	E.A.
<b>PIV.02</b>	E.A.
<b>PIV.03</b>	E.A.
<b>PIV.04</b>	V, VII
<b>PI1.01</b>	I
<b>PI1.02</b>	V, VI
<b>PI1.03</b>	E.A.
<b>PI1.04</b>	E.A.
<b>PI2.01</b>	E.A.
<b>PI2.02</b>	III, VI
<b>PI2.03</b>	VI
<b>PI2.04</b>	E.A.
<b>PI3.01</b>	I
<b>PI3.02</b>	E.A.
<b>PI3.03</b>	E.A.
<b>PI4.01</b>	All
<b>PI4.02</b>	All

	<b>PI4.03</b> <b>PI4.04</b> <b>PI4.05</b>	All V, VI, VII All
<b>Philosophy: The Big Questions, Grade 11, Open</b>	<b>PQV.01</b> <b>PQV.02</b> <b>PQ1.01</b> <b>PQ1.02</b> <b>PQ1.03</b> <b>ELV.01</b> <b>EL1.02</b>  <b>EL1.03</b> <b>OS1.01</b> <b>ISV.01</b> <b>ISV.02</b> <b>ISV.03</b> <b>ISV.04</b> <b>ISV.05</b> <b>IS1.04</b> <b>IS2.01</b> <b>IS2.02</b> <b>IS3.01</b> <b>IS3.02</b>	E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. II, III, VI I, II, IV, VI, VII II, V, VI E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A.
<b>The Individual and the Economy, Grade 11, University/ College Preparation</b>	<b>DMV.01</b> <b>DM1.01</b> <b>DM1.02</b> <b>DM1.04</b> <b>DM2.03</b> <b>DM3.01</b> <b>DM3.02</b> <b>DM3.04</b> <b>ESV.01</b>	All II, IV, VI VI V II, VI IV All E.A. II, VI



	<b>ESV.04</b>	II
	<b>ES1.01</b>	II, IV, VI
	<b>ES1.02</b>	II - VI
	<b>ES1.03</b>	VI
	<b>ES4.01</b>	II
	<b>ES4.02</b>	II
	<b>ES4.03</b>	II, VI
	<b>SIV.02</b>	VI
	<b>SI1.01</b>	V, VI
	<b>SI1.02</b>	II, Values Auction
	<b>SI2.01</b>	VI
	<b>SI3.01</b>	Values Auction, V
	<b>SI3.03</b>	II
	<b>EIV.01</b>	All
	<b>EIV.04</b>	V
	<b>EI2.02</b>	VI
	<b>EI2.03</b>	VI
	<b>EI4.01</b>	V
	<b>EI4.02</b>	V
	<b>EI4.03</b>	V
	<b>EI4.04</b>	V
	<b>ECV.01</b>	VI
	<b>ECV.02</b>	II
	<b>EC3.01</b>	IV, V
	<b>EC3.02</b>	IV, V
	<b>EC3.03</b>	V
<b>Current Aboriginal Issues in Canada, Grade 11, University/ College Preparation</b>	<b>REV.01</b>	All
	<b>REV.04</b>	All
	<b>RE2.02</b>	I
	<b>RE2.03</b>	I
	<b>RE3.02</b>	All

	<b>CHV.01</b>	All
	<b>CHV.04</b>	All
	<b>CH3.01</b>	I
<b>Aboriginal Beliefs, Values, and Aspirations in Contemporary Society, Grade 11, Workplace Preparation</b>	<b>IDV.03</b>	I
	<b>ID2.01</b>	I
	<b>REV.02</b>	I
	<b>RE3.02</b>	I
	<b>RE3.04</b>	I
	<b>SO3.02</b>	Value Auction
	<b>CHV.01</b>	All
	<b>CHV.02</b>	III
	<b>CHV.03</b>	III
	<b>CHV.04</b>	All
	<b>CH1.01</b>	I, VI
	<b>CH1.03</b>	III
	<b>CH1.04</b>	III, V, VI
	<b>CH2.02</b>	III
	<b>CH3.01</b>	I

## Grade 12

<b>Challenge and Change in Society, Grade 12, University/Coll ege Preparation</b>	<b>CH1.01</b>	III, V, VI, VII
	<b>CH2.01</b>	V, VII
	<b>CH2.02</b>	VII
	<b>CH2.03</b>	Values Auction, IV
	<b>CH2.04</b>	V
	<b>CH3.02</b>	III
	<b>STV.03</b>	I, II
	<b>ST3.01</b>	III
	<b>SCV.01</b>	VI
	<b>SCV.02</b>	I

	<b>SC1.02</b> <b>SC2.01</b> <b>SC2.02</b> <b>SC2.03</b> <b>SC3.02</b> <b>ISV.01</b> <b>ISV.04</b> <b>ISV.05</b> <b>IS1.01</b> <b>IS1.03</b> <b>IS1.04</b> <b>IS2.02</b> <b>IS2.03</b> <b>IS2.06</b> <b>IS2.07</b> <b>IS3.01</b> <b>IS3.02</b> <b>IS3.03</b>	IV, VI I All I IV E.A. II –VII II – VII I IV IV, V III, IV, VI II, III, VI II, VI E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A.
<b>Canada:  History,  Identity, and  Culture, Grade  12, University  Preparation</b>	<b>CO3.01</b> <b>CO3.02</b> <b>CO4.04</b> <b>CC4.02</b> <b>CC5.02</b> <b>CC5.04</b> <b>CHV.01</b> <b>CHV.03</b> <b>CHV.04</b> <b>CH1.02</b> <b>CH3.02</b> <b>CH4.01</b> <b>CH4.02</b> <b>CH4.05</b> <b>SEV.01</b>	I All II V I, II I All III II I III, VI I I, II II, V V, IV

	<b>SEV.02</b> <b>SE1.01</b> <b>SE1.03</b> <b>SE2.02</b> <b>SE3.02</b> <b>SE5.01</b> <b>SE5.02</b> <b>HIV.01</b> <b>HIV.02</b> <b>HIV.03</b> <b>HIV.04</b> <b>HI1.01</b> <b>HI1.02</b> <b>HI1.03</b> <b>HI2.01</b> <b>HI2.02</b> <b>HI2.03</b> <b>HI2.04</b> <b>HI4.01</b> <b>HI4.02</b> <b>HI4.03</b> <b>HI4.04</b>	I, V II, IV, V V V VI II V E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. E.A. All All All E.A.
<b>Canadian and  World Politics,  Grade 12,  University  Preparation</b>	<b>IC1.01</b> <b>IC1.02</b> <b>IC1.03</b> <b>IC3.06</b> <b>IC4.02</b> <b>IC4.04</b> <b>IC5.01</b> <b>IC5.02</b> <b>PO1.01</b> <b>PO1.02</b> <b>PO1.03</b>	VI VI VI V II, VI VI VI II, VI IV, V VI VI VI



	<b>SIV.01</b>	Values Auction
	<b>SIV.02</b>	VI
	<b>SIV.03</b>	VI
	<b>SIV.04</b>	Values Auction
	<b>SI2.01</b>	VI
	<b>SI2.02</b>	VI
	<b>SI3.04</b>	VI
	<b>SI4.01</b>	VI
	<b>SI4.03</b>	III, VI
	<b>EIV.01</b>	E.A.
	<b>EIV.02</b>	E.A.
	<b>EI1.01</b>	V
	<b>EI1.04</b>	VI
	<b>EI3.02</b>	VI
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	<b>ECV.04</b>	II
	<b>EC1.02</b>	IV
	<b>EC1.05</b>	VI
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	<b>EC2.04</b>	VI
	<b>EC3.02</b>	IV
	<b>EC3.04</b>	II
	<b>EC4.01</b>	IV
	<b>EC4.02</b>	IV
	<b>EC4.03</b>	II, IV, V
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<b>Indigenous Peoples in a Global Context, Grade 12, University/College Preparation</b>	<b>CHV.02</b> <b>CH2.02</b> <b>CH2.05</b>	All II, VI VI
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<b>Aboriginal Governance: Emerging Directions Grade 12, University/College Preparation</b>	<b>REV.01</b> <b>REV.03</b> <b>CHV.01</b>	All All I
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## PRINT RESOURCES

*Videos, web sites, community organisations , etc. to come.*

*\*\*Most of the following print resources are available through  
Another Story Bookshop: Tel: 416-462-1104 Fax: 416-462-9115\*\**

### PRIMARY

#### Picture Books

- Ackerman, Karen. 1999. *By the Dawn's Early Light*. New York: Simon & Schuster  
A day in the life of a family where a single mother works the night shift at a factory. The children look forward to the morning for their special time with their mother.
- Bayless, Maureen. 1994. *Strike! Charlottetown*. Ragweed Press  
In this gentle and engaging story, Molly learns first hand about strikes. When trucks threaten to cross the picket line at the fish cannery where Molly's mom is on strike, Molly takes matters into her own hands. With a little help from her teddy bear, her plan has some surprising results.
- Browne, Anthony. 1986. *Piggybook*. Toronto: Random House  
A humorous yet thought-provoking picture book that exposes the double-work day that most working women experience and lends itself easily to discussions of fairness and sexism.
- Chinn, Karen. 1995. *Sam and the Lucky Money*. New York: Lee and Low Books  
When Sam's grandparents give him some lucky money for Chinese New Year his mother takes him down to Chinatown to buy himself a present. At first Sam feels frustrated that the money won't buy him very much. Yet, on their trip Sam encounters a homeless man. After watching his mother give the man some change, Sam decides to give his lucky money to the man, deciding that in fact he is lucky to have all that he does.
- Offen, Hilda. 1992. *Nice Work Little Wolf*. Toronto: Penguin Books  
A light-hearted yet incisive picture book in which a young wolf is adopted into a pig family and finds he is constantly being asked to do the pigs work for them. In the end the wolf rebels and reclaims the house that he has built. After all, 'It is all his own work'.
- Paulsen, Gary. 1997. *Worksong*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company  
Simple poetic text and beautiful oil paintings in this picture book help remind children of workers' contribution to the world around them and that workers are people with families.
- Wyeth, Sharon Dennis. 1998. *Something Beautiful*. New York: Bantam  
A young girl looks out her window at the broken glass, poverty and graffiti in her

neighbourhood and decides to try to find 'something beautiful'. She asks her neighbours about what they have that is beautiful and finds there is much to love about her community.

## JUNIOR FICTION

### Picture Books

Andrews, Jan. 2000. *Out of the Everywhere*. Toronto: Groundwood

A collection of folktales from working class immigrants to Canada. There are stories of immigration from Africa, Chile, Finland, France, Greece, India, the Middle East, Russia, the United States and Vietnam. There is also a tale from the Omushkego First Nation.

Bunting, Eve. 1997. *December*. Orlando: Harcourt

A story of homelessness and generosity perfect for the for the winter holidays. Award winning art and writing.

Bunting, Eve. 1991. *Fly Away Home*. New York: Houghton Mifflin

A story of homelessness told through the eyes of a child. A remarkable resource for beginning discussions.

Look, Lenore. 1999. *Love as Strong as Ginger*. New York: Simon & Schuster

A young girl longs to see the crab cannery where her grandmother works. Yet when she gets her wish nothing is as she imagined. Katie learns first hand of the sacrifices her grandmother has made to give her granddaughter a brighter future.

McGovern, Ann. 1997. *The Lady in the Box*. New York: Turtle Books

A brother and sister find ways to make a homeless woman's life less bleak.

Mamchur, Carolyn Marie and Meguido Zola. 1993. *In the Garden*. Winnipeg: Pemmican

When a young Metis girl moves to the city it doesn't offer her family very much. When Joyce's grandmother dies she leaves her a handkerchief of seeds which Joyce uses to plant a garden. When her father goes on strike Joyce and her mom make a wonderful soup from the garden vegetables to help feed and cheer up the strikers.

Yee, Paul. 1994. *Ghost Train*. Toronto: Groundwood

A young Chinese girl comes across the ocean to try and find her father who has been working on the railroad. When she arrives she discovers her father has died. However, through dreams he tells her of the hard labour that he and his fellow workers have endured. The girl is given the task of helping to bring the spirits of the men who died home again.

Wallace, Ian. 1999. *Boy of the Deeps*. Toronto: Groundwood

Beautiful colour paintings illustrate this riveting picture book set in Cape Breton.

Wallace's text personalizes the conditions and dangers of mining at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and lends itself to discussions of the history of child labour and working conditions.

## Novels

Barkhouse, Joyce. 1990. *Pit Pony*. Toronto: Gage

A novel that has been used time and again to teach students about child labour and mining in turn of the century Cape Breton. A school guide and media literacy kit can be obtained through the web site: <http://www.pitpony.com>

Welch, Catherine A. 1992 *Danger at the Breaker*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books

A high interest, low level novel about a young boy who must quit school and start work as a breaker boy in a coal mine. On Andrew's first day of work there is an accident and Andrew is sent home not knowing whether his father is alive or dead. Set during the 19<sup>th</sup> century this novel helps readers understand the dangerous working conditions so many workers had to face.

Hunter, Bernice Thurman. 1998. *Booky: A Trilogy*. Markham: Scholastic

Three previously released Booky titles. Booky is a spunky young girl growing up during the depression. The depression years are difficult but Booky manages to find ways to have fun without spending a cent, even if she gets into a few scrapes along the way.

Littlefield, Holly. 1996. *Fire at the Triangle Factory*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books

A high interest, low level novel of two girls' experience working in a turn of the century clothing factory. Based on the true accounts of a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in 1911 in New York which killed 146 women. It was following this fire that many American labour laws were put in place.

## JUNIOR

### Non-fiction

Freedman, Russell. 1994. *Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor*. New York, NY: Clarion Books

Lewis Hine, a New York City schoolteacher and photographer working in the early years of the twentieth century was one of the most important forces behind changing public opinion on child labour. This collection of Hine's photographs is a remarkable documentary of child labour at that time. Freeman's text helps to establish the context of each photo and Hine's life.

Mackay, C. 1987. *Paycheques and Picket Lines: All About Unions in Canada*. Toronto: Kids Can Press Ltd.

An Introduction to what unions do, how they originated and some of the challenges

contemporary workers face.

Peace Child International Project. 1998. *Stand Up For Your Rights*. Celebrating 50 Years of Human Rights. Chicago: World Press.

Explains the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in simple language. It includes illustrations and creative writing from students across the world, success stories of people and organizations that are making strides in the field of human rights and practical tips on how young people can take action in challenging human rights abuses.

Prior, Katherine. 1997. *Worker's Rights*. New York: Grolier

Part of a series called What Do We Mean by Human Rights this book covers a huge range of work issues and shows workers fighting for their rights around the world. Illustrated with photographs.

Saller, Carol. 1997. *Florence Kelley*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books

A high interest, low level biography of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century advocate for childrens' and workers' rights.

## INTERMEDIATE

### Fiction

Hewitt, Marsh and Claire Mackay. 1981. *One Proud Summer*. Toronto: Women's Press

The 1946 millworkers strike in Valleyfield Quebec is told through the eyes of a 13 year old girl who has been forced to quit school to work. A David and Goliath story in which the workers are pitted against the Church, the police and a national company.

Freeman, Bill. 1983. *Trouble at Lachine Mill*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company

Set during an 1870's strike at a shirt factory in Montreal, a brother and sister are hired as strike breakers. They learn how to work together to help make changes to the world of factory work.

Freeman, Bill. 1975. *Shantymen of Cache Lake*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company

Set in the Ottawa Valley during the 1870's, a brother and sister spend a winter working at a lumber camp, after their father dies. Meg and John learn of the tensions between the foreman and the lumbermen and experience the dangerous and exciting log drive down the Ottawa river.

Paterson, Katherine. 1991. *Lyddie*. Toronto: Penguin

Tells the story of a young woman working in a textile mill in the 1840's. Lyddie works six days a week, from dawn to dusk, she learns how to read and how to handle the menacing overseer, but when the working conditions begin to effect her friends' health she is faced with a choice: either speak up for better working conditions and risk her job or stay quiet until it is perhaps too late.



Sachs, Marilyn. 1982. *Call Me Ruth*. New York: Doubleday

A young Jewish girl growing up in late 19<sup>th</sup> century New York watches as her mother becomes more and more involved in union activities. As a recent immigrant Ruth wants more than anything to impress her young beautiful teacher but when her mother is arrested for her work for the union Ruth is forced to think about her values.

## INTERMEDIATE

### Non Fiction

Barna, Laszlo. 1999. *Working: Images of Canadian Labour*. Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited.

This all ages book contains photographs that chart the development of labour in Canada throughout the twentieth century. The photographs put a face to the people who struggled, and continue to struggle, for economic and social justice.

Currie, Stephen. 1997. *We Have Marched Together: The Working Children's Crusade*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company.

This book looks at the lives of child workers in Philadelphia and across the United States. It analyzes their historic march, looks at their pictures, and describes their fight. It is a useful resource for child labour facts and statistics. The book not only describes the conditions of the child factory worker, but looks also at government and law – it also emphasizes the key activist groups of the time that pushed for social change.

Freedman, Russell. 1994. *Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor*. New York, NY: Clario Books.

See Above.

Fenwick, Tara. 1995. *Work and Leisure*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited.

An anthology of cartoons, stories, poems, and essays designed to promote labour awareness.

Jimenez, Francisco. 1999. *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

The powerful account of one family's journey across California as seen through the eyes of a young boy.

Peace Child Internation Project. 1998. *Stand Up For Your Rights*. Celebrating 50 Years of Human Rights. Chicago: World Press.

See Above.

Springer, Jane. 1997. *Listen to Us: The World's Working Children*. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd.

Using photographs, interviews, statistics, definitions and background information this book works as a primer for intermediate and senior students on the issue of child labour and around the world. Includes sections on children's rights and on ways in which kids can fight child exploitation.

Kuklin, Susan. 1998. *Iqbal Masih and The Crusaders Against Child Slavery*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Profiles the remarkable work of Iqbal Masih, a young advocate against child exploitation in Pakistan. Until his murder in 1995, Iqbal was known as the leading voice against child slavery.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. 1999. *Kids on Strike*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Documents a dozen strikes led by children and young people in a variety of industries during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Illustrated with archival photographs.

## SENIOR

### Fiction/Memoirs

Wayman, Tom. Ed. 1991. *Paperwork*. Maderia Park: Harbour Publishing Co.

An anthology of poems written about work from a wide variety of industries. Excellent for ESL and Adult learners as well as adolescents.

Zandy, Janet. Ed. 1993. *Calling Home: Working Class Women's Writings*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

A collection of working class women's short stories, memoirs, poems and essays about their experience.

Zandy, Janet. Ed. 1994. *Liberating Memory: Our Work and Our Working-Class Consciousness*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Memoirs and essays by a wide variety of working class writers.

## NON-FICTION

### Labour History

Barna, Laszio. 1999. *Working: Images of Canadian Labour*. Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited.

See above.

Grizzle, Stanley. 1998. *My Name's Not George: The Story of the Sleeping Car Porters in Canada*. Toronto: Umbrella Press.

The personal reminiscences of Stanley G. Grizzle. Chronicles the birth of the first trade union in Canada organized by and for Black men.

Heron, C. 1996. *The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History*. James Lorimer and Company.

Recounts the story of labour from mid-nineteenth century to present day, encompasses all regions of Canada.

Margoshes, Dave. 2000. *Tommy Douglas: Building the New Society*. Lantzville BC: XYZ Publishing ([xyzed@telus.net](mailto:xyzed@telus.net))

Biography of one of the founders of the CCF.

Metro Labour Education Centre. 1996. *Heritage of Struggle: Canadian Labour History Workbook*. ISBN 1-895849-28-4

A workbook complete with questions, activities, vocabulary builders, photographs and short readings. Ideal for senior ESL and Applied Level students.

Metro Labour Education Centre. 1997. *Living on Social Assistance: Stories from Ontario*.

Storylinks: Learning through Dialogue. 416-626-6573

Oral History project, trained volunteers interviewed members of their communities who were willing to share their stories of life on social assistance.

Morton, Desmond. 1999. *Working People: An Illustrated History*. McGill Queens University Press

A comprehensive history of Canadian workers from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present.

Raffo, Susan. Ed. 1997. *Queerly Classed: Gay Men and Lesbians write about Class*

An Anthology of essays, poems, and memoirs by gay men and lesbians about their experiences of class.

Scroggie, J. 1981. *Framing Our Lives: Photographs of Canadians at Work, Teacher's Guide*.

Toronto: Toronto Board of Education

Includes photographs, and activities for students to learn about the impact of technological change in the workplace, the historical division of labour, the conditions of work, and the function of unions throughout the twentieth century.

## CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

### Poverty

Capponi, Pat. 1997. *Dispatches from the Poverty Line*. Toronto: Penguin Books.

Capponi documents her experience of poverty adding a human voice to the statistics that we read about daily and exploding stereotypes about the poor with every reflection.

Capponi, Pat. 2000. *The War at Home: An Intimate Portrait of Canada's Poor*. Toronto: Penguin Books

Capponi travelled across Canada to listen to and record the stories of our poor. She examines the impact that specific government policies have had on the Canadian poor and the ways in which some have found to improve their lives under poverty.

Hurtig, Mel. 1999. *Pay the Rent or Feed the Kids: The Tragedy and Disgrace of Poverty in Canada*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc.

Hurtig examines how politicians have waged a war against the poor by reducing unemployment benefits and slashing welfare payments.

Toronto Children's Services. 1999. *Toronto Report Card on Children*. Toronto: City of Toronto. (General information for all levels)

Includes statistics, facts, charts and graphs to help identify areas where Toronto children's health and well-being are most at risk.

### **Democracy, Globalization, Economic Literacy and Human Rights**

CAW Canada. 1995. *Building Our Union: Human Rights Course*

Defines Human Rights issues from a working class and union perspective.

Gastil, John. 1993. *Democracy in Small Groups*. New Society Publishers.

Defines democracy and provides a chance for us to understand the process of democracy better. It also presents solutions to problems that block the democratic process. Activities included along with a great bibliography.

Klein, Naomi. 2000. *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*. Toronto: Random House  
Klein chronicle of the rise of anti-corporate activism from the London courtroom of the McLibel trial, to Niketown anti-sweatshop protests in New York to union squats in Southeast Asia. She introduces us to a broad range of global activists taking aim at the brand bullies.

Martin, H. and H. Schumann. (Trans. P. Camiller). 1997. *The Global Trap: Globalization and the Assault on Prosperity and Democracy*. Black Rose Books

Explores the spread of globalization and the likely consequences for jobs and democracy.

McBride, S. and J. Shields. 1997. *Dismantling a Nation: The Transition to Corporate Rule in Canada*. Fernwood Publishing

All aspects of the neo-conservative policy, privatization, deregulation, NAFTA, obsession with deficits, attacks on collective bargaining, cutbacks to social programs, weakening of federal powers are analyzed.

Metro Network for Social Justice. 1996. *Hope in Hard Times*.

A primer in economic literacy developed to help citizens understand the impact of current economic policies.

Riften, J. 1995. *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labour Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*. Toronto: GP Putnam's Sons.

Describes the major trends in contemporary economics. Textbook format.

Ross, Andrew. Ed. 1997. *No Sweat: Fashion, Free Trade, and the Rights of Garment Workers*.

New York: Verso

A collection of essays on sweatshops in the fashion and garment industry around the world.