



Inquiry into Practice: Learning and Teaching Global Matters in Local Classrooms

Edited by
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Learning and Teaching Global Matters: Toward Complexity, Criticality, and Multidimensionality

Mark Evans, David Montemurro, Mira Gambhir, and Kathryn Broad

Students in today's schools live in a world that is more interconnected than ever before. Human migration, changing demographics, and the global reach of information, for example, increasingly connect people from around the world. Major challenges, whether in health, environment, economic matters, or peace and security, require cooperation and integrated responses that extend across borders and boundaries both within and across local, provincial, national, and regional contexts.

At the same time, there is growing agreement among educators that schools and educational systems worldwide should be doing more to prepare youth to engage thoughtfully and responsibly in today's changing world. In Canada, for example, recent provincial curriculum policy reform reveals a heightened attention to the international and global dimensions of education.¹ Faculties of teacher education have also been called upon to address this area in program priorities and practices. The Association of Canadian Deans' of Education (ACDE) expressed the need for more explicit attention

to global dimensions of education in the 2006 pan-Canadian Accord on Initial Teacher Education (Collins & Tierney, 2006). This year, in their recently developed pan-Canadian Accord on Initial Teacher Education, the ACDE focuses almost entirely on the importance of internationalization of the curriculum across Canadian educational institutions (ACDE, 2014).

Discussions have also proliferated worldwide to identify desirable global understandings and competencies for 21st century teaching and learning. Educational policy-makers, researchers, and practitioners have presented difficult questions about the ways in which, for what purposes, and for whom teaching and learning in schools need to be undertaken to strengthen learning that connects the local and the global. A host of new resource materials has been developed in and outside of Canada, designed to inform and guide teachers' work in relation to various aspects of curriculum and instruction related to this area of education (see Resources, pp. 121-132).

¹ See, for example, British Columbia Civic Studies 11, 2005 and Social Justice 12, 2008; Manitoba Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability, 2013; Ontario Civics 10 and Canadian and World Studies 2013; Québec Education Contemporary World Program, 2013; Atlantic Canada in the Global Community 9, 2006.

The 21st century has also witnessed renewed Canadian scholarship pertaining to educating for the global dimension of citizenship (Evans, Davies, Dean, & Waghid, 2008; Evans, Ingram, MacDonald, & Weber, 2009; Larsen & Faden, 2008; McLean, Cook, & Crowe, 2008; McLean & Ng-A-Fook, 2013; O’Sullivan & Pashby, 2008; Pike, 2008; Richardson, 2008; Shultz, 2007; Tarc, 2013).

Since 2002, the Initial Teacher Education program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, has carried out a series of professional learning partnership projects involving university instructors and K–12 educators. The Inquiry into Practice series—based on collaboration, inquiry, and connections among theory, practice, and context—aims to deepen participants’ understandings of a range of educational themes and questions and to improve practice in all locations. University instructors are invited to submit grant proposals for inquiry projects that link theory and practice, emphasize collaboration, and work directly with school and district teachers and administrators. In culmination, the project findings for a particular theme are released in a publication. The publications are shared with schools, community organizations, visiting international delegations, and the broader public.

This Inquiry into Practice publication, *Learning and Teaching Global Matters in Local Classrooms*, is the most recent addition to the series. It examines and shares varied perspectives, curricula, instructional practices, and resources intended to enhance student learning related to the infusion of global and international dimensions of education into classroom and school-wide teaching and learning. It is organized in three sections: Educator Perspectives, Inquiry into Practice, and Resources. In this introduction, we briefly discuss how the text is organized, common themes that emerged across the sections, and concluding reflections.

ORGANIZATION OF CONTENT

The first section, Educator Perspectives, provides insights from a range of university scholars and field-based leaders who, in multiple and distinct ways, have made learning and teaching about global matters in local classrooms a core feature of their work. Each was invited to comment on purposes, opportunities, and challenges related to infusing global and international dimensions into teaching and learning. Therefore, this section offers both contrasting conceptual perspectives and concrete suggestions that can impress the reader with a sense of urgency, critique, hope, and challenge when engaging in the complex and shifting work of teaching and learning about global matters.

The second section, Inquiry into Practice, presents the 11 school-based and university-linked professional inquiries undertaken over a two-year period. The inquiries focus on a range of topics including critical global citizenship, the use of children’s literature to develop students’ understanding of sustainability in science education, and the refugee experience in personal and global understanding of “home.” The inquiries were carried out mostly with OISE partner schools and districts located in the city of Toronto and the GTA (regional municipalities including Durham, Halton, Peel, and York). This region of Canada provides a distinctly international, diverse context for this type of study. Local schools and districts linked with OISE’s Initial Teacher Education program have become sites of fascinating explorations into the possibilities of learning and teaching in pluralist contexts. The collection of inquiries in this publication speaks to the process of crossing borders demarcated by tangibles such as regions, nationalities, citizenship, and also by less tangible mindsets, identities, beliefs, and understandings. The voices across the project represent stakeholders in education: including voices of youth, beginning and experienced teachers, administrators, and researchers.

The Resources section provides an annotated bibliography of print, media, and web resources to support those interested in teaching with global perspectives in mind. Recommended by project leaders and participants, by the authors, and by experts with various lenses, these resources are offered as a means to extend the exploration of the topics, ideas, and questions posed throughout the publication.

COMMON THEMES

Several common themes weave across the specific contributions within the major sections. These themes emphasize the interplay of theory, practice, and context, and they exemplify the interconnectedness of the inquiries. The editors' discussion of the following thematic clustering was by no means a tidy process, but our intent is to prompt deeper appreciation and understanding of how local and global matters can be addressed in education.

Multiple entry points, learning intentions, and orientations. Teachers and learners can engage the global in the local classroom in many ways. Some examples include studying diverse, cross-cultural beliefs and worldviews within and across varied contexts; interrogating issues of social justice; exploring one's own prejudices and preconceptions; engaging in global issues, conflict studies, and the possibilities for civic engagement; and considering what membership means in varied communities, with attention to local and global implications.

High value of experiential, learner-centred, and inquiry-oriented learning and teaching practices. Teachers identified the value of focused practices such as constructing a respectful, interactive, and inclusive classroom or school ethos; drawing on globally oriented learning resources to assist students in understanding a "larger picture" of themselves in the world in relation to their local circumstances; and providing opportunities for students to experience learning in varied contexts, including the classroom, whole-school activities, and in one's communities, from the local to the global.

Welcoming the challenge of working with multiple conceptions of global and international. The myriad articulations of what it means to infuse global and international dimensions of education into the teaching and learning context illustrate the distinctions and tensions that can inform teachers' practice. The translation and application of learning goals in formal classroom and schooling contexts are complicated by overlapping identity affiliations and allegiances and also by a diversity of beliefs, values, and worldviews. Albeit at times difficult, teachers consistently report that a commitment to addressing issues in their programs extends both their own and their students' capacities to see the world in different ways.

Importance of building in a critical perspective. Variably defined, critical perspectives urge movement beyond the surface read of complex issues to the disrupting of common assumptions about patterns in our world, and to exploring questions of unequal power, privilege, and inequities. This can occur by bringing a critical lens to colonial and racist relations and power hierarchies of conventional schooling. This theme was expressed during the challenging process of addressing core concepts such as difference, conflict, identity, aid, and agency. Exploring multiple perspectives through a critical lens, teachers saw an opportunity for students to become meaningfully engaged in their community, and researchers, instructors, and students became challenged to reflect on their own subjectivities and the concomitant implications for power, privilege, and marginalization.

Role of self-reflection in the learning process. This theme focuses on the interplay between the personal and public, the local and the global. It highlights the importance of communication and dialogue within and across social identities and political and economic boundaries. Reflection provides opportunity for teachers and students to probe notions of perspective and difference and questions of privilege. This allows them to engage more deeply with their own identities and examine how we are all implicated in local and global matters.

Embracing learner diversity in diverse contexts.

This theme focuses on the importance of acknowledging and appreciating each person's history, culture, knowledge, and experience. In this way all learners can feel a sense of value and welcome and be able to develop a feeling of ownership and belonging in their classrooms and schools. By embracing the possibilities found in local, pluralistic contexts, and by recognizing that schools today are a microcosm of both smaller communities and larger worldwide societies, this journey of learning to include global matters can be enriched.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

As we consider the learning that occurred through the various inquiries, we see that we are part of a larger community seeking to understand more about these issues and the implications of infusing global and international dimensions of education into classroom and school-wide learning and teaching. We recognize that teachers, teacher candidates, faculty instructors, and researchers share many of the same questions, ideas, goals, and hopes for their learning and that of their students. Despite the range of research and curricular and instructional work currently underway, it is clear that this dimension of education is both compelling and complex.

Deliberate and ongoing support for university instructors and field educators is essential in efforts to improve student learning and reform schools and teacher education programs. Over the years, and again through this initiative, we are reminded of the significance for professional learning of bringing together university instructors and field-based partners to explore a shared interest. Contributors frequently identified the value of professional learning that is respectful of collaboration, inquiry, and connections among theory, practice, and context. Our use of a collaborative inquiry model is grounded in our belief that teachers in higher education and K–12 education bring different knowledge bases and care deeply about

improving their teaching to better support learners and learning. We see the power of collaboration across boundaries, both tangible and intangible, across locations, and across roles. We also see the power of big, complex, and challenging questions and the importance of self-directed—yet collaborative—pursuits of learning in real contexts for all learners. Participants emphasized the importance of continuing such explicit and intentional opportunities to talk and work collaboratively to improve professional practice in this dimension of education, especially given its complexity, criticality, and multidimensionality.

We intend to do further study of not only the content of the inquiries but also the actual process of learning undertaken and experienced by the project participants. It is our hope to discover ways to support growth, learning, and change in teaching practice; learn how to make stronger theory–practice and community–school–university collaborations; explore how practitioners engage in boundary and border crossing to build relationships and new knowledge; and learn how to support greater interdependence and learning through collaborative inquiry. We hope to continue the conversation about authentic and transformative learning and teaching for our students and for ourselves.

The strength of this collective work and collaborative inquiry is demonstrated by the range of new evidence-informed practices being carried out in both K–12 and university classrooms. The outcomes of this initiative reinforce our commitment to issues of global and international concern, collaborative inquiry, and the institutional infrastructure that make such inquiry possible. We have much to learn from sharing questions, explorations, findings, effective practices, contested ideas, conflicting notions, and new questions that challenge our ways of thinking about ourselves and our multiple communities, from the local to the global. May the scholarship in this publication extend the borders and boundaries of learning and teaching global matters in the Ontario context and beyond.

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Reflecting on Global Dimensions of Contemporary Education

George J. Sefa Dei

With increasing diversity and difference in today's education, schools now more than ever constitute a microcosm of our larger society. Such diversity comes with strengths, possibilities, and challenges. This includes not only the possibility to share knowledge, personal and collective lived experiences, histories, and cultures but also the challenges to promote “communities of learners” in our schools, colleges, and universities: that is, learners with responsibilities toward each other and their communities. In effect, it is easy to acknowledge diversity but difficult to respond in concrete ways to what diversity offers.

The importance of our intertwined and collective histories needs to be recognized, which implies that we are each other's keeper and that we are all in this together. Arguably, our biggest challenge as educators concerns how we can use the diversity and difference that we see around us to promote effective education for all learners, build good, healthy schools, and create well-integrated local, regional, national, and global communities. Working with diversity demands that each history, culture, knowledge, and experience be acknowledged and appreciated such that all learners feel a sense of value and welcome, and are able to develop a feeling of ownership and belonging in their schools.

Education has a role to play in meeting the challenges and possibilities of diversity and difference. However, a liberal view of diversity is not enough. Working with diversity does not simply involve asking how we can all get along. Diversity is about responsibility. It speaks to power, resource, and equity. It demands hard work to cultivate its purported strengths. It demands that

power- and resource-sharing be at the front and centre of our collective engagements.

In my view, educators need to bring a critical lens to global education and infuse international dimensions of global education throughout the K–12 curriculum and within colleges and universities. A sincere and critical pursuit of global education can help open up minds of young learners to the complex world we live in.

The infusion of a critical global education and its international dimensions in today's classrooms provides opportunities for enhancing learning for all. However, we need to proceed with working through some shared and common understandings of what this education must be. For example, we need to ask and have critical dialogue around questions such as the following: What do we really mean by global education with international dimensions? What are the goals and purposes of such education? How can the pursuit of such education enrich classrooms and school environments? How do we frame an inclusive global future, and what is the nature of the work required to collectively arrive at that future? For this coupling of global and international education to give us all hope, I focus on their points of convergence and what it means to educate today's learner in local schools.

As an important first step, educators might need to gain an understanding of the principles of global education and also the pedagogical and instructional strategies and efforts that can be implemented to ensure effective outcomes for all learners. I urge that our understanding of global education move beyond

providing intellectualizing, transformative projects to engaging in direct educational practices that help subvert the colonial and racist relations and power hierarchies of conventional schooling, and also the assumed normalcy of privileged and taken-for-granted assumptions.

The more popular understandings of global education are anchored in the dictates of corporate agendas of commercial interests, having its own language of choice, freedoms, privatization, and market ideologies (see Portelli & Solomon, 2001; Peters, Britton, & Blee, 2008; Kaye, 1992). However, any critical engagement of these popular understandings brings forth some interesting questions, especially when one examines the problematic, hegemonic constructions of global; interpretations of theoretical, philosophical, and practical desires to collapse local, national, and international borders and boundaries; and imagined or reconfigured futures. For example, where is the urgency to deal concretely with power, privilege, and our relative complicity in existing colonial and oppressive relations, as well as with the persistent, structural inequities that mark the global? What power relationships have tried to organize the world in a search for harmony in the global public sphere? Why has global education for the most part been pursued as a civilizing, colonial, imperial imposition on everyone, especially on those who do not hold power? (See also Charania, 2011.)

Decolonizing global education is about asking new and difficult questions concerning the erasures, negations, and omissions of histories, identities, representations, cultures, and practices.

I offer a rethinking of global education as critical global education. This education must (a) confront the conditions and unequal power relations that have created unequal advantage and privilege among nations; (b) seriously acknowledge the contribution of

all to “global humanity”; (c) teach about the hegemony of the West, which attempts to define the South in its image; (d) teach about diversity and difference as sites of power and sites of identity; (e) promote equity and values education to highlight the ways social difference as sites of identities (race, gender, class, [dis]ability, sexuality, language, religion) are linked with schooling and education; (f) promote indigenous, community, and local cultural knowledge; (g) help promote effective communal living as based on mutual trust and respect for each other and the sanctity of human life; (h) help connect learners with their rights and social responsibilities; (i) involve the idea of pursuing schooling and education as a communal resource intended for the good of humanity; (j) have the goal of building healthy, sustainable communities by teaching about collective stakes and responsibilities; (k) assist learners to work within learning communities where learners are supportive of each other; (l) help learners understand decolonization as more than an individual project—rather as communities coming to collective awareness and ensuring the success of collective projects for mutual benefits; (m) engage spirituality in learning, for example, as an affirmation of respect for teachings of the Creator, Mother Earth, and Land, as understandings of relations among self and collective, and as developing a sense of purpose and meaning of life and social existence (see also Dei, 2013).

Global education as we have come to know it focuses on intercultural dialogue and communication without engaging the tough questions of power, privilege, responsibilities, and complicities. Hence, decolonizing global education is about asking new and difficult questions concerning the erasures, negations, and omissions of histories, identities, representations, cultures, and practices. It is also about teaching and learning responsibilities, complicities, implications, and the power of possible futures. The school curriculum is an important starting place for ensuring that the critical teachings of a decolonized global education with international dimensions are carried through.

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Teaching through a Multilingual Lens: Classroom Resources for Global Education

Jim Cummins

As educators, have we marginalized the global resources in our local classrooms?

We don't have to travel very far to find the global in local classrooms. Across Canada, linguistic and cultural diversity has increased significantly during the past 20 years as a result of continued immigration, which has remained steady at around 250,000 immigrants per year. Approximately half the school populations in Toronto and Vancouver come from non-English-speaking home backgrounds. The majority of these students were born in Canada to parents who immigrated.

Clearly, this vibrant diversity provides abundant opportunity to explore global issues and realities within typical classrooms. If we take seriously generally accepted pedagogical notions such as *teaching the whole child* and *connecting curriculum to students' background knowledge*, we will encourage multilingual students—whose English may still be limited—to use their home language as a cognitive tool to engage with curriculum content. We will also find ways to enable students to gain access to the linguistic and cultural resources—referred to as *funds of knowledge*—that their parents and communities bring to Canada from around the world. In a recent review of funds-of-knowledge research, Rodriguez (2013) highlights its focus on enabling educators to learn more about students' home lives “as a means to better connect the knowledge production occurring within the school to that occurring beyond the school” (p. 89).

However, there is little evidence that Canadian schools have systematically acknowledged the knowledge production occurring in students' homes

and communities nor sought to build on this “home-grown” educational resource. Instead, current implicit and explicit policies in both school systems and teacher education programs have adopted a “benign neglect” orientation to linguistic and cultural diversity. For the most part, we no longer punish students for speaking their home languages in school, nor advise parents to switch to English in the home (as was common up to the mid-1980s). But we also pay little attention to the linguistic and cultural resources that students and communities bring into our classrooms. Educators and policy-makers tend to view “English language learners” in problem-oriented ways—students are defined by what they lack, namely English proficiency, and the priority is to help them learn English quickly so they can develop academic skills in that language. Students' home languages are seen as either irrelevant or possibly even an impediment to that process. Even when teachers view the multilingualism in their classrooms in positive ways, there are few guidelines or curriculum expectations that specify how they might mobilize the linguistic diversity of students to advance their overall academic development.

There is little evidence that Canadian schools have systematically acknowledged the knowledge production occurring in students' homes and communities nor sought to build on this “home-grown” educational resource.

The beginnings of a paradigm shift?

During the past decade Canadian educators and university researchers initiated a range of collaborative projects that sought to affirm the educational value of the global funds of knowledge that students, parents, and communities bring to local schools (see Table 1 for some illustrative projects). These projects have viewed community cultures and languages as dynamic and evolving rather than static and fixed, and they have engaged students (and frequently their parents and the wider community) in a process of *cultural production*. Gaztambide-Fernández (2011) discusses cultural production as a process whereby students and teachers come together as makers of culture to produce “creative self-representations” (p. 14). These cultural productions constitute a counter-narrative that challenges deficit perspectives among certain social groups.

Colleagues and I have argued that teacher-student interactions constitute a process of *negotiating identities* that, to varying degrees, either reflects and reinforces coercive relations of power in the wider society or, alternatively, challenges these relations of power (Cummins, 2001; Cummins & Early, 2011). When schools treat multilingual students’ cultural knowledge and linguistic talents with benign neglect, essentially asking students to leave this knowledge at the school-house door, they are complicit with a wider societal discourse that views *literacy* only as literacy in English (or French) and devalues other languages and forms of cultural knowledge. Teacher education programs are similarly complicit with this societal discourse when they ignore the knowledge base that exists regarding effective teaching of students learning English as an additional language (EAL students): for example, the ways of scaffolding instruction to make it comprehensible for learners of English. Similarly, claims to teach from a social justice perspective ring hollow when we fail to engage the full range of cognitive tools and cultural knowledge that exists in our school communities.

The projects and publications outlined in Table 1 provide a small sampling of recent Canadian initiatives that reflect funds-of-knowledge and cultural-production perspectives. In most cases, the outcomes of students’ intellectual inquiry can be described as *identity texts*, defined by Cummins and Early (2011) as the product of students’ creative work or performance, which when shared with multiple audiences (e.g., through the Internet), hold a mirror up to students in which their identities are reflected back in a positive light. This affirmation of identity challenges the devaluation of identity that students from marginalized social groups often encounter in the school and wider society. Thus, EAL students are positioned not simply as learners of English but as creators of literature and art, capable of inquiring deeply into local and global social issues that concern their lives (Stille & Cummins, 2013). For students and teachers alike, these pedagogical spaces and interactions generate a sense of empowerment, defined as the *collaborative creation of power*.

In short, there is a fundamental difference between global education that focuses on teaching students about global phenomena and current events that are “out there” in the wider world as compared to global education that connects with students’ lives “right here” and enables them to use their home languages as cognitive tools to generate knowledge about global phenomena collaboratively with their parents, teachers, and communities.

Table 1. A Sampling of Canadian Cultural Production Initiatives

Quebec

The ÉLODiL project (Éveil au Langage et Ouverture à la Diversité Linguistique—Awakening to Language and Opening up to Linguistic Diversity) (<http://www.elodil.com/>) has developed a variety of classroom activities to develop students' awareness of language and appreciation of linguistic diversity. This project has been undertaken both in Montreal (Dr. Françoise Armand, Université de Montréal) and Vancouver (Dr. Diane Dagenais, Simon Fraser University).

Source: Armand, F. & Dagenais, D. (2012). S'ouvrir à la langue de l'Autre et à la diversité linguistique. *Education Canada*, 52(1).

Ontario

The Dual Language Showcase (<http://www.thornwoodps.ca/dual/index.htm>) developed by educators at Thornwood Public School in the Peel District School Board demonstrated the feasibility of enabling primary grades EAL students, with support from their parents, to write stories in both English and their home languages. These dual language texts in 20 languages have been published on the school's website. This project inspired subsequent initiatives in Ontario, such as the Multiliteracies Project, which can be viewed at www.multiliteracies.ca.

A *Toronto Star* article documenting ongoing work focused on bringing students' multilingual funds of knowledge into classroom instruction (in ESL teacher Robin Persad's class) can be viewed at http://www.thestar.com/life/parent/2011/09/29/a_multicultural_fairy_tale.html.

Sources: Chow, P., & Cummins, J. (2003). Valuing multilingual and multicultural approaches to learning. In S. R. Schecter & J. Cummins (Eds.) *Multilingual education in practice: Using diversity as a resource*. (pp. 32–61). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

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Alberta

Research conducted by Dr. Rahat Naqvi of the University of Calgary and colleagues in the Calgary Board of Education has documented the impact of teachers and community members reading dual language books to students in both English-medium and Spanish-English bilingual classrooms (see www.rahatnaqvi.ca). The research outcomes indicate that the use of dual language books facilitates the language and literacy development of students who speak the languages targeted in these books, while not in any way hindering the literacy development of students who speak only English.

Source: Naqvi, R., Thorne, K., Pfitscher, C., Nordstokke, D., & McKeough, A. (2012). Reading dual language books: Improving early literacy skills in linguistically diverse classrooms. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*. Published online 12 October 2012, doi: 0.1177/1476718X12449453.

British Columbia

The Multiliteracies web site (www.multiliteracies.ca) which features a variety of multilingual and multimodal teacher-initiated projects led by Dr. Margaret Early is hosted at the University of British Columbia.

At Simon Fraser University, Dr. Diane Dagenais and Dr. Kelleen Toohey have collaborated for many years with educators in implementing projects focused on developing students' awareness of language and promoting their multilingual and multiliteracy skills. This work has resulted in the website *ScribJab*, which provides the following statement: "ScribJab is a web site and iPad application for children (age 10–13) to read and create digital stories (text, illustrations, and audio recordings) in multiple languages (English, French and other non-official languages). *ScribJab* creates a space for children to communicate about their stories, and come to an enhanced appreciation of their own multilingual resources."

Source: Marshall, E., & Toohey, K. (2010). Representing family: Community funds of knowledge, bilingualism, and multimodality. *Harvard Educational Review*, 80(2), 221–241.

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Roadblock or Guidepost? Travelling the Critical Global Education Path as a New Teacher

Kate O'Connor

It is a cliché that teachers wear multiple hats in our work—educator, coach, caregiver, social worker, to name a few. What is less acknowledged is that we do so in the context of our own teacher identity. For some, our central identity as teachers develops and emerges over time; for others, including myself, a strong sense of teacher identity drives our career choice early on. I entered teaching with a sense of who I wanted to be in any and all school contexts—a critical global educator.

For me, the critical global education approach to teaching means creating a space for transformative education that contributes to a more just and equitable world of critical and active citizens. In this context, global educators have students examine global systems of oppression, recognize the value of marginalized voices and knowledge, explore possibilities for the redistribution of global wealth and power, and engage in active global citizenship (Freire, 1970, 1993; Apple, 2006). (See also O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011, for a comprehensive discussion on the components and goals of critical global education.)

I embrace this approach for the reasons stated above and also because critical global education responds to another obligation that our schools have: responding to changing student populations. In many communities within the Greater Toronto Area, students are bicultural children living in transnational families. Their family histories and experiences are global, and their family migration stories are often implicitly

linked to global mechanisms of oppression and the global movement of capital and labour. The emerging pressures on schools for both global and culturally relevant education are intimately linked to one another (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011).

Schools have historically interpreted students' biculturalism as burdensome to educators and as encumbering the students' educational success. However, critical global education has the potential to recognize the value of these students' transnational identities, their bi- or multiculturalism, and their bi- or multilingualism. A funds-of-knowledge approach to education—one that values students' "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills"—can provide invaluable benefits for the classroom by serving the dual purpose of fostering positive cultural identities to support more equitable outcomes and by enriching the content and experience of global education for all students (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992, p.133; O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011). In other words, as schools and teachers seek ways to become more culturally relevant to their students, effective global education offers one means of accomplishing this goal (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

That's a lot to digest—and it's a lot to accomplish in any classroom. Entering teachers' college, I knew the work would be hard for varying and complex reasons, but carried by the momentum from my work in grad school, I was excited: I could not wait to apply the philosophy of critical global education.

Then, I became a classroom teacher. I had not accounted for the multitudinous demands placed on all teachers or the specific challenges unique to new teachers, particularly in the current employment climate. Those who are fortunate enough to find their way into a classroom not only face the overwhelming workload and steep learning curve of any new teacher but also must hustle for full sections, teach at multiple schools in one day, face three new preps every semester, and manage the emotional rollercoaster of mid-semester moves, end-of-year surpluses, or even layoffs. The competing and ever-present demands of the job itself compromised my capacity to fully put theory into practice (one could argue the very systems critical global ed aims to dismantle are contributing to this unstable climate). But then I faced a teacher identity crisis—if I was not a critical global educator, who was I? A suburban French teacher?

My time in wealthy, suburban schools reminded me that students can varyingly occupy positions of privilege and marginalization.

If the climate permitted new teachers to be able to select their classroom, I would be working in a diverse neighbourhood in Toronto, teaching history. But my time in wealthy, suburban schools reminded me that students can varyingly occupy positions of privilege and marginalization. It became clear to me that my multiple teacher identities could complement—rather than compete with—one another.

Teaching a course I had already taught once before (Grade 9 French), I could begin taking steps to express my global educator identity. As a first step, I had students create a family tree (*en français, bien sûr*). This activity gave me valuable insights into my students and provided a foundation for many more activities to come. Students came together to inquire about and share their respective family trees. The

exchanges revealed that we had a global classroom—despite the relative racial homogeneity of the school—and I positioned this as an asset our class community would build upon.

As we moved through the curriculum, I upheld my commitment to including materials that shared “subaltern” Francophone perspectives. We listened to Somalian-born K’naan’s French-filled love letter, *Africa*, featuring Francophone singers Amadou and Mariam; we watched music videos that addressed global inequities as a legacy of colonialism (*Sénégal Fast Food*); we discussed the colonial history that explains the place of French as a global language; we read *Poème à mon frère blanc*; we heard from Malian *griots*; and we explored the richness of Islamic history in Mali.

Students’ language skills developed as they were encouraged to share their own oral histories. In French, we heard difficult and moving stories about family migration from Vietnam and South Africa, about mythic family lore from Serbia, about visits to parents’ homelands, and the impact of the changing economic landscape in South Korea. Students made presentations on countries with French as their official or working language; but rather than hearing about croissants in Paris or skiing in the Swiss Alps, the class heard critical explanations for high levels of Algerian unemployment from one student and about the beauty to be found in Haiti from another.

Although these examples are specific to this course, the same first steps can be replicated in any classroom. Get to know your students. Include materials that share multiple perspectives and that challenge dominant perceptions. Value and make space for the global knowledge students bring to the classroom.

In writing this, I realize that I can still critique every activity and lesson I have outlined. One of the challenges of critical global ed is that you will be just that—critical. It is possible to talk yourself out of

anything. But we must all begin somewhere and continue to develop the critique—not as a way to arrest our work, rather as a way to improve it. The examples I have listed above are just the beginning, and I look forward to developing these methods over time. In this teaching climate, my commitment to an

identity as a critical global educator is a grounding force in my professional life. While there is no doubt that I am far from fully embodying my vision of a critical global educator, I have at last begun the work I initially sought out to do. As any critical global educator should do, I will end on a hopeful note.

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Critical Global Citizenship in K–12 Classrooms

Ali A. Abdi

It is important to teach about critical global citizenship in today’s K–12 classrooms because the world is ever more globalizing, culturally intermeshed, and technologically connected. Learners and teachers must become actively engaged with the ideas and possible practices of global citizenship. The realities of globalization and global citizenship are already present in Canadian schools and classrooms—particularly in relation to human migration and rights of citizenship.

Still, the way we teach and learn about global citizenship can be problematic: specifically, when it is conceptualized, constructed, and delivered in pre-packaged epistemic and pedagogical boxes. The same happens when the teaching and learning program is based on assumptions that propagate how the West knows not only what is good for the rest of the world but also how that knowledge is to be attained and used.

As the late Nigerian political economist, Claude Ake (1996) noted, the conceptual and practical impositions of modernist development became worse than the presumed ailments of “underdevelopment” that it was supposed to cure. Similarly, the now expanding scholarship and practices of global citizenship are being constituted and managed within the old and still functional ideological framework of the supremacy of the West (Bessis, 2003). Therefore, the way that global citizenship is currently constructed and consumed lacks critical reflection, which is necessary to establish narratives and operational categories of citizenship that are counter-hegemonic, that is, categories that aim to establish some equity among the different stakeholders.

What’s needed is a critical global citizenship project. This project should first of all recognize that citizenship is fundamental to the lives of all people. The recognition of this fundamental right would represent a new possibility to disturb the inequities that have become inherent in who we are, where we live, and what life-affirming endowments we have or lack.

This critical global citizenship project would examine thick histories and problematize the global shifts in power relations and human well-being that have created differentials among people and therefore assumed deficiencies in different contexts of citizenship. These differentials are conveyed in the international and interpersonal language of politics, economics, education, and culture: for example, the *longue durée* categorizations of first-world, second-world, third-world, and fourth-world citizens (the latter intended to describe Aboriginal peoples in post-colonial, settler-dominated locations). The outcomes of these labels affirm a context where some lives are presumably more important than others. By extension, such lives acquire higher value, deserve more rights, and should thrive at the expense of those presumed to be lesser beings.

The way we teach and learn about global citizenship can be problematic: specifically, when it is conceptualized, constructed, and delivered in pre-packaged epistemic and pedagogical boxes.

The critical role for educators is not necessarily to start with the simple denial of the dominant narratives and operational categories of citizenship. Rather, educators must critically counter the dominant themes and actions of conventional citizenship ideas and practices that are supported by the dominant narrative. To do so, learners must be given the tools to examine the thick and connected threads of systematically oppressive processes—mainly those of colonialism, racism, and the denial of other knowledge systems (Abdi, 2008)—to understand why the majority of the world’s populations are without basic rights and cannot meet their needs or fulfill their expectations.

The critical global education project is urgently needed to “re-citizenize” those who have been “de-citizenized” by such systematic processes. Educators should borrow from the brilliant analysis of the late Brazilian pragmatic philosopher Paulo Freire (2000 [1970]), by selectively deploying the complex (if occasionally misread) project of *conscientização*, which is actually much deeper than its contemporary English translation of *conscientization*. While the anglicized term conscientization is more action-oriented, the term *conscientização* draws from the parallel subjectivities of being and doing; it relates more to reflection-action modes and the praxical theory-into-practice possibilities for learners to ascertain and appreciate the world around them.

In other words, teaching and learning for critical global citizenship is more than just the pedagogical streaming of specific knowledge categories, and more about the inclusive reconstructions of consciousness into actionable and ongoing interrogations of whose ideas, histories, cultures, and overall life management systems are counted or discounted. Such possibilities of interrogating and re-interrogating these life systems should be linked, in the context of learners, with a critical understanding of (a) the historical and current

conditions that have created and are sustaining contemporary, wide discrepancies in citizenship and livelihood rights; and (b) how to most inclusively redeem new possibilities for the radical re-citizenization of marginalized populations.

From this inclusive and selectively liberating perspective of critical global citizenship, educators can harness and practise new pedagogies that overturn the far-reaching disempowerment of so many people—including millions of students in Canadian schools—whose familial and cultural connections to the unfavourable historical shifts are now marginalizing them in classroom contexts that are exclusive and alienating. To counter the most problematic projects of schooling—those that represent processes of *de-citizenization* that imprint multiple demerit points on many young learners’ minds—the critical global citizenship project is urgently needed in all schooling contexts.

Schooling is a crucial location for interventions to achieve critical global citizenship. Such citizenship adheres to a global ethic (Dower & Williams, 2002) that refuses to dehumanize anyone, irrespective of their birth chances, current endowments, and geographically attached privileges, or lack thereof. More so, and for my own purpose here, critical global citizenship education should facilitate the collective appreciation of the humanist African life philosophy of *Ubuntu*, which asserts that we should be willing, and when needed, taught to see and practise our humanity through the humanity of the other. In an “ubuntu-ized” context of radical inter-subjective humanization, learners are empowered to constructively live difference in ways that affirm their fundamental rights, needs, and aspirations.

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Global Citizenship and Indigenous Worldview: Strategies for K to 12 Classrooms

Pamela Rose Toulouse

Global citizenship education refers to a pedagogical approach that fosters K to 12 students' inquiry skills and their ability to be agents of social change (Ottman, 2009). Embedded within this philosophy is the nurturing of interconnectedness, interdependence, holism, and commitment to *human/other-than-human rights*.¹ Classroom strategies, curriculum, and resources need to focus on the building of community, the valuing of diversity, and the inclusion of an international perspective (Toulouse, 2013). With this type of K to 12 education, Indigenous worldview plays a significant role in the development of a much needed global learner (Cheney, 2002). The survival of our planet and the emotional intelligence of our children depend upon it.

Food security, health, climate change, fossil fuels, social media, clothing, trade, and other issues impact us all. A global citizen who embraces Indigenous worldviews does so through a respectful lens and concern with one's environmental footprint (Simpson, 2002). A global citizen that acts from an understanding of Indigenous values does so with the next seven generations in mind. The foundation of Indigenous consciousness is *conscientiousness*, where students develop strong bonds with the living world (and all is deemed as living). Social change for the betterment of humans and other-than-humans is central to thought and action. This can only come about when students can connect, relate, reflect, and act together (James, 2012).

Schools are microcosms of our ever-evolving society, and daily our students are bombarded with information through various technologies. Students of this millennial generation have global access to the world and possess tools to create dialogue and potential change through social online platforms (Ottman, 2009). An example of the power of this technology is the Idle No More movement that reached all parts of the world and prompted action in terms of Indigenous rights.² Our students are becoming global citizens whether they choose to or not. Classrooms and the educators within them have the responsibility to help shape the type of global citizens our students can become (Deer, 2010).

A global citizen that acts from an understanding of Indigenous values does so with the next seven generations in mind.

Indigenous worldview is grounded in holism, respect, interconnections, and a reverence for the sacred (Capurso, 2010). Incorporating this *360 degree way of seeing/living* in the classroom through culturally appropriate resources, themes, and strategies is key to global citizenship education.³ Teachers in K to 12 settings are at the forefront of leading and facilitating an education that can impact our world. It begins in the classroom with the student being provided with a

¹ Other-than-human is an Indigenous term that refers to all life that is visible and not visible here on earth and in the known (as well as unknown) universe.

² Idle No More is an international protest movement that began in Canada in response to the continual ignoring of Indigenous rights. The hunger strike of Chief Theresa Spence of Attawapiskat sparked the creation of this grassroots crusade.

³ 360 degree way of seeing/living is a holistic way of living. It focuses on knowing who we are and living with the next seven generations in mind. This perspective comes from the work of Midewin Ojibwe Elder Jim Dumont.

variety of opportunities to connect physically–emotionally–intellectually–spiritually with the self, others (including other–than–human beings), the community, and mother earth (Ledoux, 2006). This type of Indigenous pedagogy is essential to respectful global

citizenship. See Figure 1 for a summary of Indigenous resources, themes, and teaching strategies to incorporate in kindergarten to Grade 12 classrooms as part of global citizenship education.

Figure 1. Summary of Indigenous-based pedagogy in K to 12 global citizenship classrooms

Grade Level	Resources	Themes and Strategies
Early learning and kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elders, Métis senators, and local FNMI* knowledge keepers Key contact: FNMI lead at your school board Picture books with an Indigenous focus Key contact: GoodMinds Publishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on building a community of learners. Connect Indigenous teachings and stories from across the globe with the students' experiences.
Primary (Grades 1 to 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circle of Life: Learning From An Elder Series Publisher: Nelson Education and the Indigenous Education Coalition Storytellers, site visits to cultural locations, and Indigenous celebrations Key contact: FNMI lead at your school board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on how we are all connected to each other and the things that we see and don't see. Relate Indigenous themes and history from various First Nations to the traditions of the students.
Junior (Grades 4 to 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Aboriginal Perspectives: A Guide to the Teacher's Toolkit – Practical Teaching Strategies for the Elementary Classroom</i> Publisher: Ontario Ministry of Education <i>Achieving Aboriginal Student Success: A Guide for K to 8 Classrooms</i> Publisher: Portage and Main Press 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on valuing diversity and learning together. Explore the gifts (material and non-material) of Indigenous peoples around the world and how this impacts our lives today.
Intermediate (Grades 7 & 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>First Nation, Métis and Inuit: Tracing Our Historical Footprints</i> Publisher: York Region District School Board and Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board <i>American Indian Contributions to the World: 15 000 Years of Inventions and Innovations</i> Publisher: Facts on File Inc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on social change and the strengths of the students. Discover global issues that are facing Indigenous peoples in our world Seek ways to understand that these issues affect us all (shared responsibilities).
Junior secondary (Grades 9 & 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Strength and Struggle: Perspectives from First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples in Canada</i> Publisher: McGraw-Hill Ryerson <i>Aboriginal Peoples in Canada</i> Publisher: GoodMinds & Pearson Education Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on creating international connections. Investigate a variety Indigenous youth movements, schools, groups, and organizations. Form a partnership and dialogue.
Senior secondary (Grades 11 & 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Full Circle: First Nations, Métis, Inuit Ways of Knowing</i> Publisher: Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation <i>Aboriginal Beliefs, Values and Aspirations</i> Publisher: GoodMinds & Pearson Education Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on holism and stewardship. Research Indigenous relationships with the earth, her children, and the universe from across the globe. Plan a community-based project or event in partnership with a FNMI community.

* FNMI is the acronym for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

In conclusion, a global citizenship education that infuses Indigenous pedagogy in K to 12 classrooms is absolutely necessary (Baxter, 2007). Our planet and

the health and well-being of our children (and their children) depend upon conscientious generations that have the courage and tools to be visionary leaders.

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The Global Dimension: Moving Beyond Good Intentions

Antonino Giambrone

Current neoliberal trends in education reflect a focus on standardized testing, streaming, and the continued disparities in educational achievement of racialized groups and students living in poverty. The current infusion of a “global dimension” in the K–12 curriculum in classrooms and schools is providing opportunity for an effective response to these trends. However, it is also raising challenges for teachers who wish to work with students on critical engagement to address local and global injustices.

Recent updates in provincial curriculum policy in Ontario, particularly in social studies, history, and geography (elementary), and in the social sciences (secondary) provide teachers with more explicit opportunities for engaging the global dimension with students. However, these opportunities do not necessarily make it easier for teachers to engage in global education in a critical way. How educators understand the practice of global education in classrooms, and how students respond, is as complex as the local and global processes and contexts that such a pedagogical approach claims to address. Global education has, for the most part, been informed by the concept of interconnection. While such a concept is important for understanding the related nature of various global issues and processes, it also runs the risk of ignoring difference and the reality of historical contexts of oppression. The infusion of a global dimension has the potential to address oppression in a critical way, but it also has the potential to perpetuate oppression, despite good intentions.

In my early work with elementary school students, I aligned my practice with what I thought was a critical approach to global education. I sought to engage students in societal critique through dialogue and to foster various forms of social action as responses to the local and global issues we explored and analyzed. I taught about global issues and sought to critically explore their underlying causes, and I facilitated my conception of *social action* to redress injustices. Even within such a framework, much of my practice aimed at what Lesko and Bloom (1998) refer to as happy endings: I hoped students felt good about their social action, our learning, and the awareness (and funds) we raised on particular issues.

I especially experienced what I deemed success in engaging students in such an approach when I taught at a senior school where most of the students identified as white and middle to upper-middle class. Students at this school responded to my conception of global education with enthusiasm. I often invited critique of the global impact of various corporate entities, for example, by discussing issues of labour exploitation and the impact of globalizing practices. Also, I organized community service projects for students and accompanied them to demonstrations aimed at raising awareness for various issues that I, and my students, associated with local and global injustice. To incite a desire for activism, we frequently had discussions of *others*,¹ and the impact of oppression on others. I began to wonder, however, about the role

¹ I borrow Kumashiro’s (2000) use of the term *other* to refer to groups that are traditionally marginalized in society.

of self in such work: how my students' and my own intersecting identities played into how they responded to particular issues and approaches. Would other students—students who identified differently and had different experiences—respond similarly? Was my approach universalizing particular values and presenting a monolithic view of diverse others in other places?

While [the concept of interconnection] is important for understanding the related nature of various global issues and processes, it also runs the risk of ignoring difference and the reality of historical contexts of oppression.

My conception of global education as a way to confront injustice was challenged when I began teaching at a large elementary school where most students were recent immigrants to Canada (many under refugee claims), racialized,² and of low socioeconomic status. Compared to the students in my previous school, my new students did not seem to respond as automatically and positively to what *I* considered issues of social justice. This new context provoked me to further question what I was doing, how I was doing it, for whom, its effectiveness, and the role my own privilege played in my approach to global education. I began to wonder whether or not my approach to global education reflected and valued students' lived experiences, and what that meant for what and how I taught. I questioned whether or not I thought enough about my experiences in relation to those of my students, and in relation to the realities of people (including students and their families) involved in the issues I aimed to address. I also wondered if student responses to my approach to global education reflected a replaying or performance of what they thought I wanted to see and hear (Sonu, 2012).

As I continue to ask myself these reflexive questions, I notice a general increase in attention to global

citizenship education in the teaching and learning that happens in schools, particularly through the involvement of various non-governmental organizations and charities in school-wide and classroom curriculum. I worry about limited conceptions of global education, those that encompass an array of teaching practices and learning goals that do not reflect a critical or active stance, and that emphasize non-reflexive acts of charity as social action: by this I mean action without consideration of questions of power and privilege, the historical context of colonialism, and a recognition of how processes and institutions serve to marginalize particular individuals and communities on a local and global scale. I also worry about how certain forms of global education might actually inhibit justice through bypassing a recognition of how those engaged in such work—teachers and students—are implicated in the very structures that create injustice on a local and global scale. I have come to understand that different conceptualizations of global education manifest themselves in different ways, in different schools, and for different reasons.

For me, the key challenges for global education are as follows: to explicitly engage anti-oppression work beyond a focus on interconnectedness; to consider how intersecting experiences of racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, ableism, and colonialism play out in schools every day; and, in the process, to address local and global issues. Infusing the global dimension in local classrooms and schools might begin by challenging the current barriers that students face daily and also the systemic and global injustices inherent in the issues that educators might attempt to make part of the curriculum. There is no doubt that such a challenge may be messy, time-consuming, and wracked with tensions and conflict. However, rather than avoiding such tensions and conflict, educators might be mobilized by them and, by engaging with care and hope, might turn them into something generative, something beyond good intentions.

² I use the term *racialized* to refer to groups who are marginalized specifically on the basis of their perceived race.

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Infusing Global Citizenship into Higher Education

Michele Schweisfurth

I am a former student of the Ontario education system and an occasional researcher within it, but above all I consider myself a member of the international and cross-sectoral global citizenship education community of practice. In this piece I would like to reflect beyond the infusion of global and international dimensions in Ontario's K–12 curriculum locally and consider what might be learned from good practice and research for other sectors of education and other parts of the world.

While working in the UK in higher education and researching internationalization as a phenomenon here, I am intrigued by the increasing reference to global citizenship as an attribute conferred upon university graduation. The practice is growing of listing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that university graduates should possess, regardless of their disciplinary studies; in many institutions global citizenship has pride of place among these attributes. So, the stated expectation is that graduates will be global citizens both in terms of their contribution to the social good and in terms of the job markets they can and wish to access.

How global citizenship is understood in this context reveals a balance of priorities that is different from the perspective revealed by the inquiry into practice “global matters” projects. While ethical imperatives such as learning to live together are mentioned, I have observed that the focus is primarily on skills for working in an increasingly global job market. To some extent cosmopolitan competences—skills for communication and living and working in diverse or foreign environments—have been co-opted as the virtue of employability for graduates who increasingly need or

want to be mobile and prepared to work in intercultural environments. In a time of global economic crisis, when parts of Europe, including the UK, are suffering particularly badly, job-seeking dominates the minds of many graduates. Also, indicators of internationalization and employability are widely incorporated into the competitive league tables that concern many universities, and this encourages an outcomes- and indicators-focused approach to all aspects of university life, rather than highlighting the processes of developing these through the curriculum and pedagogical interactions.

While the international nature of university learning environments may seem like a gift for global citizenship education, this is not a given.

In many ways, the environment of typical university classrooms—where, especially at the post-graduate level, large numbers of international students mix with an already quite diverse home student population—should be the ideal setting for the development of global citizenship. However, while the international nature of university learning environments may seem like a gift for global citizenship education, this is not a given. The mixing of international and home students can be complicated by linguistic, friendship, and solidarity bonds that encourage students to live and study in monocultural subgroups. It takes institutional commitment and willingness on the part of tutors to risk disrupting these tendencies in the name of intercultural learning, but not all tutors have the

awareness or skills to manage this. Likewise, while in theory the curriculum should be internationalized—for example, by including international case studies, broadened epistemological perspectives, and study-abroad opportunities—many institutions mostly encourage rather than demand these changes. Whatever the shortcomings of institutional promotion and support for the development of attributes of global citizenship, research has shown that international students respond to this agenda more enthusiastically than do some home students (Higher Education Academy, 2006; Fielden, 2007). International students do reap the benefits, in part because of the self-managed transformational learning that comes with the challenge of studying in a foreign context.

The OISE inquiry into practice global matters projects are spearheaded by people concerned with the cause of global citizenship, and the projects are dominated by objectives of developing high-level critical thinking skills within a context of an ethically oriented global citizenship. Social justice and social and ecological responsibility are emphasized. Transformation is sought unapologetically. Cultural difference and similarity are equally valued. Reflexivity is nurtured. And all the projects have an empirical basis in real classrooms,

with a view to shaping practice among professionals assumed to be open to change.

However, the day-to-day reality in schools is different from university life. And the way global citizenship is conceptualized and enacted in some institutions of higher education is very different. In thinking about this, I question what may be at the root of this difference in perspective. For example, is it because of the age of the learners—university leaders and tutors might not be comfortable with imposing a values agenda on adult students? Or, is it because of the nature of the teaching professionals—who in higher education may see themselves as subject specialists more than spiritual guides, and who value autonomy so highly that they may not respond well to professional development that encourages particular directions? “Herding cats” is how one former head of unit at my former university jokingly described the process of getting university tutors to work towards a common purpose, even an obviously good one.

I do think there are questions to ask about how the spirit of global citizenship might infuse the curriculum not only in Ontario schools’ K–12 curriculum but also beyond.

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Advancing Global Understanding and Perspectives in Public Education

Domenic Bellissimo, Rob Dubyk, and Alison Wallace

An understanding of global perspectives is important. Global influences impact and permeate our lives even if we never travel beyond our home communities. These influences include the food we eat and the clothes we wear and also the ideas we encounter and the people we meet in our daily lives and through social media. Consequently, the school curriculum needs to include an international dimension, and classrooms need to provide opportunities for students to understand experiences and issues from around the world.

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO), a union of education workers, has taken on the responsibility of ensuring that its members and Ontario students develop their understanding of global matters. In 2001, OSSTF/FEESO created the Common Threads initiative: a program to research specific issues and develop curriculum materials for English secondary schools in Ontario. The purpose of this initiative is to develop awareness among Ontario's high school students of the global impact of their choices and actions, and to help them make responsible choices for the sake of their collective future. To date, five projects have been completed, and four of these focus on global perspectives and worldwide issues. The curriculum expectations of the Ontario Ministry of Education have been incorporated into the design of the learning materials, and each project provides classroom-ready resources, including a variety of multimedia formats offering a range of choice and maximum flexibility.

The first project, Globalization: Sweatshops, and the Clothes We Wear, was completed in 2002.

Through this project OSSTF/FEESO developed relationships with the Maquila Solidarity Network and the Sindicato de Trabajadoras de la Educación de Guatemala (STEG). Curriculum materials developed for this project remain relevant today, especially considering the tragic deaths, in April 2013, of many garment workers in Bangladesh, when the Rana Plaza garment factory collapsed. The exposure of abysmal safety conditions in this and other garment factories has prompted many people, including students, to become concerned about the conditions where their clothes come from.

The purpose of this initiative is to develop awareness among Ontario's high school students of the global impact of their choices and actions, and to help them make responsible choices for the sake of their collective future.

The project From Canada to South Africa: Combatting HIV/AIDS Together was completed in 2004; in the process OSSTF/FEESO strengthened its relationship with the Stephen Lewis Foundation and the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). The intent of these learning materials is to help Canadian students understand the scope and impact of this indiscriminate disease.

The project *Tapped Out: The World Water Crisis* was released in 2006. A new partnership with the Polaris Institute and the Confederación de Trabajadores de Educación Urbana de Bolivia (CTEUB) was established as a result. The intent of the learning materials for this project is to help students understand and discuss the future of this resource. When considering impacts of climate change and access to water as a basic human right, the issues of protection and preservation of water—as well as attempts to privatize water resources—are highly relevant.

The project *Hungry for Change: Food and Food Security* was researched in Brazil and released in 2008. As a result of this project, OSSTF/FEESO established new partnerships with Food Share Canada and the Centre for Studies in Food Security at Ryerson University. The intent of the learning materials for this project is to help students understand how climate change and rising populations put increasing pressure on food production, and how this will impact politics in Canada and abroad.

The most recent project, *Full Circle: First Nation, Métis and Inuit Ways of Knowing*, was released in January 2013. Unlike previous projects that had an international component, this one focused on Aboriginal peoples within the Canadian context. The intent of the learning materials for this project is to increase students' understanding of the rights of Aboriginal peoples, and the ways in which these rights have been disregarded by governments or misunderstood by the media and mainstream society. The aim of this project is also to assist in adapting the Ontario educational system to meet the strengths and needs of Aboriginal students.

The next project for Common Threads, *The Sustainable Society*, will focus on sustainable practices, including sustainable resource development and the building and maintaining of strong, healthy

communities. Two countries will be compared and contrasted in terms of the methods they use to develop their resources and the ways that resource development affects their economies and societies in both the short and long terms. The project will include an examination of the differing concepts of and approaches to development and the various political, societal, corporate, and scientific pressures that influence the approach that has been taken by each country. This investigation will help students become informed citizens who can take part in shaping the society in which they live.

OSSTF/FEESO continues to work with non-governmental agencies, unions, and educational groups from around the world in order to contribute to the development of curriculum that supports the understanding of global issues. The Common Threads projects have stimulated discussion of global and local issues among students and school staff, and OSSTF/FEESO, as an educational union, continues to be committed to promoting this important public education discussion.



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Global Education in Canadian Elementary Schools: Opportunities and Challenges

Karen Mundy and Caroline Manion

In recent decades technological, economic, political, and sociocultural changes associated with globalization have been widely perceived as demanding a different kind of education—one that will prepare children with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for participation in an increasingly globalized world. Research from the fields of child psychology and political science confirms that the habits (e.g., critical thinking, conflict resolution) and dispositions (e.g., support for social justice, sense of personal responsibility) needed for active citizenship are formed at a much younger age than previously understood (Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2006; van Deth, Abendschon, & Vollmar, 2010).

In this brief piece we draw on the findings from our 2005 study of global education in Canadian elementary schools (Mundy, Manion, Masemann, & Haggerty, 2007; Mundy & Manion, 2008) to elaborate on what we see as the most important opportunities and challenges for infusing global education in Canadian school systems. The first of its kind, our study investigated not only the situation of global education in Canadian elementary schools but also the nature of support for global education by schools, districts, provincial ministries, non-government partners, and relevant federal bodies. Based on an analysis of provincial curricula and interviews in ministries of education and a small sample of diverse school districts and schools across Canada, we also suggest how global education activities might be better coordinated and supported.

Defining Global Education

Historically, many tensions have emerged in the efforts to define *global education*. However, a set of common principles and ideals for high-quality global education are frequently described in the relevant academic literature (see for example, Pike & Selby, 1988, 1999, 2000) as follows:

- A view of the world as one system, and of human life as shaped by a history of global interdependence
- Commitment to the idea that there are basic human rights and that these include social and economic equality as well as basic freedoms
- Commitment to the notion of the value of cultural diversity and the importance of intercultural understanding and tolerance of differences of opinion
- A belief in the efficacy of individual action
- A commitment to child-centred or progressive pedagogy
- Awareness and a commitment to planetary sustainability

Despite these wide-ranging ideals, we found that educators and teachers in our study tended to have a different focus. They defined *global education* as any effort to introduce international issues in the classroom, and they sometimes referred to global interdependence, helping others, and including multiple perspectives. In the elementary schools we studied, global education activities tended to revolve

around the curriculum of NGO partners who would often come to schools for fundraising or to educate children about the specific activities of their organizations. While the value of global education was widely recognized, we found that global education activities in elementary schools usually occurred in the absence of a coherent curricular framework in provincial elementary education systems.

Challenges

Our findings from interviews with education policy-makers and administrators helped us recognize several formidable challenges to the effective implementation and assessment of global education in practice. First, global education is hindered when framed as optional rather than mandatory and when left to the discretion of individual teachers. Second, the implementation of global education is weakened when adequate resources are not allocated for pedagogical support; for example, our findings show that in many jurisdictions only one social studies specialist was responsible for training hundreds of teachers. A third challenge is the lack of leadership on the part of administrators and ministry officials in promoting and supporting the type of partnerships with NGOs that are important to the delivery of global education.

School-level actors rarely mentioned the two central ideas in the global education literature—linking global and local challenges and active global citizenship ... even though these ideas were emphasized to varying degrees in provincial curriculum guides.

At the school level, we found three dimensions to the challenges of implementing global education: (a) teachers' understanding and competency, (b) competing expectations and time pressures, and (c) piecemeal,

uneven partnerships between schools and NGOs working in the area of global education. In terms of teachers' understanding and competency, our study showed that teachers rarely directly addressed the spectrum of specific issues associated with global education, such as human rights, global citizenship, problems of war and conflict, or environmental sustainability. School-level actors rarely mentioned the two central ideas in the global education literature—linking global and local challenges and active global citizenship (implying actions other than fundraising)—even though these ideas were emphasized to varying degrees in provincial curriculum guides.

In terms of competing expectations and time pressures, the most common impediments to introducing global education into the classroom were lack of time and the fact that global education at the elementary school level was not a top priority, particularly in light of heightened expectations for literacy and numeracy.

In the absence of ministry support, external partnerships with NGOs often played a defining role in school-level global education experiences. For example, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) were the most often mentioned external partners supporting global education at the elementary school level. Yet these external partnerships were rarely linked to the school system's cycle of curriculum development and implementation. Since their primary focus was on fundraising (as per the descriptions of our research participants)—and often reproduced a charity orientation—rather than on sustained, cross-curricular forms of learning, external partnerships did not tend to support learning of the complexity of global interdependence or the development of dispositions associated with active citizenship and critical thinking. Also of concern is the fact that external partnerships were distributed inequitably across schools. The scope of global education received

by elementary school students depended heavily on two things: the initiative of individual teachers and schools, and a school's ability to attract input from non-governmental organizations. This situation leads to substantial inequality in the implementation of global education within Canadian schools.

Opportunities

The infusion of global education in Canadian classrooms today provides an opportunity for educators and learners to critically think about, engage with, and analyze complex issues of global interdependence. Based on our research we propose that global education must (a) be seen as a cross-cutting topic throughout the curriculum, not be limited to its perceived natural home in social studies; (b) integrate more cosmopolitan conceptions of identity (viewing the world as one system and human life as shaped by a history of global interdependence); (c) emphasize active rather than passive notions of citizenship; (d) embrace rather than avoid

controversial themes; and (e) balance the economic competitiveness, global social justice, and environmental sustainability agendas of global education. We also argue for a stronger, ministry-led engagement with global citizenship education in the development of elementary curricula, and believe that initial teacher education programs as well must be part of the solution to the challenges we have discussed. Because NGO engagement with schools is uneven—and less frequent in remote or rural schools—there is a need for ministries and districts to ensure that a common framework of activities and engagements is available for every elementary student.

Global educators can be encouraged by a widespread recognition among educators and educational policy-makers of the need for deepening engagement with global citizenship education. Despite significant challenges, there has never been a better time to pay attention to global education in Canadian elementary schools.

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The Global Ideas Institute: Insights into the Place of the Local in Global Education

Rosemary Evans

As a school committed to producing “socially responsible global citizens,” University of Toronto Schools (UTS) has undertaken a number of initiatives that build student understanding of global issues; one of these is the Global Ideas Institute, a partnership between UTS and the Munk School of Global Affairs. In the course of these efforts, we have begun to see that profound insights emerge when students are provided with opportunity to explore issues at both the local and global level. When students learn to appreciate the unique, local dimensions of an issue and then compare these diverse realities, a more authentic and nuanced understanding of global challenges can emerge. Different elements of global issues—such as poverty, healthcare delivery, food scarcity, malnutrition, and waste management—are shared throughout the world, but students’ appreciate the complexities of such global issues when they develop understanding of distinctive local realities.

In 2010, under the leadership of then principal Michael Robertson, UTS and the Asian Institute at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto established a partnership: the Global Ideas Institute. During the initial year of this partnership, students from nine schools began a unique exploration of global learning. The school’s partners at the Munk School included Janice Gross Stein, director of the Munk School of Global Affairs, and Joseph Wong, director of the Asian Institute at the Munk School. A political scientist and award-winning teacher, Wong is part of a cross-campus interdisciplinary partnership called the Global Innovation Group (GIG). Working together with colleagues from diverse disciplines, including engineering, economics, strategy, and

medicine, the GIG tackles health challenges in the global South. It was Robertson and Wong’s vision to develop an opportunity for secondary students to understand and, indeed, parallel the work of the GIG. This was the inspiration for the Global Ideas Institute.

Each school team of students then undertakes research that’s grounded in a particular local reality. The students examine the challenge in the context of a local community, strive to develop a proposal for scaling the project, and then pitch their analysis and ideas to a panel of experts.

The crux of the Global Ideas Institute is that secondary school students explore a challenge that is the current focus of the collaborative work by the GIG interdisciplinary team. As a partner with the Asian Institute, UTS serves as a hub that connects other schools in the Greater Toronto Area with the Global Ideas Institute. By 2014, over 250 students from 17 schools have participated. The secondary school students spend approximately six months developing a deep understanding of a particular problem; they work in teams and are mentored by undergraduate and graduate students and initial teacher education candidates. They hear presentations by members of the GIG who present unique perspectives on a particular global challenge. For example, economist Dilip Soman analyzes the problem through the lens of behavioural economics and considers insights from his field. He also suggests possible “nudges” for students to consider while developing change strategies.

Each school team of students then undertakes research that's grounded in a particular local reality. The students examine the challenge in the context of a local community, strive to develop a proposal for scaling the project, and then pitch their analysis and ideas to a panel of experts. They develop an academic poster to convey the complexity of the problem and the proposed solution. When the students make their presentations to one another and the expert panel during a final symposium, they hear about the multiple contexts and local dimensions that have to be taken into account. By considering these dimensions the students better comprehend local-global issues.

During 2011–2012, under the direction of Yu-Ling Cheng, a professor of chemical engineering, and her team, the Global Ideas Institute tackled the problem of redesigning the toilet for the developing world. Funded by the Gates Foundation, Cheng and her team are creating a toilet that can be used in the particular circumstances of rural India and urban Ethiopia: a toilet that does not need water, electricity, or a sewage system, and can process human waste in under 24 hours at a cost of less than five cents per user per day. Cheng tells the students that the technical dimensions can be accomplished, but the complexities of the challenge involve understanding local mores and customs and the sociological, religious, and economic realities that are barriers to implementation and use.

During 2012–13, the students investigated infant malnutrition, specifically the challenge of scaling a micronutrient powder, Sprinkles, developed by

Dr. Stanley Zlotkin, pediatrician and nutritionist at Sick Kids Hospital. Zlotkin has worked with international organizations such as UNICEF to distribute Sprinkles, which parents can readily use to supplement the diets of their infants and thus prevent rickets and cretinism. During the final symposium for this global learning opportunity, students presented their analysis and proposed solutions to the problem of infant malnutrition for 12 unique localities, including communities in South and Central America, Africa, the Middle East, India, East Asia, and Canada's North.

The phrase “think globally and act locally” is often cited in global education circles. While the phrase has multiple interpretations it suggests that understanding global issues can be enhanced through an appreciation of the local dimensions of these issues. The Global Ideas Institute provides a context for students to link the local and the global. However, the local reality that students explore is not necessarily solely their own locality; instead, they gain understanding of the local through an in-depth analysis of an issue within a particular community or district. Furthermore, the local-global stance provides students and teachers with a perspective for considering how they can make a difference: starting in their own local communities, and by considering how local issues are part of interconnected global systems.¹ Frequently, the students involved in the Global Ideas Institute have become motivated to take their ideas further and to join local chapters of global NGO's, including UNICEF and Engineers Without Borders.



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¹ <http://etfo.net/globaled/Educating4GlobalCitizenship.pdf>
http://www.unicef.ca/sites/default/files/imce_uploads/UTILITY%20NAV/TEACHERS/DOCS/GC/ChartingGlobalEducationinElementarySchools.pdf

Moving from Economized Learning to Global Inquiry and Collaboration

William Gaudelli

Global learning needs to be included in learning communities around the world. This is evident given that mutuality is a condition of the planet and that growing challenges on the near-horizon are decidedly global in nature. The litany of global problems suggests the need for an enormous effort that seemingly surpasses the human ability to grapple effectively with changes in the offing: including refugees from mass violence and ecological disasters; spread of infectious diseases due to lack of access to clean, potable water; routine injustice facing the most poor and marginalized; and severe atmospheric change due to industry. How can educators expect future generations to address such concerns without providing basic knowledge about the problems and also the skills and tools for addressing them?

Despite the clarion need for intergenerational learning about the planet and its inhabitants, current educational systems seem ill-prepared to address this learning challenge. In most countries, particularly in the global North, the overriding focus is economic gain through more testing, more standards, and more economic competition. The irony is that most policy-makers do not see that this focus derives from the same model of economic competition as that of twentieth century modernization. Instead of seeking an alternative way of thinking about human development—one that is more humanistic, supports the multifaceted dimensions of human life, and finds meaning through living in community and with family—educational policy-makers continue to view student achievement in terms of economic competition and zero-sum analyses rather than creativity and innovation. Perhaps the greatest harm is visited on children who are

economized in such a way that their lives are reduced to the means to economic ends, rather than as ends in and of themselves.

These young people's lives are being charted without the consent of parents and children and with little or no attention to the structured and systemic way that they are being economized. The international competition around Programme for International Student Assessments (PISA) test scores is illustrative of this economization of young people's efforts. Ministries of education around the world increasingly gear curriculum, instruction, and assessment towards this type of assessment in hopes of improving their international ranking, which contributes to national prestige and economic development by attracting global capital investment. The students matter in the sense that they abide a *learn-to-earn* and *earn-to-consume* paradigm that is normatively and narrowly promoted as a good life.

Using the internet and social media, students can and do form communities of affiliation to inquire and act on areas of mutual concern and with global resonance.

The situation may be improved, however, if dedicated educators can help lead young people to inquire differently about their world. The power of national systems of education—for example, in the United States—to frame the discourse of what counts as learning, and therefore what does not count, seems to present a significant obstacle for those who wish to reframe education for goals above and beyond the nation's economic well-being or the corporate

nation. Yet, the availability of and access to media, digital devices, and various modes of inquiry and expression offer tremendous opportunity for students to learn beyond brick-and-mortar schools and go above and beyond the narrowly established imperatives of economic growth. Using the internet and social media, students can and do form communities of affiliation to inquire and act on areas of mutual concern and with global resonance. Projects like iEarn and Global Kids, which use digital media to join students to inquire and work on collective projects, are an example of how these connections can be made. This type of interactivity is more possible today than it was in the past, and it presents a host of opportunities previously unknown. To help guide the coming generations, we need capable and thoughtful educators who can grasp the wider social dimension of education generally—see the forest for the trees. Working with others as a teacher educator, I have confidence that many talented teachers are up to the task. Yet we still need a system that views global learning as much more than an auxiliary to the core of what young people need to know: not simply an activity that can be relegated to a club or after-school activity but something included throughout the life of a school.

It may seem like a tall order to reconfigure schools around the goals of justice, equity, and ecological stability, while incorporating the values of aesthetic engagement and the possibilities of transcendence. But my suggestion to those engaged in this work is to keep it simple and begin local. Some of the best programming I have seen recently illustrates global learning that draws strategically on the local to demonstrate

the mutuality of the global. The possibilities of making these connections are endless because so much more can be seen and understood from a wider vantage point. For example, teachers can engage students in inquiry about how demographics have changed within their school and community over the past three decades; this can yield important insights into how and why people move on the planet, and how these shifts are precipitated by events often far removed from a destination community. Or, students might inquire about how food, materials, and other items flow through their school by identifying the various points of origin and production, the people involved in the supply chain of a particular material, the waste that is generated, and the eventual destination. Or, students might learn more about how their school or community uses energy, its sources and mechanisms of distribution, the uses to which it is put, and how those needs have changed over time, along with the consequences of the various forms of generation.

When educators maintain focus on the local while seeking resonance with global issues, myriad opportunities for engagement within and beyond the community can emerge. It is critical that global learning becomes an opportunity for students to be meaningfully engaged in their community, not just a spectator activity. Inquiring engagement is a critical part of being a global learner: a stance that seeks points of connection within, around, and beyond the community. Through their awareness and engagement, teachers will help students take up this call seriously—as if their futures depend upon it, and they likely do.



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Critical Global Citizenship Education: Cultivating Teacher Efficacy through Professional Collaboration

David Ast and Kathy Bickmore

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how a group of Toronto District School Board (TDSB) associate teachers and teacher candidates from OISE infused critical global citizenship education into their teaching practice—specifically, how they conceptualized what critical global citizenship education is, constructed their rationales for why critical global citizenship education is important, and designed curriculum to demonstrate how critical global citizenship education can be implemented. The project’s theoretical framework is based on Andreotti’s (2006) conception of critical reflexivity in global citizenship education. Through co-construction of a professional learning community, the co-investigators

and participants shared and analyzed promising principles and practices in critical global citizenship education. By cultivating teacher efficacy around critical global citizenship, the project shows how teachers—rather than reproducing the “civilizing-mission” narrative common to global issues curriculum in many schools and classrooms—can challenge themselves and their students to address global issues through a historical and critical lens aimed at disrupting common assumptions about inequality in the world.

PROJECT FOCUS

The purpose of the project was to discern and build upon the content and pedagogical knowledge of participating associate teachers and teacher candidates, in relation to *what* they teach, *why*, and *how* they teach for critical global citizenship. We pursued the following three research questions:

- How do participating associate teachers and teacher candidates conceptualize, prioritize, and demonstrate critical global citizenship education in Grade 10 classrooms?
- How do the participants expand their repertoires and competencies for critical global citizenship education through a collaborative professional learning community?

- How do the content and pedagogies of critical global citizenship education and its focus on critical literacy engage students in their learning and contribute to overall teacher efficacy in the classroom?

The project established a professional learning community (PLC) to co-construct, compile, and disseminate promising principles and practices in critical global citizenship education. The intent was that, by cultivating teacher efficacy around critical global citizenship, there would be a corresponding increase in student engagement and critical thinking on global issues. Based on their interest in critical global citizenship education, five practising TDSB secondary school teachers of Canadian and World Studies (who also acted as associate teachers) and seven OISE teacher candidates from the Initial Teacher Education program were selected to participate. Two TDSB instructional leaders also participated in the fall PLC. Indirect participants included the secondary students in the participating teachers' classrooms. The associate teachers taught in five TDSB secondary schools located in neighbourhoods with different ethno-cultural, racial, religious, and socioeconomic make-up.¹

Collaborative professional reflection and learning for critical global citizenship education involves teachers explicitly working with their students to problematize notions and practices around power, voice, and difference embedded in global issues. Participants in this project engaged in *critical* (as opposed to *soft*) forms of global citizenship education (Andreotti, 2006). Instead of taking up the “civilizing” narrative common within mainstream global citizenship education (Evans, 2008; Richardson & Abbott, 2009), the project aimed to cultivate teacher understanding and efficacy in

developing and implementing critical global citizenship education. The purpose was to challenge the assumptions of teachers and students about the causes of inequality in our world, by examining global issues through multiple, historical, critical lenses.

“ *How as teachers can we point the finger at ourselves and look at our own complicity? How can we then work with students to point the finger at themselves without turning them off?* ”

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

Semi-structured interviews

Open-ended interviews with associate teachers and teacher candidates—conducted before and during the first and/or second practicum experiences—invited each educator, individually, to reflect aloud on the following questions:

- *What* critical global citizenship education meant for them as associate teacher or teacher candidate
- *Why* critical global citizenship education was important to them
- *How* critical global citizenship education could be infused with the expectations of the current Civics or Canadian and World Studies curriculum

Professional learning community (PLC) meetings

Two PLC groups were formed, one in the fall term and one in winter. Each PLC group consisted of associate teachers and the teacher candidates working with them that term. Two associate teachers participated in both PLCs, with different teacher candidate as partners. The fall PLC group (three associate teachers,

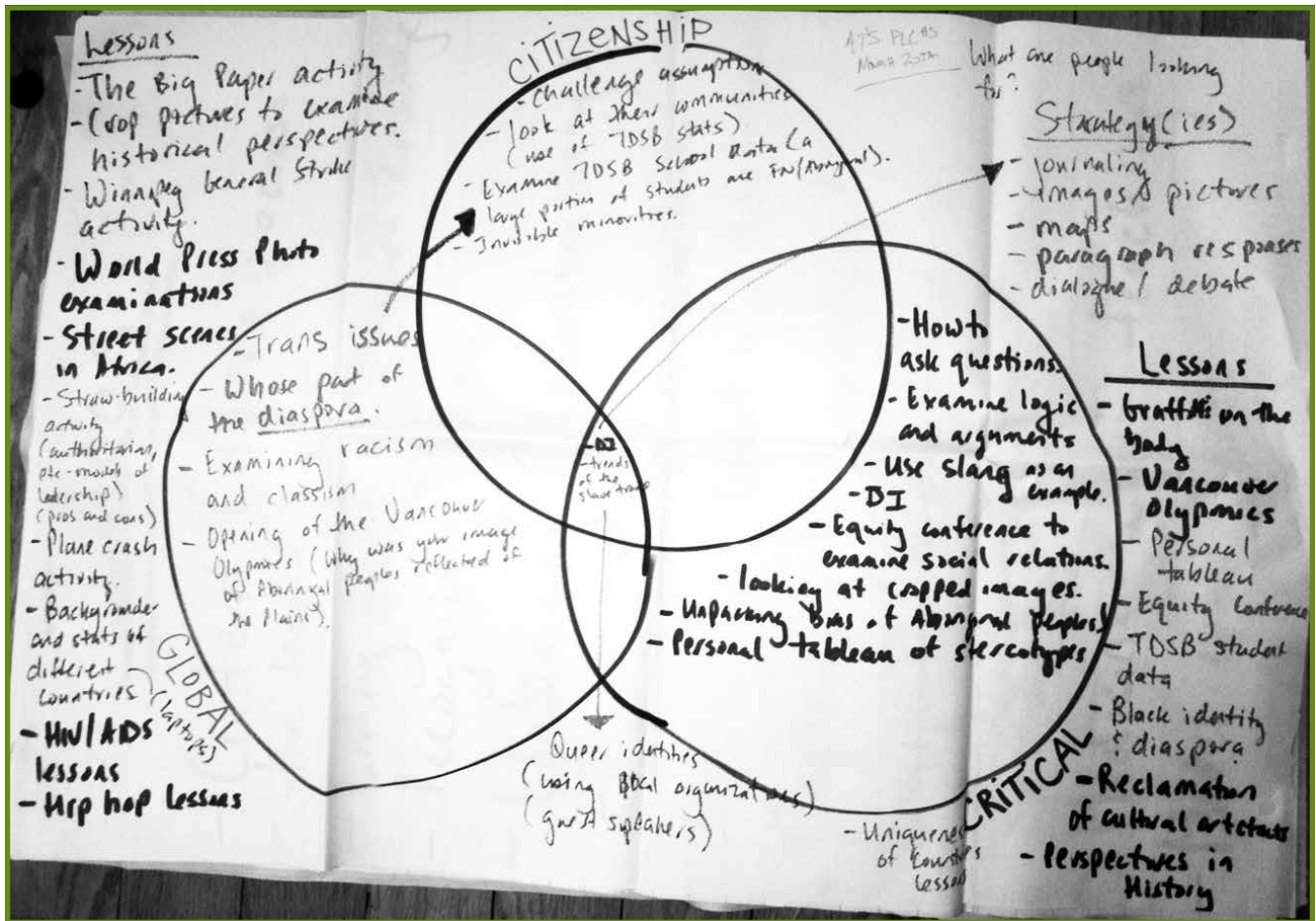
¹ The schools spanned the full range of the Learning Opportunities Index, which ranks each TDSB school based on measures of external challenges affecting student achievement (e.g., income, parents' education, and proportion of lone-parent families). Source: The *2011 Learning Opportunities Index: Questions and Answers*. Toronto: TDSB, pp. 1–2.

three teacher candidates, two instructional leaders, and the co-investigators) held three meetings during and after the first practicum. The winter PLC group (four associate teachers, four teacher candidates, and the co-investigators) held three meetings before, during, and after the second practicum. The agenda sequence in the two PLC groups followed a similar framework:

- The initial PLC meeting invited associate teachers and teacher candidates to discuss and share their perspectives with colleagues on the same three questions that were posed during the semi-structured interviews.

- The second PLC meeting focused on specific teaching examples and the experiences of the associate teachers and teacher candidates as they worked to construct lessons that integrated critical, global, and citizenship dimensions into their teaching.
- The third PLC meeting invited participants to reflect on their learning from the research project and to discuss future steps and directions for their practice in critical global citizenship education. Before and after this final PLC meeting, participants shared teaching resources and ideas via an electronic drop box.

Figure 1. Associate teacher reflections on teaching for critical global citizenship (PLC meeting #5)



Classroom observation

Teaching observations during the first and second practica were set up so that both associate teachers and teacher candidates could be involved in the research process, along with the co-investigators. Two critical global citizenship lessons—one delivered by the associate teacher, the other by the teacher candidate—were observed in each secondary school classroom.

Viewing the local as foundational for global understanding, some participants emphasized multiple, but not necessarily transnational, perspectives. Others used international country study comparators to make sense of the local.

DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative data included one semi-structured interview with each associate teacher and teacher candidate; observations of six PLC meetings; observations of participants' secondary school classroom teaching; and documents such as relevant classroom materials, copies of student work, and materials co-generated during PLC gatherings. Data analysis applied Andreotti's framework: comparing educators' understandings, practices, concerns, and learning practices in relation to global dimensions of power, voice, and difference in critical citizenship, and pedagogies for engaging diverse students in such learning.

FINDINGS

Probing global dimensions

Andreotti (2006) challenges educators to generate not only awareness and compassion regarding North-South inequalities but also critical reflection on Canadian citizens' assumptions and behaviours that legitimize, reinforce, and benefit from those global inequalities. One white female associate teacher in a

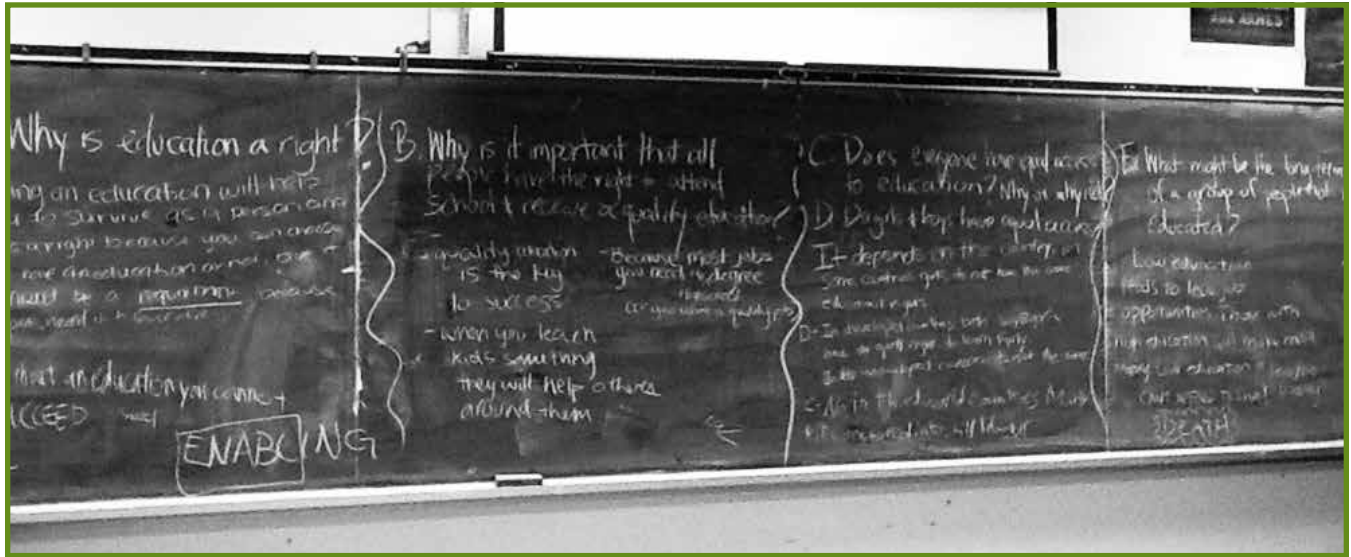
middle-income school explained this as challenging the "normal" and "going outside of our North American understanding of the world." For example, she had ten civics students show kinesthetically—by changing their seating across ten chairs—the increasing inequality between the richest and poorest segments of the Canadian population during the period from 1970 to 2000. Then she demonstrated the 2005 global context: the richest 1 percent of world population (primarily in US, Canada, Europe, and Japan) owned 40 percent of the wealth, while the poorer half of world population owned 1 percent. This provoked class discussion about causes and about the Occupy movement that protested such inequality.

Viewing the local as foundational for global understanding, some participants emphasized multiple, but not necessarily transnational, perspectives. Others used international country study comparators to make sense of the local—for instance, illustrating modern forms of slavery or alternate forms of governance, and thereby highlighting choices embedded in the Canadian system. A few used alternative and non-Western media resources to inform discussions of how history and news embody partial (biased and incomplete) knowledge (Kumashiro, 2004). Some used international citizen action cases (for example, Pakistan's Malala Yousafzai and NGO campaigns) to examine human and children's rights related to education.

Critical citizenship: power and voice

Interviews, PLCs, and classroom observations demonstrated that the associate teachers and teacher candidates alike believed strongly in bringing critical engagement to their practice, challenging themselves and their students to reflect on their own subjectivities and the resulting implications for power, privilege, and marginalization. One associate teacher explained these goals as "waking people up about their own circumstances, and who they are, and getting them to be present and conscious in their own lives about what they're doing and what their actions mean."

Figure 2. Student writing on education as a right



Another associate teacher, working with a predominantly affluent and white student population, believed that critical thinking was among the most important skills he could teach his students:

Learning critical thinking skills, learning a little bit about your own subjectivity, learning that you're part of a bigger process, breaking down and understanding your power. These are life skills. If you can learn how to do that through civics or any other course, then it's going to help you no matter what you do in your life.

Another associate teacher, working in a “high-needs” school with a predominantly racialized student population, saw his work as directly related to issues of power and voice:

Critical global citizenship means challenging the status quo, trying to really challenge the power structures in classrooms. We need to work so students have voice.... At my school students have been excluded because of who they are, where they come from, so that their voice has been taken away. In my class, they appreciate getting access to skills and information that allow them to advocate for themselves. Schools can either replicate or combat social inequality.

Many participants found that criticality and reflection transcended notions of global citizenship action. One teacher candidate held that “critical does not equal action, strictly in the form of petitions, fundraising, etc.” Rather, “it involves being critical about your thoughts and actions, as well as your positionality within society and how this makes you complicit in certain things.”

Associate teachers and teacher candidates brought these critical concepts into both their pedagogy and the content they taught. They incorporated a variety of teaching and learning strategies in their classrooms: from students formulating questions from multiple perspectives, comparing and interpreting images, and communicating via social media to unpacking stereotypes. One associate teacher, working in a small downtown secondary school, used the Power Flower activity (Arnold et al., 1991) with civics students to analyze issues of social identity location. A teacher candidate, completing his practicum at a middle-income downtown collegiate, challenged his students to imagine “probable, possible, and preferable futures” (Pike & Selby, 2000) based on current tensions in the Korean peninsula.

Figure 3. Student-generated North Korea exit card

North Korea's Alternative Futures - Exit Card		
Probable Future: What will happen if we stay on this course?	Possible Future: What could happen if current conditions change?	Preferable Future: What would I like to see happen in North Korea?
-worse conditions for citizens (less freedom) -growing fear from other countries of NK -continued development of weapons	<u>Worse</u> if they worsen, wors and continued limited human freedoms. <u>Better</u> if they improve, citizens gaining freedom, a merge between states	-the countries join the UN -citizens having more choice about their freedoms -a possible reunification but not required for peace between the two

Challenges to critical global citizenship education

Critical global citizenship education demands substantial planning time, because it involves locating teaching resources with critical, alternative perspectives and designing pedagogies to help make abstract ideas accessible and pertinent to students' experiences. Especially for courses that included students from diverse academic streams and backgrounds, participants struggled to create lessons that would engage, as one associate teacher put it, "students who are [already] immersed and passionate about these issues and others who are like little deers blinking." Some, though not all, believed they had to instill a knowledge base before inviting critique. Rigid timetables, skeptical or disinterested colleagues, and the limited time span of the one-semester civics course exacerbated such challenges. This was particularly difficult for novice teacher candidates, but even experienced associate teacher participants were eager for the opportunities in the PLC to share and borrow colleagues' pedagogical resources.

Criticality is emotionally as well as intellectually difficult. One white female associate teacher working in a marginalized neighbourhood reflected: "When you actually ask people to think critically, it requires them to name things that don't feel so great ... to really challenge your own assumptions and beliefs... To be sixteen and not sure on your feet, I think, is really hard."

In interviews and PLCs, participants explained how they tried to balance recognition of brutal injustices with a sense of possibility, by using narratives of change-makers facing long odds. At the same time, they taught in an open manner, without imposing their own ideologies. One racialized associate teacher working with a non-affluent, racialized student population put it this way:

Am I turning into that colonizer, colonizing their ideas?... On the one hand, I know I need to make the class a safe space for everyone, so I do not shut them down.... I have my own politics and values.... Who am I to silence someone else?... And, I'm wanting to hear

diverse opinions.... I would like to learn more about how other teachers are negotiating that in their classrooms.

IMPACT

The participating associate teachers and teacher candidates engaged fully in each stage of the research process. They all were grateful that the PLCs provided an intentional and focused space to reflect together on the what, why, and how of critical global citizenship education. Participants shared freely that they were incorporating into their practice the ideas and strategies gained through this collaboration.

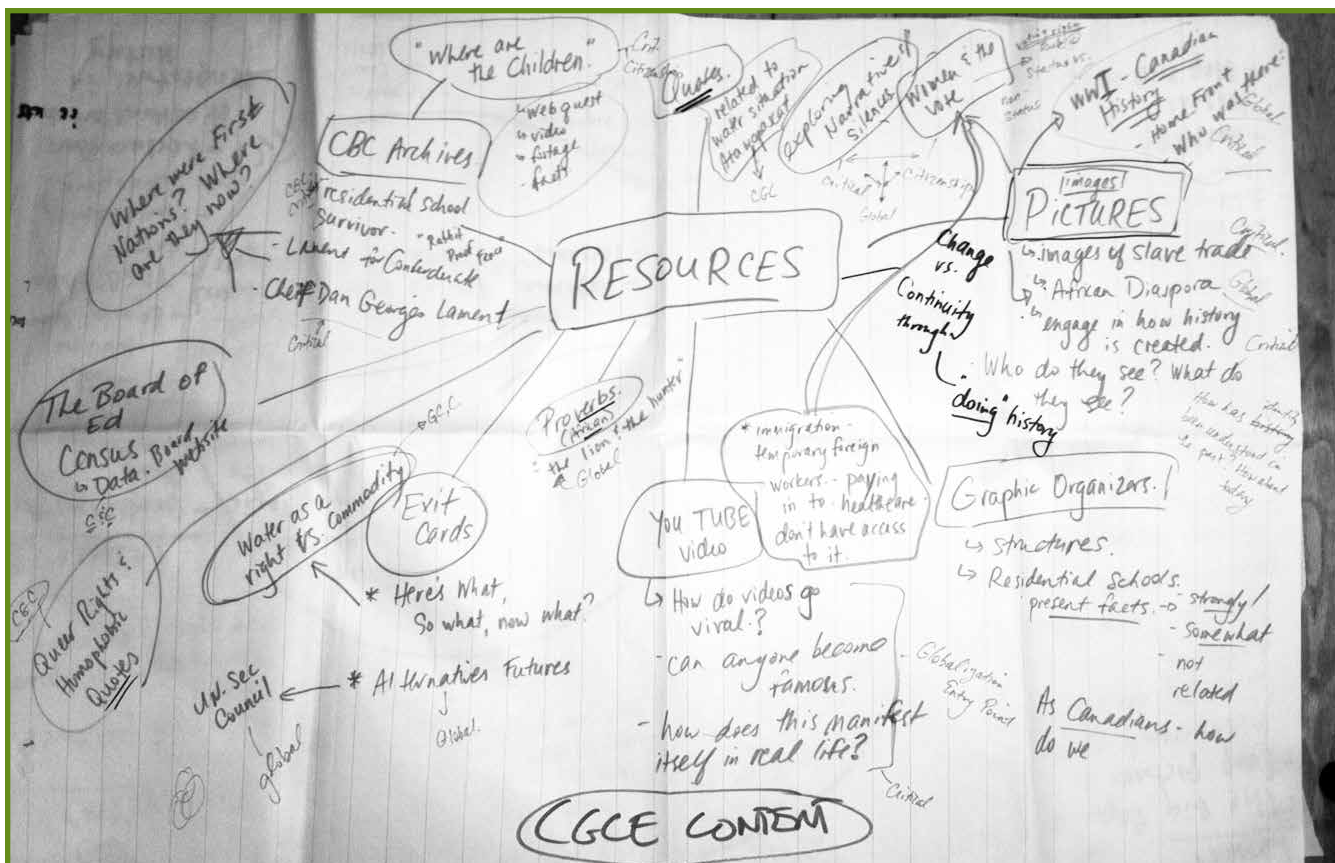
An associate teacher working at a high-needs school reflected on the impact her learning in the project was having on her teaching practice, thus ultimately on her

students: “The PLC has provided a space to question and reflect on our own practice and to see how others conceive of it—and to see it in action ... I feel rejuvenated! Students in my classes notice it and ask, “Hey Miss, you been talking with your friends again?”

The teacher candidates found their involvement in the project, especially the PLCs, was a profound opportunity to improve their understanding and practice related to critical global citizenship education. One teacher candidate reflected that the “collaborative and interdisciplinary teaching and learning are important to truly understand and learn about critical global citizenship.”

Another described how the project had pushed her to develop critical global citizenship from abstraction into tangible teaching practices:

Figure 4. Associate teacher and teacher candidate reflections on resources to support critical global citizenship education (PLC meeting #6)



Without a lot of experience, my critical thinking has existed at a purely theoretical level, so this project has provided some good concrete ways to implement [critical global citizenship] in practice. I've really appreciated all of the resource-sharing and ideas for lessons that I've learned, plus it's good to develop a network—going into teaching—of like-minded people.

The opportunity to build professional community presented by the project and the PLCs helped to break down the isolation that many associate teachers experience in their schools and that teacher candidates feel upon entering the teaching profession. The PLCs broadened participants' perspectives on incorporating critical issues of power, voice, and difference into their global citizenship teaching. All participants emphasized the importance of continuing such explicit, intentional opportunities to talk and work collaboratively to improve professional practice.

IMPLICATIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Our study affirms the claims of scholarly literature in teacher development, particularly in relation to critical educational work, that emphasize the importance of continuing, intentional opportunities to problematize, compare, and discuss teaching practice over time (Bickmore, 2005; Little, 2011). Participants contrasted the ongoing professional-practical dialogues among committed learners in the PLC experience with the truncated, transmission-oriented professional development workshops frequently offered in schools and some co-curricular initial teacher education programming. This experience suggests that universities such as OISE can and should cooperate with school boards to facilitate iterative opportunities for focused, collaborative, critical dialogue among educational practitioners.

NEXT STEPS

Looking beyond to future research possibilities, associate teachers agreed that it would be beneficial to observe one another teaching at their respective schools. Also, opportunity for international exchange via electronic media could inspire and inform further critical reflection and learning. Associate teachers and teacher candidates suggested that future research could entail co-creation of specific critical global citizenship lessons and activities that all participants would implement in their classrooms. Then, in the PLC, they could reflect on the ways they each handled comparable lesson material, the effectiveness of the lessons in impacting student learning, and their next steps.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Mathematical Discourse: Supporting Diverse Communities in Ontario's Mathematics Classrooms

Cathy Marks Krpan

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Cathy Marks Krpan: Faculty member at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

ABSTRACT

Sharing ideas and discussing mathematical ideas with other students can assist learners in deepening their understanding of mathematical concepts. However, educators often implement such strategies without taking into account how students perceive these teaching approaches and whether they believe they improve the learning process in mathematics. The goal of this project was to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions of teaching strategies that promote mathematical discourse. This project involved three middle-school teachers, 17 English language learners (ELLs), and 42 students whose first language is English. Over the course of 10 months, data were gathered through meetings, teacher and student interviews, classroom observations, surveys and questionnaires. The research findings from this study strongly suggest that ELLs can provide key insights related to how mathematical discourse helps their learning and can shed light on the challenges they face in Ontario classrooms. They also reveal how educators can better support diverse communities in mathematics

classrooms. Educator insights about student discourse and classroom practice can assist professional development leaders as they implement mathematics programs in Ontario school districts.

PROJECT FOCUS

Mathematics teaching that focuses on rote learning and procedural knowledge (i.e., knowledge of rules and procedures), giving little attention to conceptual knowledge and authentic problem solving, often leads to a fragile understanding of the concepts students are learning (Baroody, Feil, & Johnston, 2007; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Hiebert, 1999). While both procedural fluency and conceptual knowledge are important, focusing solely on procedural knowledge can leave students overly dependent on prescribed processes, and this limits their ability to solve problems without having a strategy readily provided (Schoenfeld, 1992). When students experience learning in this way, they can often develop a very narrow view of mathematics and problem solving (Stein, 2007). To provide opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of mathematics, teachers need to encourage communities of mathematical discourse in their classrooms. Discussing mathematical ideas and strategies allows students to strengthen their procedural fluency and apply mathematical concepts in meaningful contexts. This approach also enables teachers to

identify possible student misconceptions (Ball, 1991; Chapin & O'Connor, 2007; Cirillo, 2013; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics [NCTM], 2000; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 2005). The educator's role becomes one of facilitator, questioning and prompting students as they participate in mathematical conversations (Krpan, 2009).

ELLs often possess a rich understanding of mathematical strategies and concepts that can be overlooked because they do not speak English fluently enough to share their ideas and participate fully in mathematical discussions.

As educators, we need to ensure that all learners feel confident and have a voice in the teaching and learning process. English Language Learners (ELLs) can find the infusion of mathematical discourse different from the kind of mathematics teaching they experienced in their homeland (Marks Krpan, 2009, 2013). ELLs often possess a rich understanding of mathematical strategies and concepts that can be overlooked because they do not speak English fluently enough to share their ideas and participate fully in mathematical discussions.

The focus of this study was to identify ELLs' perceptions of mathematics and mathematical discourse compared to those of native speakers of English (NSs). The study also explored how two Grade 6 teachers and one Grade 7 teacher perceived the infusion of mathematical discourse in their programs and the impact it had on student learning. This study took place in a middle school located in the Greater Toronto Area. The school population is 908 students of which 57.4 percent are ELL. Seventeen ELLs, 42 NSs, and three educators participated in this study. Working collaboratively with the educators and students, the following questions were explored:

- How do educators perceive the implementation of mathematical discourse in their practice?

- How do ELLs perceive mathematical discourse, compared to NSs?
- What do ELLs find helpful in supporting their learning in mathematics?
- What insights can ELLs share about their journey of learning mathematics in Ontario?

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

As one component of this project, three educators participated in five two-hour meetings, which took place during the day about every other month during the school year. For each meeting, I prepared questions to guide the discussions. The goal of the meetings was to gain insight about the educators' journey as they infused mathematical discourse in their mathematics program and about how they supported ELLs in their programs. During the first two meetings we explored what they understood mathematical discourse to mean, how much they infuse it in their teaching, and what role it played in their practice.

As researcher, I visited each classroom once to conduct classroom observations. During this time I met with students informally and observed as they participated in the classroom teacher's lesson. I also visited each classroom twice to conduct demonstration lessons based on a three-part model of mathematics teaching that promoted student discourse: (a) presenting the problem; (b) inviting students to work in groups—organized ahead of time by the classroom teacher; (c) having students share their ideas and discuss what they had learned with the class.

The rationale for the demonstration lessons was to provide opportunities for each classroom teacher to observe teaching strategies for mathematical discourse that were different from their own classroom practice. The lessons also served as an opportunity for the researcher and classroom teacher to observe how ELLs and NSs participated in the specific discourse activities.

As the meetings with the educators progressed, the discussions focused more on student work samples, teaching approaches observed from the demonstration lessons, and the insights the educators shared based on their observations and own classroom practice. To provide further insight into their practice, they also completed a questionnaire.

To gain insight into the students' perspective of the mathematical discourse and their attitudes toward mathematics, I conducted a survey during class time. Also during class time I conducted 20-minute interviews with 17 ELLs in small groups of two or three students, asking them about the challenges and successes they experienced learning mathematics.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

I used the following methods of data collection during this research project: audio-taped interviews of students and of teachers, researcher's notes from classroom observations and teacher meetings, teacher questionnaires, demonstration lessons, student surveys, and student work samples. Student attitudes and perceptions were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree through to 5=strongly agree). Seventeen ELLs and 42 NSs completed the survey. The data from the surveys were entered into a spread sheet and then tabulated using a statistical program to verify if there were any correlations. Once the results were tabulated, a Z-test analysis was conducted to verify the statistical significance of the data results. The data collected from all sources were triangulated and analyzed to identify patterns and common themes in the research.

“ *I have a Stage 1 ELL in my class. At the beginning, he would not even raise his hand.... Now I see that he is raising his hand, and he tries to answer. He is confident.* ”

FINDINGS

Teachers' voices

The amount of mathematical discourse implemented in their practice varied among the three educators. There were many factors that influenced why they did not infuse more opportunities for students to collaborate and share their ideas. All of the educators felt that having in-depth mathematical discussions as a whole class or as part of collaborative group work, took up a lot of time. They expressed concern about addressing all the key pieces of the curriculum in a timely manner. The Grade 6 teachers in particular were concerned about getting the students ready for Ontario's Educational Quality and Accountability Office standardized tests that take place each year in the spring for students in Grades 3, 6, and 9. Throughout the study, the educators infused more classroom discussion in their teaching approaches. Some modified their questioning to allow for more open-ended exploration, and others included more problem-solving activities in their practice.

All three teachers expressed a desire to infuse more mathematical discourse in their practice. Based on their observation of the demonstration lessons, some participants felt that more student discussion would provide insightful information about what their students understood and more importantly any misconceptions they had. The teachers found that their lessons tended to be more teacher-directed than they would have liked. They felt that the current schedule of 42-minute math classes did not allow for an in-depth teaching of mathematical discourse. They also expressed frustration that past initiatives in their school district tended to focus more on literacy in language arts than on mathematics. They expressed a need for more professional development in mathematics, which they felt would provide them with more ideas and support for infusing mathematical discourse in their programs.

As the study progressed, the teachers began to enhance their teaching with specific strategies they had observed during the demonstration lessons. They incorporated questioning techniques that focused on engaging students in explaining their ideas instead of just providing an answer. They felt that changing their questioning did not take up extra time and resulted in increased student engagement. One teacher explained:

I have begun to use different questions. In the beginning I used to say, “That is wrong, your answer is wrong, let me now show you.” But now I have come out of that and I ask, “How did you come to this answer? Can you explain?” It gives them something to talk about.

Another teacher explained that she used paraphrasing in her practice:

I have tried [using the question] “can you rephrase what he said?” Sometimes they think they understood it, until they verbalized it. Sometimes they have not truly understood, and it [paraphrasing] quickly solidifies it for them ...which is what we want. We want them to get to that end, that Aha, OK! Now we are all on the same page.

When considering how they supported the ELL students in their math classes, one educator stressed that mathematical discourse, where students presented and shared their ideas to the class, was helpful for ELLs as they were able to listen to mathematical vocabulary being used in a meaningful context. The teacher commented, “I have a Stage 1 ELL in my class. At the beginning, he would not even raise his hand.... Now I see that he is raising his hand, and he tries to answer. He is confident.” The student was listening to the others and didn’t feel threatened and didn’t get upset if his answer was wrong.

It was also noted that small-group work in mathematics enabled ELLs to build confidence in their communication skills. As one teacher explained,

My ELLs are getting heard a little bit more because they are in the small groups. I have been doing a bit more group activities. It is fostering more [participation]. They are getting positive results. By experiencing some success they feel encouraged [to participate].

Global insights

When asked what advice they would give a student who was learning English, many of the ELLs suggested finding students or teachers who spoke their language so they could translate what others were saying. A teacher who had seen this occurring explained that ELLs could sometimes find a student who spoke their language and take on the role as guardian, translating what others said. But if an ELL cannot find someone to translate, the ELLs interviewed said they would encourage them to speak as much English as possible outside during recess. They also recommended watching TV, as they found this helpful. In addition to sharing these strategies, many of the ELLs discussed how challenging it was for them arriving in a new country and a new school where no one spoke their language. Most of the students felt alone and very isolated, and they often equated not knowing English to being different and standing out. One Grade 7 student described her experience:

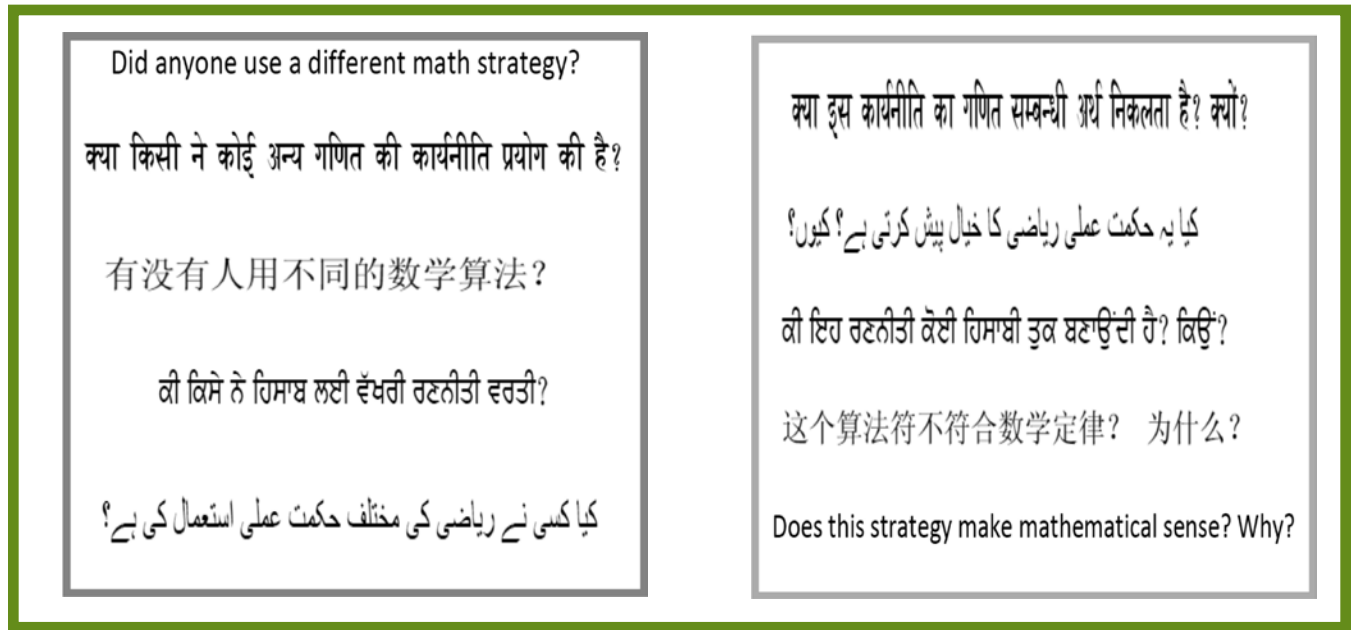
It felt really awkward, like you know, like we are not normal like other people speaking English.... People here know English, since they are Canadian. Like, some people that are not Canadian, they do not know English, so they feel awkward. Like we are speaking a different language and we are not like them [Canadians].

ELLs who had attended school in their homeland found it challenging not only to learn English but also to get used to a different teaching approach. However, several students expressed that discussing math ideas in small groups, enabled them to listen and watch what other students did, even if they could not speak English. This process afforded them opportunities to

forge friendships and become comfortable with Ontario teaching strategies. Furthermore, they explained that by watching others, they were able to understand what was expected of them in math class, and they began to participate more readily. Unanimously, they agreed that a question chart would be very helpful—a chart that had common math

questions or instructions translated into their language and that the teacher could refer during class discussions. (See Figure 1.) They stressed that the chart would at least identify the topic of the discussion, allowing them to have a context for the words and expressions they heard.

Figure 1. Math question chart in students' home language



Almost all of the ELLs interviewed shared that their parents provided them with extra homework, beyond what was given in math class. They explained that their parents wanted them to succeed and get ahead and that the extra work would help in this area.

The ELL surveys provided further evidence that ELLs found mathematical discourse helpful. The results from the survey questions were quite compelling and significant (using a .05 level). The data revealed that 75 percent of ELLs compared to only 35.6 percent of NSs felt that sharing math ideas with others helped their learning in mathematics. In addition, 64.7 percent of ELLs compared to 38.1 percent of NSs felt that they learn best when they listen to others share their math ideas and strategies. (See Figures 2 and 3.)

This data challenges the view that some hold, that mathematical discourse might be too confusing or overwhelming for ELLs.

IMPACT

All of the educators felt that having participated in the research project provided them with more knowledge and understanding of how to infuse discourse in their lessons. Many of the educators believed they changed the way they implemented and infused math discourse in their teaching practice, particularly through questioning and group work.

They appreciated the research meetings where they could discuss and share ideas during school time.

Figure 2. ELL survey results based on the statement “I learn best when I listen to other students share their math ideas and strategies”

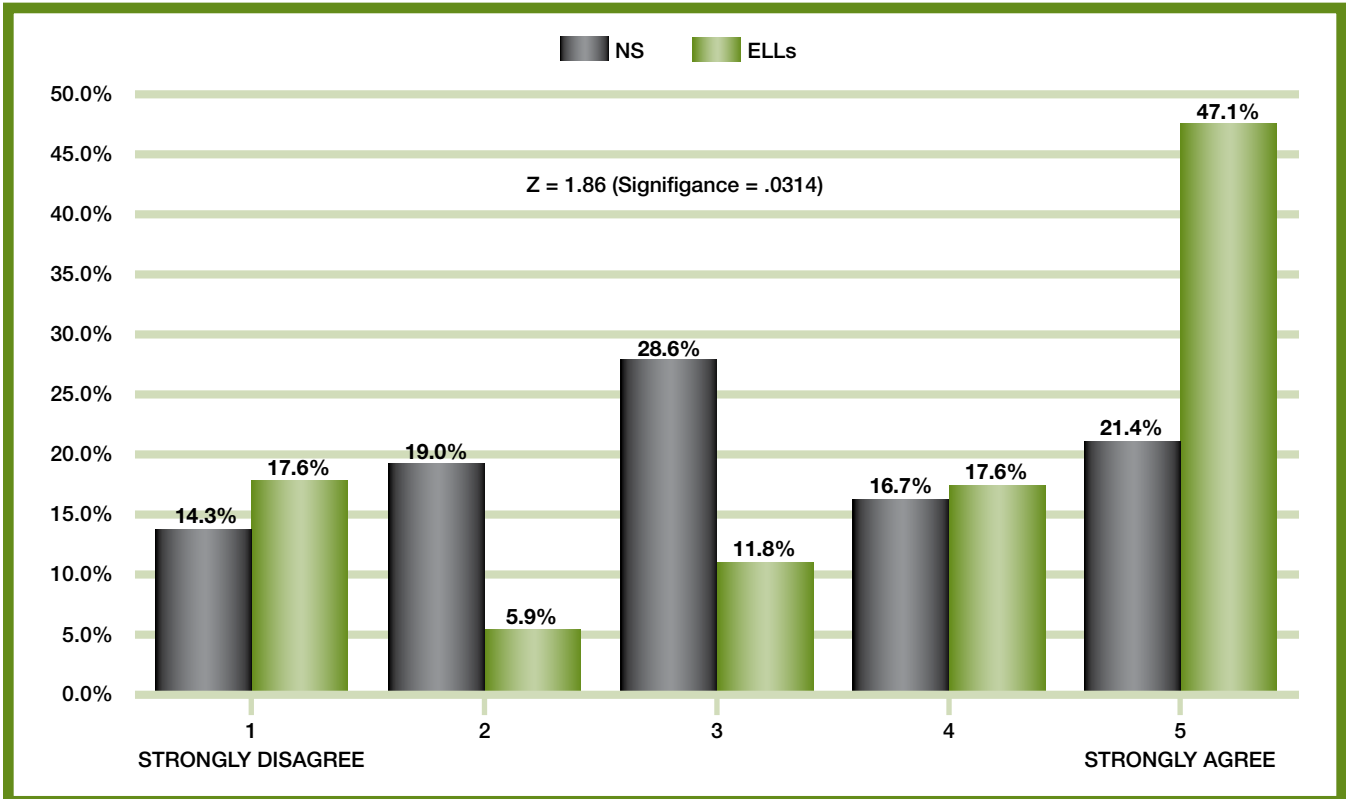
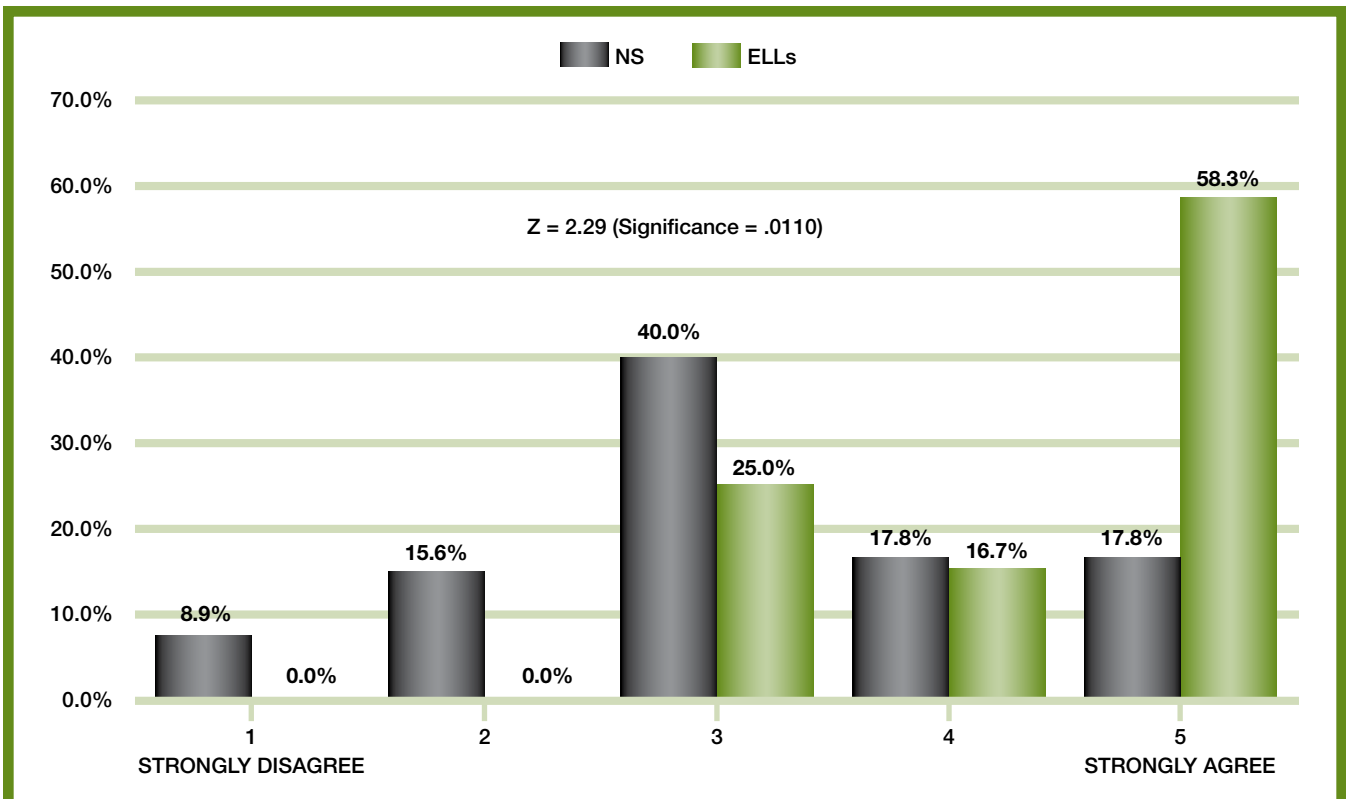


Figure 3. ELL survey results based on the statement “I learn better when I can share my mathematical thinking with others”



They felt that seeing someone else teach their students (during the demonstration lessons) enabled them to learn or consolidate new approaches and also view how their students interacted during the lessons. They also stressed that the research study provided them with a rich experience that they felt was relevant and allowed them to personalize their learning. Teachers changed or embellished their existing questioning techniques to encourage more conceptual learning and student discourse. Some students also expressed gratitude for participating in the interviews. They liked the opportunity to share their ideas and help other future ELLs. The students who participated in the lessons enjoyed the different problem solving and liked having to share their ideas with the class in the form of presentations. Also, the principal expressed an interest in pursuing a larger, professional development experience for the whole school, where the research data could be shared and discussed.

IMPLICATIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

The results of this study clearly highlight the importance of mathematical discourse for all students, including ELLs. The data from the surveys and ELL interviews emphasize the importance of creating a system in which ELLs voices are heard and valued beyond the academic component of our educational system. The ELLs in this study were eager to share their stories and insights about their journeys, often providing insightful ideas and revealing commentary. Results from the research also support examining current models of support for ELLs in schools where some groups of ELLs may be spending an inordinate amount of time removed from the mathematics classroom, away from the rich contextual modelling of mathematical language and social interactions.

This study can also serve as a possible modification for professional development models where, in addition to in-class lessons and teacher meetings, there is a component that includes student voices as part of the process. Students would have opportunity to comment on their experiences and how they perceive specific teaching strategies implemented in classroom lessons. This would allow further exploration of how we can best support ELLs as they describe their journey of learning English and mathematical concepts in Ontario classrooms. This inclusive approach may also assist in dispelling possible misconceptions about ELLs and their views of learning mathematics in Ontario classrooms.

NEXT STEPS

Continued exploration of how educators interpret and implement discourse in their mathematics programs is critical in order to address any challenges, design meaningful resources, and create effective professional development. In addition, we need to create more research opportunities where we can explore further the perspectives of ELLs and NSs with respect to current initiatives in mathematics education. This will afford a better understanding of global systems and cultures so we can successfully meet the needs of all learners in mathematics education.

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Learning about Self and the World Beyond: Cultural, Religious, and Social Justice Clubs in High Schools

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PROJECT PARTNERS

Toronto District School Board

- Superintendent Jeff Hainbuch
- Student SuperCouncil
- Vice-principals from four secondary schools
- Teachers and club advisors at three secondary schools
- 46 students from 10 secondary schools

ABSTRACT

Our study focuses on the experiences of diverse adolescents in cultural, religious, or social justice clubs and the effects of club participation on the development of identity and intercultural citizenship in Toronto District School Board (TDSB) secondary schools, as well as among members of the Student SuperCouncil. The themes explored through this project include building relationships across cultures, honouring one's roots, equity, social justice, and dealing with discrimination at school.

PROJECT FOCUS

The project focused on the experiences of diverse students in religious, cultural, and social justice clubs in 10 TDSB secondary schools located across the Greater Toronto Area in a wide variety of neighbourhoods.

TDSB is the largest school board in Canada, with nearly 600 schools and 250,000 students. The student body at the TDSB speaks more than 80 languages, and 53 percent of the students have a language other than English as their mother tongue or as the primary language spoken at home. In addition, approximately 26 percent of students were born outside Canada, and about 17 percent of students receive some special education support.

According to school and board policy all clubs are open to any interested student, and several clubs bring together a range of students from different backgrounds. For example, the Cultural Mosaic welcomes students from any background. On the other hand, clubs such as the Filipino Club usually draw Canadian-born and immigrant students of Filipino background. Table 1 lists some of the clubs included in this study.

We grounded our research project in an education for social justice framework, which is informed by critical educational and social theorists such as Apple (2008),

Table 1. School Clubs

Cultural Clubs	Religious Clubs	Social Justice Clubs
Asian Pop Culture Club	Christians in Action Christian Association Christian Club Youth for Christ	Free the Children Me-to-We Club Oxfam United Way UNICEF
Chinese Student Association	Muslim Students Association	Gay-Straight Alliance SASSY Students Against Sexual Stereotyping Yeah Rainbow Club
Cultural Mosaic Culturama	Ismaili Students Association	Community Outreach Group Youth Initiative
Filipino Club	Jewish Students Society	Stop the Stigma / Buddies Club/ FACES
Caribbean Students Association African Caribbean Club		Student SuperCouncil
Black History Association		Equity Council
ESL Ambassador		Environmental Council (ECO)
Jewish Culture Club		Harmony Movement Operation Smile

Kincheloe (2008), and Giroux (2004). Issues of equity and diversity education are grounded within a transformative pedagogy that is conceived of in terms of social and public responsibility, and challenges the notion of “difference as deficit” (Cummins, 2003) that’s imposed on many diverse learners and teachers within the Canadian education system. Diverse teachers and learners are inherently disadvantaged in such a narrow framework, which positions them on the margins of schooling and society (Kincheloe, 2008). We reject a deficit paradigm and instead conceptualize diversity as a multifaceted asset in school communities that are enriched by the presence of diverse learners and teachers with varied worldviews, experiences, perspectives, knowledge, and approaches.

We reject a deficit paradigm and instead conceptualize diversity as a multifaceted asset in school communities, which are enriched by the presence of diverse learners and teachers with varied worldviews, experiences, perspectives, knowledge, and approaches.

Our exploratory, multiple case study focuses on the nature of adolescents’ experiences in a wide range of cultural, religious, or social justice clubs and on the effect of club participation on identity (Wenger, 1998) and intercultural citizenship development (Bennett, 1998; Byram, 2006, 2011a & b). It also highlights themes related to relationship-building across cultures, honouring one’s roots, social justice, and dealing with discrimination.

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

From March 2012 to January 2013 we conducted a survey of the literature and navigated the ethical review process at the University of Toronto and the TDSB. In the fall of 2012 and winter of 2013 we adjusted our project plan due to political unrest across the public school sector. As club activities were cancelled, this challenging situation led us to meet with the Student SuperCouncil executive committee members who, along with Superintendent Hainbuch, facilitated access to school sites and research participants.

Data collection occurred from February to April 2013, and data analysis and website development occurred from May to November 2013. Dissemination of findings via the DiT website, conferences, and presentations at TDSB and OISE took place from August 2013 onward.

DATA COLLECTION

A qualitative, exploratory, multiple case study was best suited to study the impact of students' involvement in cultural, religious, or social justice clubs. An online survey and videotaped individual or group interviews were the two main sources of data.

Forty-six secondary school students and eight teachers responded to the survey. Two vice-principals from two different schools, nine teachers from three schools, and forty-four students from 10 schools took part in either an individual or a group interview.

As we collected our data partway through the school year, following more than six months during which club activities were seriously compromised or cancelled altogether, the students and educators who volunteered to take part in our study were generally very committed and active club advisors

or participants. Their strong community spirit no doubt had an impact on their responses, which were generally extremely positive. The survey and interview questions did not focus directly on issues related to power and privilege other than a few questions about participation in clubs and club membership in particular.

FINDINGS

The 2009 Ontario Inclusive Education and Equity policy describes the role of every teacher, school, and school district in ensuring that all students feel welcome and that appropriate conditions for learning and growth are in place. Our findings support this policy by showing the central role that cultural, religious, and social justice clubs play in the most diverse student population in Canada. Specifically, we found that club involvement promotes (a) intercultural communication skills among students and (b) a greater sense of membership with all of humanity across varied school contexts.

Reasons for joining clubs

Students report a wide range of reasons for joining cultural, religious, and social justice clubs; the top reasons are a desire to be included in the community and wanting to make a difference. Many students commented on how participation in these types of clubs had opened their mind to many new ideas. Table 2 gives a list of their reasons for joining the clubs. Table 3 lists the activities that participants reported being involved in.

Importance of clubs and what students are most proud of

Many participants mentioned how proud they were to have raised student spirit at their school as a result of these various religious, cultural, or social justice clubs.

Table 2. Top Reasons for Joining Clubs*

To be part of a group with other students with the same interests	65%
To do activities that would make a difference	61%
To participate in fun and interesting activities	61%
To make new friends	57%
To be part of a group with others from the same religious or cultural background	48%
To make friends from different grades across the school	48%
To promote education and awareness about my religion, culture, or a social justice issue I feel strongly about	48%

* based on survey results (N=46)

Table 3. Club Activities*

Helping other people	67%
Event planning	61%
Fundraising	52%
Planning meetings	48%

* based on survey results (N=46)

Most of the student participants believe their club is a positive influence in the school community. Table 4 lists aspects of club participation that made the students proud.

Several students involved in social justice clubs described successful fundraising campaigns, including food, clothing, school supply, and toy drives for communities in Canada and elsewhere in the world. Many students spoke about how their club activities led to increased awareness of a range of issues among students in the school. Specific examples include heightened awareness of the living conditions of Aboriginal people in various parts of Canada, the limited access to education of many children in developing countries, the discrimination faced by LGBTQ youth, the plight of refugees and victims of natural

Table 4. Valued Experiences for Club Participation*

Bringing positive change to school	89%
Making a difference	41%
Coming together as a team with a common bond	20%

* based on survey results (N=46)

disasters. Members of the Student SuperCouncil felt that bringing the concerns of the students in their school to district administration and trustees resulted in positive change. For example, the need for prayer spaces in schools with a growing Muslim population was brought forward and resulted in nearly immediate change.

Educators described how they took advantage of their position of power to invite students from particular backgrounds to become involved in various clubs and leadership activities in the school. One Grade 10 boy from an African background explained how one of his teachers invited him to consider being a member of the Student SuperCouncil executive. He took up the challenge and later described what a transformative experience it had been for him to be a student leader.

When he arrived in Grade 9 he felt he was perceived negatively because of the colour of his skin and the variety of English he spoke. However, he experienced a growth in skills and confidence as a student leader, which led to his peers showing him respect.

Interaction with peers

Students highlighted the importance of these clubs as a place to develop new friendships. They also told us that there isn't equal representation from all student groups. In particular, the English language learners (ELLs) have been underrepresented in the clubs. ELLs reported bonding with other ELLs, while Canadian-born students said they learned that ELLs have a lot in common with Canadians. They perceived this intergroup contact as helpful in becoming more open-minded, communicative, considerate, and aware of what immigrant students have to offer the school community. Immigrant students explained that clubs were very helpful in terms of providing opportunities to socialize. These personal connections also included more than half the students feeling a sense of membership with a broader group of people from all over the world. Table 5 shows survey findings on peer interaction.

Table 5. Value of Peer Interaction through Club Participation*

Formation of new friendships	100%
Contact with members of other clubs	72%
Getting to know new Canadians	67%
Meeting peers from a different cultural or religious background	50%

* based on survey results (N=46)

In spite of the positive comments made by many participants regarding interaction with new Canadian students, the issue of access to clubs was not considered critically. When we probed, the most common

response was that immigrant students could not really be expected to participate much in clubs because they lacked English communication skills and needed to focus most of their energy on catching up academically. The limited access to clubs for these students was not examined critically by study participants, and solutions were not sought.

However, some clubs such as the Filipino and Chinese cultural clubs provided support for immigrant students via homework sessions with bilingual peer tutors. This is an example of how communities of practice are formed at school through cultural club tutoring: with “experts” (the bilingual students) helping novices (the English language learners) move from the periphery to the centre (Wenger, 1998).

What students learned about themselves

Students reported that by taking part in clubs they increased their leadership skills, including time management and organization, and they gained pride and cultural awareness about their own background. Also, by spending time with others who were different from them, they gained an understanding of their own prejudices and preconceptions. Students attributed these feelings of pride to the discovery of common bonds with other club members—which provided a sense of belonging and empowerment—and to club activities that allowed them to gain and share knowledge, embrace their heritage and identity, and boost their confidence. (See Table 6.)

Table 6. Valued Self-learning*

Feeling proud of their heritage	63%
Increased connections to extended family and community	57%
Learning more about their own cultural or religious background	46%

* based on survey results (N=46)

What students learned about the world

Students gained insight into how fortunate their lives are. They also learned that many of their peers know little about the world beyond their schools and homes. Through club involvement, students understand that social justice issues need to be addressed and that religious, racial, or cultural diversity is positive and enriching. Many students reported learning about how much all young people have in common in their own school and across their city and beyond. Participants highlighted how socializing with diverse students increased their knowledge and led them to become more open-minded. One participant noted that “communication leads to peace.” Table 7 shows the top two aspects of global learning that resulted from participation in clubs.

Table 7. Valued Global Learning*

Learning about other cultures and religions	56%
Gaining a greater respect and understanding of diversity	47%

* based on survey results (N=46)

Discrimination

Our interviews and survey with students in TDSB high schools showed that about 15 percent of the participating students experienced discrimination as a result of belonging to or being a member of a club. They explained that people stereotyped them because they were in a certain club and made assumptions about them around such issues as their sexual orientation. As well, nearly 20 percent of these students said that they learned from these experiences. By participating in a range of activities that brought together students from different clubs, they themselves confronted some of their own stereotypes and biases. This ability to confront their own beliefs increased acceptance and respect for diversity in the school

community. However, when probed, student participants tended to minimize the impact of their experiences of discrimination by referring to these as instances of friends teasing them or just “as words that can’t hurt me.”

Role of the teacher-advisor

Students described the role of the teacher as needing to change at different times: sometimes teachers were needed to provide strong leadership, and other times teachers needed to allow students to be in charge. Many students from cultural or religious clubs mentioned they would have appreciated having a teacher-advisor of the same background as their own and with relevant knowledge. These students felt that a teacher from the same background would be able to draw on their life experiences to support them when facing challenges related to their cultural or religious identity. Several student participants recognized that it would not always be possible to make such a match and said that a well-informed teacher-advisor willing to advocate for the club could be a good club-advisor as well. A few students mentioned some unfortunate situations where a teacher was “assigned” advising responsibilities for a club for which they had no interest.

Advice for peers

Consistently, students advised their peers to take part in clubs to gain confidence and learn from others. They stressed that this involvement leads to having a better time in school and the world beyond. Here is how one participant put it: “Take part in clubs. Step outside of what you are familiar with. Learn about others, from others, with others. And have a great time while you are doing it.”

Intercultural competence and citizenship

Our interaction with the participants in focus groups revealed a high level of intercultural competence among them. According to a 2006 study by Deardorff, the top-rated definition of *intercultural competence* is “the

ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 247). We observed how diverse students possessed the ability to act and react sensitively in intercultural encounters.

The survey and interview responses provided insights on how involvement in cultural, religious, and social justice clubs can create intercultural citizens: described by Byram (2011b) as individuals or groups able to live and dialogue with individuals and groups of other

identifications. Byram also specifies that intercultural citizenship requires "the development of competencies to engage with others in political activity across linguistic and cultural boundaries both within and across state frontiers" (2011b, p. 19). The many club and cross-club activities that brought together students from different backgrounds provided many examples of boundary-crossing and engagement in pursuit of common goals.


Figure 1. Diversity in Teaching (DiT) website home page

DiT | diversity in teaching

[DiT Blog](#) [News & Events](#) [DiT Community](#) [ESL Infusion](#) [Resources](#) [Projects](#)

High School Social Justice and Culture Clubs Home / Projects / High School Social Justice and Culture Clubs

Learning about self and the world beyond: Cultural, religious, and social justice clubs in high schools



Participating in cultural, religious, and social justice clubs may not only present wonderful opportunities to learn about the many factors that make us unique individuals (e.g. linguistic, cultural background, ethnic background...), but also to discover that we may all be similar in many ways (e.g. youth sharing triumphs and concerns regarding school...) as members of diverse broader communities.

We want to know more about your experiences and the impact that your participation in these clubs may (or may not) have had in your life. We invite you to click on "Read more" below and explore the links on the right if you want to know more about this research or/and would like to share your experiences.

[+ Read more](#)

- > The Clubs
- > Pride
- > Interaction With Peers
- > What Students Learn About Themselves
- > Learning About the World Around Us and Beyond
- > Discrimination
- > The Role of Teacher Advisors
- > Advice for Peers
- > Student SuperCouncil
- > Your Experiences
- > Surveys
- > References

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

By making this study's findings available online at the Diversity in Teaching (DiT) website (<http://wordpress.utoronto.ca/diversityinteaching/>), teacher educators, teacher candidates, and practising teachers can easily access both the detailed survey findings, video clips, and related resources for use in group professional development sessions or for their own use. (See Figure 1.)

Viewing a selection of the videoclips at the beginning of a course, or as part of a professional learning session, is an effective way to show teachers the need to include cultural, religious, and social justice clubs among the many clubs available in secondary schools. At the same time teachers can learn about how to ensure club members receive the type of support they need. Hearing the perspectives of diverse youth and their teacher-advisors can act as a powerful call to action for all present and future teachers.

“ *I learned that beyond everything in the world, it's really important to know almost where you came from so that way you can continue to figure out how to advance. You have to know your roots before you're going to continue. I really think the Jewish cultural club has helped myself and others figure that out.* ”

NEXT STEPS

As Toronto teens are very diverse, it is important to continue working collaboratively with them to develop new multimedia resources that let their perspectives be heard by educators. We discovered how important it is to give students a voice in terms of expressing their needs and explaining why cultural,

religious, and social justice clubs are central to their development and overall experience in high school. In future productions, we would like to focus on club, classroom, and school activities that help students develop more critical perspectives on aspects of diversity within and beyond their schools. These include dealing with discrimination of various kinds at school and beyond, the role of the teacher-advisor as a leader versus facilitator, and the role of student leaders in shaping club philosophy and sometimes acting as gatekeepers. It would be important to spend time with students and teacher-advisors during club meetings and events to gain a better understanding of how students are affected by these experiences, as many reported that their views of themselves and the world beyond were “transformed” by their involvement in religious, cultural, or social justice clubs.

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Sharing Global Classrooms: An International Experience

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PROJECT COORDINATORS

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Margaret Wells: Instructor, Initial Teacher Education, OISE

PROJECT PARTNERS

Lakeside International School,
Guanacaste, Costa Rica

Loreto Sealdah School, Kolkata,
West Bengal, India

Panighatta High School, Siliguri,
West Bengal, India

St Joseph's School, North Point,
West Bengal, India

St Michael's Higher Secondary School,
North Point, West Bengal, India

Kampala International School Uganda,
Kampala, Uganda

Seeta High School, Mukono, Uganda

Uganda Martyrs Senior Secondary School,
Kayunga, Uganda

Holy Name of Mary College School,
Mississauga, Ontario

McCrimmon Middle School,
Peel District School Board, Ontario

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, Toronto
Catholic District School Board, Toronto, Ontario

Teacher candidates: Sarah Benson,
Rosalia Cha, Sahar Mohamed, Julia Simonelli,
Natalie Kiedrowski, Sarah Miller, Nicole Ross,
Michelle Treleaven, Jo Felipe, Karen Founk,
John Hammersley, Tanya Rodrigues,
Jayme Schirk, Lorna Wright

ABSTRACT

Fourteen teacher candidates from the Initial Teacher Education program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education completed an international internship in May 2012 in one of the following destinations: Costa Rica, India, and Uganda-Rwanda. Prior to beginning their internship abroad, they met as a group for four preparatory classes. Upon returning they were expected to design and deliver a unit of study in local classrooms based on their field experiences. This inquiry examined the perspectives of the teacher candidates in terms of the meaning and value and the personal and professional impact of this international internship experience. One key finding was the importance of experiential understanding of global issues, even for participants who were very knowledgeable about these issues.

PROJECT FOCUS

This inquiry project was inspired by the Pan-Canadian Accord (Collins & Tierney, 2006), which aimed to improve the quality of teacher education by responding to the diversity of contemporary Canadian demographics and Canada's increasing global involvement. Particularly relevant for this inquiry is the principle of the Accord that "promotes diversity, inclusion, understanding, acceptance, and social responsibility in continuing dialogue with local, national, and global communities" (p. 1).

Wilson (1993) concludes that teachers who obtain international experiences know more, have broader horizons and tolerance for diverse views, and become more committed to the notion of global citizenship and cross-cultural dialogue. However, Wilson's research does not provide enough detail about the teacher candidates' experiences, including their challenges and the often contradictory impacts that such experiences have on them. In fact, there is a dearth of empirical data on the impact of international, cross-cultural, and global experiences on the worldviews and pedagogy of teacher candidates.

Mundy and Manion (2008) lament the lack of systemic support in Canadian elementary schools for curriculum development and teacher training with respect to global education. However, recent attempts have been made to redress this shortcoming through enhanced teacher training programs (The Longview Foundation, 2008). Burnouf (2004) lists some teacher-preparation constructs from a variety of theorists, as well as a West African proverb that says, "The world is like a Mask dancing: we cannot see it well if we stand in one place" (p. 11). Bennett (2004) describes, for example, the quest for *intercultural competence* as a way of fulfilling this goal and offers a training program and assessment tool (Hammer et al., 2003).

The primary research questions that guided this inquiry are as follows:

- Do teacher-candidates' involvement in an international internship program facilitate their ability to design and deliver effective global curricula in their particular curriculum area?
- Do international internship experiences foster cross-cultural friendships between students, and do they result in durable learning opportunities for students in each culture?
- How valuable is professional collaboration between the teacher candidates on international internships and the teachers in the destination schools, and how sustainable is this collaboration?

STAGES OF PROJECT

This multifaceted inquiry is based on one of OISE's mandatory Initial Teacher Education requirements, the internship: "The Internship is a highly individualized, experiential, learning opportunity where teacher candidates self-select their learning site based on their developing interests and needs as an Ontario teacher" (Chudleigh, 2010, p. 2). Permissions and ethics approvals were first obtained from the university, local school boards, and overseas schools. Recruitment of teacher candidates, which involved applications and personal interviews, began in September 2011. The 14 selected teacher candidates chose their destinations from the three that were available. Together they attended four preparatory classes between December and April 2012 to review preventative health and safety practices and to explore global issues and issues specific to the destination of their internships.

Each destination offered a slightly different teaching experience. In Costa Rica the teacher candidates taught at a single school; in India they taught at three different rural and urban schools that varied in terms of ethnicity and privilege, and in Uganda and Rwanda they taught in three schools that differed in terms of religious affiliation. Figure 1 lists other sites in each country that were visited during the internships.

OISE instructors who served as trip leaders accompanied the groups that visited India and Uganda-Rwanda; they also led periodic debriefings during their specific trips. A final debriefing for each group was held shortly after the teacher candidates returned to Canada.

The teacher candidates were asked to design and deliver a unit of study based on their overseas fieldwork and to fulfill Ontario curriculum expectations in an area of their choosing. A number of teacher candidates were not able to complete the units of study due to their changing life circumstances and time commitments. Four teacher candidates delivered

Figure 1. Teacher candidates' site visits during their international internships

Costa Rica Arenal volcano, Baldi hot springs, La Fortuna waterfall, a canopy rainforest, and Playa Hermosa
India Kolkata—the Barefoot Teachers' program in the Brickwork factories, and the Rainbow children's initiative that provides education to homeless children Darjeeling—the Mary Ward and Hayden Hall sustainable development initiatives, the Tibetan Refugee Centre, Tea Estate community, Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, and the Ghoom Buddhist Monastery Varanasi—Ganges River and visit to Sarnath
Uganda A community for leprosy survivors, Acholi Corners Displaced Persons Village, an anti-malaria initiative in Kotogo village, and Queen Elizabeth National Gamepark
Rwanda Dian Fossey's gorilla research sanctuary in Volcanoes National Park, Agahozo-Shalom youth village for young survivors of the genocide, Nyamata and Ntarama memorial sites, the Kigali Genocide Memorial, and a World Vision recipient's home

their units of study during the following school year in these Ontario curriculum areas: Grade 7 science, Grade 6 music, and Grade 9 religious studies.

DATA COLLECTION

The following data was collected from the 14 teacher candidates:

- Three journal entries in response to the three key research questions, which were completed at three specific times: pre-, mid-, and post-internship. All teacher candidates returned at least two of the three journal entries.
- Following the internship, each teacher candidate responded to questions that extended beyond the primary research questions and that reflected the broader impact of the experience on their personal and professional learning: 13 out of 14 teacher candidates responded.

- Units of study were prepared, submitted, and delivered by the teacher candidates upon their return. (see Figure 2.) Eight of the teacher candidates prepared and submitted a unit of study, and four were involved in teaching a unit in an Ontario classroom.
- Feedback was also obtained from the following:
 - students in the Ontario classrooms who were taught the units of study
 - a retired Ontario teacher who observed the delivery of one lesson from each unit of study, and submitted a written appraisal for each
 - administrators from each destination school (called the *site supervisors*)
 - trip leader for the group that visited India

All the above feedback was part of the data collection. This material was read and analyzed by all three project coordinators individually, and then their analyses were compared.

Figure 2. Classroom resources

<p>Units Of Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Grade 7 Science, Understanding Life Systems: “The lives of our stuff: A mini-unit on the environmental and social impacts of the products we consume” by Rosalia Cha and Sahar Mohamed (Costa Rica)● Grade 6 Music: “Exploring forms and cultural contexts in music” by Natalie Kiedrowski (India)● Grade 9 Religious Studies: “Social justice across the globe” by Jayme Schirk (Uganda/Rwanda)● Grade 11 Introduction to Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology: “Similarities between systemic discrimination in the Rwandan genocide and contemporary forms of bullying: How lessons of the past can be used to combat present-day bullying” by Tanya Rodrigues (Uganda/Rwanda)
<p>Powerpoint Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Grade 7/8 Social Studies: “Comparing and contrasting cultural life and geographical regions of Canada and Uganda and Rwanda” by John Hammersley (Uganda/Rwanda)● Grade 7/8 Mathematics: “India and algebra: Representing word problems as algebraic equations” by Nicole Ross (India)
<p>Blogs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sahar Mohamed on Costa Rica: http://ticaincostarica.tumblr.com● Les Miller on India: http://indiaandnepal2012.blogspot.ca/2012_04_01_archive.html

FINDINGS

The results of this inquiry are described in terms of both the personal and professional impact of participation in an international internship—although discriminating between personal and professional impacts was not easy. Feedback from the teacher candidates clearly suggests that the experience was transformative in both the personal and the professional sense.

The first research question was strongly supported. The teacher candidates self-identified the positive influence that the experience had on their capacity to design and deliver effective global curricula. This was evident in the comments of the retired teacher who observed a lesson from each unit. In his words, the units collectively “demonstrated global complexities, multiple perspectives, and a strong sense of global consciousness, emphasized cultural similarities and differences, served to dispel stereotypes, and infused relevant anecdotes and personal experiences into their lessons.” The feedback from students in the classes confirmed this; one commented, “These kids that live in places with poverty, they are just like us and they

have dreams, but many don’t have the opportunity to chase their dreams.”

The second research question about fostering cross-cultural friendships had limited success due to the constraints of the short-term school visits and unreliable technology. The same applies to the third research question about nurturing professional collaboration between teachers. These limitations were compounded by the fact that many teacher candidates did not find consistent employment in schools upon their return, and this impeded their ability to maintain links between local and overseas students and professional collaboration with international schools.

Personal learning

The experience of the international internship had a profound impact for all the teacher candidates. One of the trip leaders (Miller), who accompanied the group that went to India, remarked that for him the international internship served as “the most profound and constructively disturbing experience of my life.” He

Figure 3. Math lesson within the context of child labour

Many poor families migrate with their children to the brickwork factories surrounding Kolkata. Children work alongside their parents to make thousands of bricks a day. They earn about 1 rupee for every 15 bricks they make.

Starter:
Write an equation showing daily earnings based on bricks made.



felt this trip was important for teacher candidates as an experience of *conscientization* (Freire, 1970) because they had direct exposure to the existence of poverty side by side with extreme wealth. Reading and talking about global issues and seeing films are all valuable education activities, but even teacher candidates with a prior understanding of global issues spoke about the profound learning derived from such an experiential program. One teacher candidate wrote,

It is one thing to see pictures of a country on the Internet or in magazines, and truly another to see them firsthand.... It reminded me of the importance of celebrating the cultural capital of all students and the beneficial effects that students' cultures can have on the learning process.

The teacher candidates developed a greater recognition of their own privileged circumstances, and felt the experience contributed to their making more socially conscious decisions since their return. One teacher candidate commented,

I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to fly across the world and visit these schools. But the inequities that are so apparent when you are visiting the developing world make me feel wrong for being able to travel there just because I can. Something that we talked about a lot while on the internship was how to make this experience actually mean something to both the people we met and to ourselves. The conclusion was that what we do once we get back to Canada would be the defining factor of whether this internship was truly successful.

Several felt the experience challenged their ideas about social injustice and their personal connections to global systemic inequities, which created both confusion and insight. One teacher candidate commented,

I began to think of this visit like I was viewing the world through a tiny keyhole—where there were limits, where I couldn't quite grasp the full picture, where my identity was framing what I saw. This was both extremely frustrating and also enlightening. I think that in some ways, I am still grappling with what this means.

The units collectively “demonstrated global complexities, multiple perspectives, and a strong sense of global consciousness, emphasized cultural similarities and differences, served to dispel stereotypes, and infused relevant anecdotes and personal experiences into their lessons.”

Professional learning

All participants affirmed that the internship experience had a positive impact on them as educators. Several remarked that the experience made them more sensitive to multiculturalism in Canadian classrooms and more mindful of ethnocentric attitudes. One teacher candidate wrote, “This experience has helped me to better understand how to teach through a global lens, particularly through the reinforcement of pedagogy that helps students to understand privilege and the impact of the Global North on third world countries.”

Some also observed that their earlier pre-service experience had focused on the Ontario curriculum, and so the internship experience opened their eyes to why and how curriculum is developed differently in different contexts. They learned that the assumption that western teaching strategies are workable in

overseas classrooms can introduce impediments for learning in those contexts. One teacher candidate commented,

With time I realized some of their practices made the most sense when taking into account cultural difference, lack of resources, and over-crowded classroom sizes. I started to see that some of my ideas about education and teaching practices would simply not have worked within this context.

The internship facilitated their ability to design and deliver effective global curricula, particularly in developing ideas and resources. They gained an appreciation of the complexity of global issues, multiple perspectives, and different lifestyles, and they witnessed and reflected upon culturally specific educational practices that are unacceptable in Canadian educational systems: for example, gender discrimination and corporal punishment. The following represents a sampling of insights by the teacher candidates across a variety of domains.

- **Classroom relevance**—the value of primary sources, integrating personal experiences, non-western literature and multicultural perspectives, and the use of creative, low-cost teaching resources
- **Conceptual**—celebration of diversity, recognition that any person can be part of both problems and solutions and that many western advantages are the result of how we treat those in the developing countries
- **Gender Roles**—appreciation of female role differences between Canadian and Ugandan contexts, and fixed expectations of female roles
- **Economic development**—the value of non-western development models in non-western contexts, the difference between charity and sustainable development, dangers of excessive consumerism, and similar effects of poverty in Canada and elsewhere.

- **Educational**—appreciation of the resourcefulness within non-western educational contexts, implications of teacher-centric and teacher-as-final-authority educational models, and the impact of education on social mobility
- **Emotional**—value of warm hospitality and new friendships, motivation to fight injustice at home, and feelings of guilt related to the colonial past and neo-colonial present
- **Environmental**—appreciation of nature’s beauty, the need for resource protection, the dangers of ecotourism, and the threatening effects of certain human activities on the environment
- **Health-related**—global consequences of malaria, HIV/AIDS, and leprosy, the need for maintaining safe eating and drinking practices, the challenges of mosquitoes, excessive heat, and lack of AC in developing countries
- **Lifestyle**—the importance of life-long learning, including new languages and histories, a willingness to confront one’s own privileges, and greater consciousness of social concerns
- **Religious**—the prominence of religion in some countries and the relationship between the secular and religious in education
- **Social**—the importance of connecting students, teachers, and communities across cross-cultural contexts, and support for new citizens in one’s own country.
- **Social justice**—a deeper understanding of social justice issues by witnessing the displacement of the Acholi people in Uganda by the Lord’s Resistance Army from the Democratic Republic of Congo, child labour in the Indian brickfields, and survivor testimony in Rwanda

The site supervisors in the overseas schools recognized the value of the international internships for their teachers and students: the presence of “westerners” in their schools made their students feel “important.” These programs in many of these same schools have been operating for a number of years, and are generally well-received by the destination schools, teachers,

and students. This is particularly true in the rural and less-privileged schools where such visits are infrequent. Several site supervisors would prefer, however, visits of longer duration that would bring increased benefits for both students and staff.

Internship challenges for teacher candidates

Decisions about overseas schools require careful reflection. Will teacher candidates be placed in a single school or in multiple schools, urban or rural, secular or religious, public or private or elite-private? Each decision has important implications for the adequacy of the placement and necessitates knowledge of the destination, the school system, and the locale. School placements are stressful for many teacher candidates in local-practice teaching environments, but in international contexts the difficulties of school placements can be exacerbated by limited resources and technology, large class sizes, and by using unfamiliar teaching strategies. In addition, such teaching challenges may be minimized or compounded by the personal adaptation of the teacher candidate at the destination.

The teacher candidates developed a greater recognition of their own privileged circumstances, and felt the experience contributed to their making more socially conscious decisions since their return.

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Teacher candidates must be carefully selected, prepared, and supported during the international experience. The four preparatory meetings in the present internship design seemed to be sufficient. Some destinations, however, may present conditions that require significant support from the program leaders in briefings during the program. Such conditions might include harsh climate, difficult emotional realities, fatigue, poor nutrition, and illness.

Figure 4. Malaria protection program in Ggaba, Uganda



We recommend that no placement in a school be for less than one full week, and that communication with site supervisors be ongoing. The experience of teaching in at least two different schools (elite-local, urban-rural, public-religious) can be enriching for teacher candidates. Such contrasting experiences, when compared with experiences in Canada, are potentially transformative and enable reflexivity: the capacity to develop courage and ability to see one's own prejudice, biases, complicity in the created problems, and agency in providing solutions.

Every opportunity should be provided for the teacher candidates to talk about and disseminate their learning from their overseas experiences—including through social media, forums, conferences, and workshops. Graduate courses, such as Global Education and Comparative, International, and Development Education, could support future international internships, either as preparation for the internship experience or later when the teacher candidates consolidate their learning or embark on new

directions of learning. Guest speakers who work in developing countries, documentaries, YouTube videos, and visits to cultural sites could also support the international internship.

Teacher candidates need to have more opportunities for teaching in international contexts, interacting with local communities, and exploring the local environment. In so doing, they should be encouraged to compare and contrast the culture, environment, and education in Canada with that in overseas' contexts. This would serve to broaden their capacity for understanding local diversity and alternative pedagogical approaches of other cultures.

Prohibitive costs are often associated with programs to international destinations. Similar and far more cost-effective internship experiences could be provided within Canada and still fulfill many of the same goals as this international experience: for example, an internship of comparable time in an Aboriginal or specific ethno-cultural community.

This inquiry was multifaceted and challenging on many levels, and this report offers reasons for the effectiveness of this inquiry and attempts to honestly appraise its deficiencies. Two future studies could offer further insight: (1) compare the contrasting perspectives of host educators with those of visiting educators, and (2) assess the long-term impact on the careers of the participating teacher candidates at a later point in time.

The fundamental learning, however, that emerges from this inquiry is the uncontested value of international internships on behalf of students in local and overseas classrooms. The benefits accrued from the unit lessons, as reflected by the comments of the student recipients, were resoundingly positive. This impression was confirmed by the comments of the teacher-observer. Moreover, the units displayed excitement and dynamism across many strands of curriculum, and transcended the actual curriculum. In the words of a Grade 6 student, I learned that “we are all different and special in our own way.”

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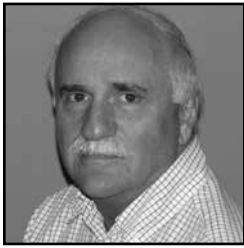
The authors would like to thank all school personnel who participated in this project, along with Canadian Jesuits International and the Loretto Sisters. Our facilitators in Rwanda were Alison Burkett and Emery Rutagonya. Both were exceptional in conveying the tragic events of 1994 and in leading our evening debriefings. Finally, we are most grateful for the generosity of our teacher candidates for maintaining their commitment to the study well past the completion of the internship itself.

Figure 5. Student dancers in Costa Rica



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Deepening Knowledge to Inspire Action: Including Aboriginal Perspectives in Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

This research project focused on strategies to increase teacher candidates' willingness and readiness to incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and pedagogies into their classroom practice. We found that teacher candidates most appreciated the inclusion of First Voice perspectives, in-depth instruction on current and historical events, and a continuous examination of privilege as a preparation for incorporating Aboriginal content into their future practice. Near the end of their Initial Teacher Education program, most teacher candidates reported feeling more confident and willing to include Aboriginal perspectives. However, we found three main reasons why Aboriginal perspectives may

not be included in their classrooms. When these concerns are addressed more teachers may feel encouraged to take up Aboriginal perspectives in their practice.

PROJECT FOCUS

The Central Option, with approximately 68 elementary school teacher candidates at OISE, has a specific mandate to provide targeted instruction related to Aboriginal content. While some candidates chose the Central Option for this reason, this was not the first choice of most teacher candidates who enrolled in it. Our research team consisted of two faculty members, the director of the Secondary BEd program, one graduate student, and one instructional coordinator of the Central Option. All are members of OISE's Deepening Knowledge Project, a working group of OISE teacher education faculty and staff who are committed to infusing Aboriginal education throughout the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program at OISE (Mashford-Pringle & Nardozi, 2013).

Our study is located within the context of teacher education programs at universities across Canada, many of which have begun to document and analyze the initiatives they have created to bring meaningful Aboriginal education instruction to their teacher candidates. (See Figure 1.) In British Columbia and Saskatchewan, for instance, it is mandatory that all teacher candidates take a full course in Aboriginal

Education during their teacher education. Most recently, Lakehead University’s faculty council passed a motion that will see each candidate required to take a 36-hour course in Aboriginal education, and all

curriculum and instruction courses will include program learning outcomes that explicitly include planning for and teaching Aboriginal learners (Berger, personal communication, November 25, 2013).

Figure 1. Resources on Aboriginal education initiatives at other institutions

<p>Nova Scotia</p> <p>Finney, S., & Orr, J. (1995). “I’ve really learned a lot, but...”: Cross-cultural understanding and teacher education in a racist society. <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i>, 46(5), 327–333.</p>
<p>York University, Ontario</p> <p>Vetter, D. M., & Blimkie, M. (2011). Learning to teach in culturally responsive and respectful ways: The first steps in creating a First Nation, Métis and Inuit education infusion in a mainstream teacher education program. <i>The Canadian Journal of Native Studies</i>, 31(2), 173–185,187,189.</p>
<p>Toronto, Ontario</p> <p>Dion, S., & Dion, M. R. (2009). Braiding histories: <i>Learning from Aboriginal peoples’ experiences and perspectives</i>. Vancouver: UBC Press.</p>
<p>Ontario</p> <p>Cherubini, L., Hodson, J., Manley Casmir, M., & Muir, C. (2010). Closing the gap at the peril of widening the void: Implications of the Ontario Ministry of Education’s policy for Aboriginal education. <i>Canadian Journal of Education</i>, 33(2), 329–55.</p>
<p>Manitoba</p> <p>Kanu, Y. (2011). <i>Integrating Aboriginal perspectives into the school curriculum: Purposes, possibilities and challenges</i>. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.</p>
<p>Alberta</p> <p>den Heyer, K. (2009). Sticky points: Teacher educators re-examine their practice in light of a new Alberta social studies program and its inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives. <i>Teaching Education</i>, 20(4), 343–355.</p>
<p>British Columbia</p> <p>Sandford, K., Williams, L., Hopper, T., & McGregor, C. (2012). Indigenous principles decolonizing teacher education: <i>What we have learned. in education</i>. 18(2), 18–34.</p>

Resistance of teacher candidates to Aboriginal content is a typical response to attempts to discuss race and racism with mostly non-Aboriginal students in a teacher education setting (Aveling, 2006). Members of the research team have witnessed such resistance during in-class presentations across the ITE program, for example, when teacher candidates learn about the history and present oppression of indigenous peoples

on this land. Resistance has taken the form of denial of the existence of personal and white privilege, teacher candidates questioning the importance and relevance of Aboriginal content and perspectives to all students, and suggestions that Aboriginal perspectives should not be overemphasized in K–12 classrooms (where they have been historically excluded or underemphasized).

This research project set out to address this concern by asking the following question: Which strategies used within Central Option are most powerful in increasing teacher candidates' willingness and readiness to incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and pedagogies into their classroom practice? This question was based on a desire to know what instructional strategies employed within the ITE program were most effective for inspiring teacher candidates to take up Aboriginal content when they teach their own classes.

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

We were aware from earlier instruction of teacher candidates across the ITE program that almost all teacher candidates claimed very little knowledge of Aboriginal histories and experiences and that some resisted the topics surrounding Aboriginal communities. We developed an initial survey to take these experiences into account. At this time the team, led by a Central Option instructional leader, developed strategies to incorporate Aboriginal topics into the Teacher Education Seminar (TES) course. These strategies included a presentation from team members Angela Nardozi and John Doran on Aboriginal histories, worldviews, and perspectives; a retreat to the Toronto Islands with Aboriginal community members and elders to hear stories of the area; a requirement to use a picture book with a First Nations, Métis, or Inuit theme in their practicum placement; a workshop run by First Nations teacher and scholar Pamela Toulouse; and many more specifically targeted activities.

To gather data about the responses of the teacher candidates to this program of activities, we administered surveys at three key points in the program to approximately 70 teacher candidates, and we conducted two rounds of interviews with five purposively selected participants. Since the first set of surveys revealed three concerns of teacher candidates regarding taking up Aboriginal content in their work, the team reframed

these concerns as the following questions to tackle their reticence head-on:

- Why should I prioritize Aboriginal history, issues, and perspectives when there are many social justice issues that the students in my classes have?
- How do I fit in these Aboriginal topics when there is so little time?
- Should I start to teach about these things even if I feel I don't know enough?

These questions were voluntarily taken up by teacher candidates in the Central Option as the main research question in their required inquiry project. The teacher candidates then shared the results of their study with other Central Option colleagues, asking them to reflect on their personal responses to the questions and on the responses of the group.

“ *Aboriginal content can be fully integrated into each and every subject that students are taught in the classroom. Such content can address many topics and issues that the Ministry and other teachers feel are important lessons to impart to their students, including environmental stewardship, diversity, equity and social justice, culture and religion, as well as incorporating holistic methods of teaching, including storytelling, talking circles and pieces, and music.* ”

DATA COLLECTION

Our team collected data from the participating teacher candidates through three surveys: one administered at the beginning of the TES course, and one administered at the end of each of their two one-month practicums. All the teacher candidates who were present on the day of the surveys completed the survey.

In addition to the surveys, five teacher candidates were recruited for two rounds of one-on-one interviews with a research assistant. The questions used in the interviews were open-ended. Interviews were coded separately by three members of the research team, and afterwards the coded data were synthesized.

While the five interview participants were chosen because they expressed a range of perceptions of their own readiness to incorporate Aboriginal content in their future classroom practice, all participants saw the importance of doing this. We explicitly sought the input of those who had reported on the surveys that this content was unimportant, but none of these participants came forward for an interview.

FINDINGS

Based on the surveys that were collected, the research team witnessed a shift in the teacher candidate’s knowledge of both the histories and the contemporary

issues of Aboriginal peoples and communities. See Tables 1 and 2 for a summary of responses obtained during the three surveys.

The results in Table 1 indicate that by the end of the program no teacher candidates felt they had only “little” knowledge of Aboriginal histories, but the majority still felt they had only “some” knowledge of these histories. This result indicates that such instruction may need further development in the Central Option. Table 2 indicates that by the end of the program, targeted instruction had contributed to reducing the number of teacher candidates who felt they had both “little” and “some” knowledge of current issues and events involving Aboriginal peoples.

Compared to what they reported in the beginning of the year, the teacher candidates at the end of their program expressed a major shift in their readiness to incorporate Aboriginal histories and content into their future practice. (See Table 3.)

Table 1. Knowledge of Aboriginal Histories

	Percentage of participants who share this viewpoint		
Viewpoint on personal knowledge of Aboriginal histories	Entry	Midpoint	Closing
I have studied these histories carefully and have an extensive knowledge of the histories of Aboriginal peoples of Canada.	4%	2%	2%
I have fairly extensive knowledge of the histories of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.	10%	30%	38%
I have some knowledge of the histories of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.	58%	64%	60%
I have little knowledge of these histories.	28%	2%	0

Table 2. Knowledge of Current Aboriginal Issues

Viewpoint on personal knowledge of current Aboriginal issues.	Percentage of participants who share this viewpoint		
	Entry	Midpoint	Closing
I have extensive knowledge of the current issues and events involving Aboriginal peoples of Canada.	4%	11%	9%
I have fairly extensive knowledge of the current issues and events involving Aboriginal peoples in Canada.	10%	38%	51%
I have some knowledge of the current issues and events involving Aboriginal peoples.	63%	49%	40%
I have little knowledge of these current issues and events.	22%	0	0

Table 3. Self-Perceived Readiness to Teach Aboriginal Content

Self-perceived readiness	Percentage of participants who share this viewpoint		
	Entry	Midpoint	Closing
Very ready	10%	13%	10%
Ready	7%	34%	48%
Somewhat ready	34%	47%	36%
Not ready	49%	6%	6%

During analysis of the research data, four key themes emerged in relation to how teacher candidates take on Aboriginal content in their classrooms.

1. Need for extensive instruction around the histories and current experiences of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people

Comments on final surveys suggest that teacher candidates in the Initial Teacher Education program need to learn more about the workings of colonization that had a major impact on the founding and

development of Canada and that continue to evolve in the relationship between Aboriginal people and *all* Canadians today. Some teacher candidates felt that they and their peers would benefit from explicit discussion in class around the concepts and implications of colonialism, racism, decolonization, and appropriation, as well as a continual examination of privilege. Such additional instruction would help increase their willingness and readiness to incorporate this content in their teaching.

2. Importance of First Voice testimony

The participants repeatedly mentioned the impact that indigenous guest speakers and elders had on their learning. Teacher candidates consistently asked to hear from a variety of indigenous community members so that diverse voices could be represented in their learning and teaching. It was clear from participant comments that OISE was seen as an institutional authority that could verify the authenticity of the elders.

3. Supports and obstacles for incorporating Aboriginal content

Upon entering the Central Option, most teacher candidates reported having some or little knowledge of the histories and current experiences of Aboriginal peoples and communities. Many of those surveyed found the overview presentation by our team members Nardozi and Doran helpful in increasing their knowledge and showing them what they did not know. Then in their practicum placements when they proposed lessons that included Aboriginal content, some teacher candidates felt support from their associate teachers, but others felt resistance from them. Very few associate teachers expressed confidence in teaching this material, and so teacher candidates often took the lead in designing and delivering these lessons.

4. Need for demonstrations of what teaching Aboriginal content looks like

While teacher candidates self-reported that their level of knowledge increased as the program progressed, they still expressed a desire to see concrete examples of what the teaching of Aboriginal content in the classroom would look like in practice. For instance, teacher candidates suggested they would benefit from reading about or viewing the instruction of history units that appropriately incorporate Aboriginal perspectives on contact and early settlement and that

complement the curriculum in Grade 3 and Grade 6. It is possible that modelling a wide variety of lesson strategies that includes both historical and current content would help teacher candidates imagine how this content could enter into their own practice.

Professional development opportunities that raise teachers' level of knowledge of Aboriginal perspectives and their confidence in including this content in their classroom teaching are needed.... This knowledge would help all students make connections to the stories of indigenous and colonized peoples around the world, making them better global citizens.

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The results of this project have implications not only for teacher education programs but also for school boards that may find upon close examination that most of their teachers lack knowledge and confidence to teach Aboriginal content to their students. Professional development opportunities that raise teachers' level of knowledge of Aboriginal perspectives and their confidence in including this content in their classroom teaching are needed. It has been shown that including Aboriginal content and pedagogies in the classroom is important for the success of Aboriginal youth, who are increasingly attending public schools across the country (Battiste, 1995; Bell, 2004; Kanu, 2011). This content, however, is also relevant and, we argue, essential for all Canadian students so that they can better understand the history of this nation, and its present relationship to Aboriginal peoples. This knowledge would help all students make connections to the stories of indigenous and colonized peoples around the world, making them better global citizens.

Throughout our work, teacher candidates reiterated the same questions, confusions, and resistances about

including Aboriginal content in their teaching practice: time pressures, lack of knowledge, and balancing competing equity and curriculum concerns. Unfortunately, no teacher candidate showing strong resistance to this teaching came forward to be interviewed for our study. Future research must find creative ways to engage their voices, as insight into their opinions and mindset, especially how they evolve with instruction of Aboriginal histories and content, is critical to developing strategies of instruction for more effective teacher education around including Aboriginal perspectives.

The work of the Deepening Knowledge Project continues during the 2013–2014 academic year, and the results of this research have already informed the planning process for the 2013–2014 Central Option

of the Initial Teacher Education program at OISE. Our team has also disseminated the results of this project to instructors from other cohorts across the program and plans to continue sharing information in relevant professional development contexts.

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Using Stories and Science to Prompt Thinking about Environmental Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to investigate how the use of children's literature influences students' conceptions of environmental sustainability. Two Grade 7 science classes and one Grade 4 class participated in this project. Previous studies have found that students' conceptions of the environment and sustainability lack ideas about global and political issues. In this project, students read two stories: one highlights the global and political aspects of environmental sustainability, and the other demonstrates how seeds of a single plant can support the survival needs of a group of people. After reading these stories, students discussed the stories in

a focus group. This project shows that the integration of such literature into a science lesson can assist in the development of students' conception of environmental sustainability by supporting discussion of global issues in terms of social and political responsibility. This study provides an example for teachers to develop and assess their students' understanding about science.

PROJECT FOCUS

Teaching and learning about global issues in terms of environmental sustainability is important for a multicultural science education (Hodson, 1993). According to the Ontario Ministry of Education (2007), sustainability is viewed as a fundamental concept in the Ontario science curriculum throughout the elementary and secondary grades.

Children come to science education with conceptions of how the world works based on their interactions with their environment and with other people (Trumper, 2001). However, these conceptions may be wrong or incomplete. Children's literature can be used effectively in the science curriculum to facilitate discussions of science concepts (Feasey, 2006; Kalchman, 1998; Keogh et al., 2006). However, Sackes, Trundle, and Flevares (2009) argue that research into the use of children's literature to study science concepts needs to include the study of the changes in thinking about science that occur through this practice.

Concerning the development of the concept of sustainability among 13 year-old students, Walshe (2008) identifies the importance of three pillars of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic. However, research is lacking on how teachers might assist the development of this understanding among younger students.

Loughland, Petocz, and Reid (2002) describe object-focused and relational-focused conceptions of the environment: object-focused conceptions refer to the environment as a place, or a place that contains living things; relational-focused conceptions require thinking about the environment in terms people's responsibility and a mutually sustaining relationship between people and the environment.

The aim of this project was to support a change in thinking toward a relational-focused conception by using children's advanced picture books in the classroom. The key questions of this study were guided by students' conceptions of sustainability as described by Walshe (2008).

The following questions guided this project:

- How do children's stories change the way students think about environmental sustainability?
- What do these changes look like, and how do they develop students' thinking about environmental sustainability as a global issue?

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

Stage 1

This first stage of the project involved finding books that address issues of environmental sustainability, specifically those that reflect a mutually sustaining relationship between people and the environment. One of the books selected was *Weslandia* by Paul Fleishman (1999), which describes how a highly intelligent boy and a few friends create an entire civilization based on a particular plant. The story demonstrates how the

environment provided food, clothing, shelter, games, a time-keeping system, and a number system using this plant. The second book selected, *Seeds of Change* by Jen Cullerton (2010), tells about Nobel Prize winner Wangari Maathai, who led a movement in Kenya to replant the native trees that had been deforested by coffee plantation companies. While *Weslandia* highlights physical factors related to sustainability, *Seeds of Change* highlights the human and emotional aspects of sustainability. Both stories are appropriate for children in Grades 3 to 8.

Stage 2

I looked for teachers who were covering aspects of the curriculum that highlight environmental sustainability. A Grade 4 classroom and two Grade 7 classrooms from the same school and two teachers from a local school board volunteered to participate. I met with the participating teachers to discuss what they had covered in the curriculum related to the unit of study on environment. Students in the two Grade 7 classes had taken the unit on ecosystems, which also covers the topic of sustainability. Students in Grade 4 had covered the unit on habitat and community, which also covers the concepts of sustainability and stewardship.

Stage 3

I developed a survey based on the six categories of students' conceptions of the environment as identified by Loughland et al. (2002). The survey questions, which were given to students before, during, and after the one-hour lesson can be seen in Figure 1. To provide a baseline of students' conceptions of environmental sustainability before hearing the stories, the students completed parts A and B from Stage 1 of the questionnaire. Since they had difficulty with understanding the word *sustainability*, I said they could look up the definition of *sustain* in the dictionary. After *Weslandia* was read to the students, they completed parts A and B from Stage 2 of the questionnaire. Then *Seeds of Change* was read to the class, and they completed parts A and B from Stage 3 of the questionnaire.

Figure 1. Student questionnaire: Stage 1 used before reading the books, Stage 2 used after reading *Weslandia*, and Stage 3 used after reading *Seeds of Change*

Stage 1

Part A

Below are seven phrases that people have used to describe the word *environment*. Which of the two phrases below best describe the way you think about the word *environment*?

- 1) The environment is a place.
- 2) The environment is a place that contains living things.
- 3) The environment is a place that contains living things and people.
- 4) The environment is a place that does something for people.
- 5) The environment is a place that people are part of and are responsible for.
- 6) The environment is place that people need, and a place that needs people.
- 7) The environment is a place which may bring conflict between people or a place which may bring peace between people.

Explain your choices in the space below: _____

Part B

Think about what *sustaining the environment* means and write as much as you know in the space below. Sustaining the environment means _____

Stage 2

Part A

After reading *Weslandia*, circle the two phrases that best describe the word *environment*.

- 1) The environment is a place.
- 2) The environment is a place that contains living things.
- 3) The environment is a place that contains living things and people.
- 4) The environment is a place that does something for people.
- 5) The environment is a place that people are part of and are responsible for.
- 6) The environment is place that people need, and a place that needs people.
- 7) The environment is a place which may bring conflict between people or a place which may bring peace between people.

Explain your choices in the space below: _____

Part B

Think about what *sustaining the environment* means and write as much as you know in the space below. How does the story of *Weslandia* relate to sustaining the environment? Sustaining the environment means _____

Stage 3

Part A

After reading about Wingari's *Seeds of Change*, circle the two phrases that best describe the word environment.

- 1) The environment is a place.
- 2) The environment is a place that contains living things.
- 3) The environment is a place that contains living things and people.
- 4) The environment is a place that does something for people.
- 5) The environment is a place that people are part of and are responsible for.
- 6) The environment is place that people need, and a place that needs people.
- 7) The environment is a place which may bring conflict between people or a place which may bring peace between people.

Explain your choices in the space below: _____

Part B

Think about what *sustaining the environment* means and write as much as you know in the space below. How does Wingari's story relate to the idea of sustaining the environment? Sustaining the environment means _____

Stage 4

When the researchers visited each classroom for an entire afternoon, students first completed the questionnaires and then the books were read to them. In each classroom, during a break after the class, eight students volunteered as a focus group to discuss their answers to the questions. During the focus-group discussions, students were asked to discuss their choices or changes to their choices from part A or B. Nine students from the Grade 4 class volunteered to participate in the focus group and share the explanations to their answers.

Stage 5

Six teachers volunteered to come and learn about the study, review the materials, discuss the study curriculum and preliminary findings, and give feedback on the content.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection included the classroom surveys and questionnaires, researcher's notes from the focus groups with students on their answers to questionnaires, a phone interview with one Grade 7 teacher, and researcher's notes from the focus group with six teachers. A total of 67 questionnaires were collected (43 from students in the two Grade 7 classes and 24 from the Grade 4 students). All students in the class took the survey, but only those who had permission to have their work collected as part of the project had their surveys included in the data analysis.

The data was coded and analyzed using inter-rater reliability. This was performed by two of the research partners for 20 percent of the data to determine which students' choices exhibited a change. A change was noted if students' choices from the questionnaire moved from one type of choice to another.

FINDINGS

Changes in defining environment

For the purpose of this study, a shift from an object-focused choice to a relational-focused choice would demonstrate a change in students' understanding of environment. Forty-one out of 67 students exhibited that change. Eleven out of 67 showed no change in their choices, and 10 students demonstrated some change from a relational-focused to an object-focused view.

Many students were able to account for their changes in thinking by referring to the stories they had heard. For example, at the outset, one student defined *environment* as follows: "The environment has living things in it, and people are responsible for keeping the environment clean and safe." After listening to the reading of the first book, this student wrote, "The environment can seem like a place that is safe or dangerous. The environment can provide shelter and make tools for people." After hearing the second story, this student began to include ideas of conflict and resolution—keys to understanding environmental sustainability. The student explained, "I think this because the woman believed that trees will help us and generations to come. Some people disagreed, and in the end everyone agreed."

The explanation another student gave clearly shows a movement from an object-focused to a relational-focused view of the environment. At the outset, this student wrote, "I chose #3 because there is not only people, there are living things ... that are just as important as people. I also picked #1 because the environment is a place really." After hearing the first story (*Weslandia*), the student wrote, "The story made me think of environment differently. It made me think of it in a way that is more about plants and trees and crops. Without these things we wouldn't survive. I realized it more in this book." After hearing the second story, this student explained,

I picked #5 because in the book the people are part of the land. They love and live in the land. They must save for the land or else they would die. I picked #6 because the people in the village need the fruit and homes. The place needs the people because they need the nourishment from the people.

Changes in defining sustainability

Before the students heard the stories read to them, their definitions of *sustainability*, were, as Walshe (2008) noted, superficial: for example, “sustainability means to keep the environment going.” After hearing the stories, all students were able to draw on examples to give ideas about taking action and respecting, not wasting. For example, one student wrote,

Weslandia relates to sustainability because in the story when he was using his plant to make sunscreen he wouldn't use it all at once because he will run out of plants to use, and it wouldn't keep enough for everyone forever. Wesley would wait for the plants to regrow so he wouldn't run out of plants and ruin his civilization.

This student's explanation suggests they understand that responsible citizenship requires patience and understanding concerning the environment and its limits, and the consequences of pushing beyond those limits.

The stories provided students with a personal perspective that allowed them to understand how global matters affect people.

Main themes from student focus-group discussions

When comparing students' initial ideas about the environment with their initial ideas about sustainability, we noticed that their ideas changed after they heard both stories. The students had developed a relational-focused view and were able to provide examples related to people's responsibility to the environment.

However, none of their answers related to sustainability included concepts of politics and conflict, but these ideas did come through in students' comments in the focus groups.

The student focus-group discussions provided a means to discuss science topics related to sustainability that were otherwise difficult for many children of this age to understand. Compared to a systems view of science—an “outside-looking in” perspective—that is typical of most science education programs (Chandra, 2002), the stories helped students develop a personal perspective (inside-looking out).

A Grade 4 student who felt the responsibility is on us to help our environment said, “Wingari made me feel like I had to do this!” Another said, “The conflict with the government and activists do not help the environment.” Many students from the Grade 4 class connected ideas they had learned in their Habit Project where they had to investigate a threatened habitat and make a presentation to their classmates. For example, one student stated, “Wingari demonstrates how far we can go to help sustain our direct environment.” Another noted the connection between environment and war and said, “It is our responsibility to keep the peace for ourselves and the environment.”

Another student made connections to the environment and human rights by recognizing that the voice of the people was the catalyst for change: “Wingari did not stop! Even though she was put in jail she kept talking to other prisoners about her cause.”

During the Grade 7 focus group discussion, one student seemed to have connected the *Seeds of Change* story to other things he had heard about sustainability. He said, “The governments and business just try to hide everything they do so we don't know what we are buying and what it took to get that thing, like some kind of coffee.” Another student noted the human emotional aspects of the environment, saying, “The environment provided a lot more than just things for Wingari's family. They had a lot of memories there.”

In conclusion, the results suggest that (a) the stories provided students with a personal perspective that allowed them to understand how global matters affect people, (b) students can move from thinking about the environment as an object that provides things for people to an understanding of the environment as a relational object that relies on people to sustain it, and (c) a relational understanding of the environment supports discourse in local classrooms because students explore environmental issues in relation to global matters.

Response of teachers

The Grade 7 teacher interviewed was intrigued by the level of engagement that the students showed in the discussion of the environment. She felt the books “provided a novel way to get more students excited about thinking about science and the politics of it than just reading about it in a text.” Similarly, during the focus group, teachers described how a story can add to science lessons. One teacher, an expert in music, suggested that stories of music and its origins can be added to the list of books to help students understand people’s connections to the environment. All teachers agreed they had a problem in figuring out which stories are available and appropriate for addressing the topics of the environmental sustainability and other science topics in general.

“ *Businesses and government should think of the people who depend on their environments to live, before they ruin their environments.* ”

IMPACT

The project provides an example of how to use children’s literature to specifically address and assess how students understand science concepts. The results show that even though the teacher had covered topics related to environmental sustainability in their regular program, most students maintain an object-focused

view of the environment unless there is a conscious effort to engage students in meaningful discourse about the relational view.

By contrast, thinking about the environment in a relational way sets the foundation for environmental sustainability discussions that include the role of government. To move students’ conceptions of the environment toward a relational view, students must confront their current conceptions of the environment and compare these to other ways of thinking. In this study, using a forced-choice questionnaire and having students reflect on their choices with respect to the stories was an effective way to help students confront different ways of thinking about the environment. The project also demonstrates the power of story to excite students about science, giving them a perspective on experiences that they would not experience for themselves.

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

On a larger scale, we hope that by supporting the development of responsible citizens, students will realize that they can make a difference in the lives of people around the world. For example, participating in fair trade and the sustainability of cocoa farms may be as simple as choosing not to buy a particular chocolate bar.

This project has initiated a quest to design similar lessons: for example, a list of stories paired with choices that represent different ways of thinking about a science concept. This type of document would address teachers’ concerns about how to teach science concepts that they have either little knowledge of or experience in teaching. Such a document could provide guidance on choosing thought-provoking questions and stories that encourage students to construct knowledge and seek understanding of science concepts as they relate to global matters.

Another implication of this project concerns how students can be introduced to Aboriginal contributions to science: for example, indigenous

concepts of astronomy that have helped First Nations sustain their environment, and the Anishinabe story of Grandfather Sun, Grandmother Moon, and Mother Earth, which can provoke powerful conversations about indigenous people around the world and their struggle to preserve their culture (Chandra & Percy, 2001). A future research project related to the integration of Aboriginal experience within the school curriculum of all Canadian provinces will use Aboriginal stories to introduce students to concepts and global issues related to environmental sustainability.

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Encouraging Digital Technology Integration with Critical Thinking: The Global Teenager Project

Garfield Gini-Newman

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ABSTRACT

The Global Teenager Project (GTP) includes over 500 schools in 42 countries. The schools from around the world are grouped into learning circles of 10 to 12 schools. The learning circles focus on a central topic, and the theme of the learning circle connected to this study was United Beyond Our Diversity. During a 10-week learning circle the students met through a

wiki at different times to pose questions, share research, reflect on ideas from partners in the learning circle, and share a summary of the ideas. The findings from the project reveal the value of connecting students through technology both to establish relevance in their learning and to broaden their perspectives. As well, to realize the full potential of student-centred explorations of an issue, teachers need to carefully choreograph the inquiry to enable students to frame powerful questions and determine what is most important and relevant in the materials they share.

PROJECT FOCUS

This project focused on the work of the Global Teenager Project (GTP) carried out in three schools in the Greater Toronto Area. Organized into learning circles of schools around the world, the GTP aims to unite students of distinctive cultures through rich discourse on important global issues.ⁱ

For the purpose of this project, we selected the United Beyond Our Diversity learning circle as it provides focus for an exploration of what makes cultures both distinct and also similar. The research examined two intertwined issues: (a) the use of technology in the context of the GTP to nurture globally minded students in local classrooms, and (b) how to supplement the learning circle with teacher and teacher candidate professional learning around critical inquiry.

ⁱ www.globalteenager.org

The project participants included three teacher candidates from OISE's BEd program and one from OISE's Master of Teaching program, and four associate teachers, including three from public elementary schools and one from an independent girls' school. The associate teachers and teacher candidates who participated in the project came from public schools in the York Region District School Board and the Toronto District School Board and also from Bishop Strachan, an independent girls' school in Toronto.

Two complementary questions guided this inquiry:

- To what extent does the use of a framework for embedding critical thinking in the curriculum help teachers and teacher candidates assist learning through meaningful inquiry?
- Does the Global Teenager Project help students understand and apply important concepts to respond to complex global issues?

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

During August 2012 the lead investigator met with OISE's North Option course instructor to discuss the Inquiry into Practice research project and its relationship to the GTP. Then our research team developed questionnaires and interview questions that would be used before the launch of the learning circle and following its completion.

In mid-September we gave an introductory session to the BEd class of the elementary North Option about the GTP and the process of embedding critical inquiry in teaching practice. Teacher candidates who were to be involved in the project through their practicum placement at a participating school met with the investigators to confirm their willingness to participate and to review their role in the project. Prior to beginning their practicum, the four teacher candidates completed a series of 17 survey questions that addressed identity, diversity, and global perspectives, and also critical thinking and inquiry.

Informal meetings were also held with the participating associate teachers to orient them to the focus for the GTP and the theme "united beyond diversity." The teachers also completed a questionnaire before the launch of the learning circle.

The learning circle began on September 24th and continued for 10 weeks. While the students engaged in the learning circle, bi-weekly professional development sessions were held for teachers and teacher candidates. These sessions focused on framing powerful questions, assessing the credibility of sources, using criteria in problem solving and decision-making, and effectively communicating ideas in classroom and online practice.

At the conclusion of the learning circle in early December, the four teachers and three teacher candidates completed a post-project questionnaire and participated in an interview. The interview questions focused on how their participation in the professional learning webinars had an impact on their teaching practice and what impact on student learning resulted from students' participation in the learning circle.

“ *This project did not change my views on identity, or Canada's place in the world. It did expand my understanding about how other countries view diversity.* ”

DATA COLLECTION

Throughout the project, we gathered data through informal observations online, questionnaires, and interviews with teachers and teacher candidates. Specifically, we collected the data that emerged during the evolving student discourse on the wiki, and then analyzed the data in terms of the nature of the questions the students posed (e.g., did the questions seek specific responses, ask about preferences, or invite careful consideration of an issue?) and the nature of the responses students provided to the question posed by their peers.

We were particularly interested in answers that showed evidence of communication around issues as opposed to those that shared a personal opinion or detail of a student's culture. To assess the efficacy of the project we analyzed how students framed and responded to questions; we saw this as important in nurturing students' competence to engage in critical inquiry. Similarly, through an analysis of the discourse generated during the bi-weekly webinars for associate teachers and teacher candidates and through responses provided by the associate teachers and teacher candidates in the interviews, we gathered insights into how comfortable the educators felt in supporting students' development of the intellectual tools to engage in critical inquiry.

FINDINGS

Assumptions about global diversity

The data analysis revealed a tendency for both teachers and students to assume that diversity is embraced more readily in Canada than in other countries and that diversity is a more prevalent issue in Canada than elsewhere. One teacher candidate remarked, "Diversity is important to Canadian identity but much less so in other countries." At the end of the project, the responses to survey questions showed that views of diversity in the Canadian context remained largely unchanged, but there were shifts in perception of diversity in other countries. A teacher candidate noted, "This project did not change my views on identity, or Canada's place in the world. It did expand my understanding about how other countries view diversity." This insight was important as they realized issues of diversity and acceptance are global issues and not particular to western countries. This insight also cautions teachers to reconsider how they frame questions and tasks and how they guide class discussions. It is important that assumptions of greater and lesser diversity are challenged and explored by students through the examination of various perspectives and

the use of global media sources (e.g., surveying newspaper headlines around the world using an app such as Newseum).

Explicit instruction to support students' in critical thinking

A key finding is the importance of being explicit in teaching students the intellectual tools they require to engage meaningfully in critical inquiry: including building background knowledge; using criteria for judgment; understanding critical thinking vocabulary; using thinking strategies; and developing the habits of good thinkers, such as attention to detail, open-mindedness, and empathy. Several teachers and teacher candidates noted that the greatest impact on their teaching and their students' success came from clearly and explicitly addressing (a) thinking strategies to support inquiry, such as using graphic organizers to make connections between ideas, and providing evidence and criteria to support their conclusions; (b) literacy by providing pre-reading and during-reading strategies to help students identify key ideas, and by providing supportive writing strategies such as RAFTS (Role, Audience, Format, Topic, and Strong Verb); and (c) student understanding of critical-thinking terms, such as *bias* and *perspective*. One of the participating teachers observed, "With the right tools and guidance, the youngest student is capable of critical thinking and profound conclusions." A teacher candidate remarked, "The webinars gave me some great insight into how to promote critical thinking in students, as well as fabulous resources to support my teaching."

Authentic learning

Students were invited to explore global issues in a global learning community, and this context supported a shift in the learning experience from what Richardson (2013) refers to as *contrived learning* to an "authentic creation and sharing of outcomes" (p. 13). Furthermore, the use of a wiki as a platform for sharing students' ideas created an opportunity for

meaningful collaboration among students around the world who were participating in the Global Teenager Project. In this way, the GTP was a powerful vehicle for creating an authentic context for student inquiry.

The data also suggests that situating teachers' professional learning within the context of a student learning circle helped ensure that teacher learning was authentic and timely, allowing teachers to immediately apply their learning from the webinars in their teaching.

Advice from the classroom

Many teachers recognized the value of the GTP as a framework for nurturing students' ability to engage in meaningful inquiry and to participate as collaborative learners. Several teachers said the effectiveness of the learning circle could be increased by having a guiding question that clearly defines the nature of the inquiry. Having a common topic did not ensure that students were able to delve into a rich inquiry. The concept of diversity was too broad, so the online discussion was not sufficiently focused for achieving a rich discourse among participating schools. Often students posted online materials that had very little connection to what other schools were posting. One teacher observed that "the learning circle needs to have a driving question to focus the students and invite them to investigate a topic. It will still bring out all the different perspectives and cultural lenses into the conversations." Along similar lines, another teacher noted, "Perhaps some of the sessions, particularly the sessions on designing good questions, could be done with the teachers prior to starting the GTP [learning circle]." Doing so might provide focus for thoughtful inquiry and ensure that the students' questions—posted on the wiki for their peers in other countries to answer—went beyond those that simply required lists of information as answers.

Using technology to connect students around the world to discuss current issues can be authentic and meaningful, but in the absence of a pedagogy that is focused on nurturing students' thinking, the potential for transformative learning is greatly diminished.

IMPLICATIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

The Global Teenager Project was conceived to address learning in a global and digital environment. What was less explicitly addressed was the pedagogical underpinning of the program. Despite the many merits of the program, the absence of explicit teaching practices and assessment to support quality thinking limited the educational impact of GTP on learners. What this study has reinforced is the need for a pedagogical model that ensures the opportunities presented by new technologies are fully realized. When students are invited to explore and offer solutions collaboratively with peers internationally, the potential for truly transformative learning is created. Yet, as was clear from this project, the inclusion of explicit teaching around the intellectual tools needed to nurture critical and creative thinking must be an integral part of the experience if students are to derive the desired benefits. Using technology to connect students around the world to discuss current issues can be authentic and meaningful, but in the absence of a pedagogy that is focused on nurturing students' thinking, the potential for transformative learning is greatly diminished.

NEXT STEPS

Since the implementation of this project, conversations have taken place among the directors of the Global Teenager Project (Bob Hofman and Eliane Metni) along with Garfield Gini-Newman (representing the Critical Thinking Consortiumⁱⁱ) to consider how a learning circle can be focused on a provocative issue and how teachers can be supported earlier in the process so they can integrate supportive strategies for students in their classrooms earlier on.

As well, more schools across Canada are becoming aware of the Global Teenager Project and are exploring opportunities to participate. For example, several schools in Alberta are considering participation in a learning circle, specifically for their Grade 10 students.

The insights from this project extend beyond ways to revise the Global Teenager Project or to increase participation; they include a reconsideration of how to make effective use of technology to support

digitally enhanced learning. We learned from our study about the effectiveness of blending teacher professional learning regarding the infusion of critical inquiry in their classrooms with the nurturing of global mindedness such as can occur through student participation in the GTP. These insights can be applied to inform how technology can be used to support deep understanding in many contexts.

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Expressions of Indigenous Identities in Schools

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ABSTRACT

In Ontario, the term *indigenous* is commonly used to refer to First Nations peoples. When used more broadly, the term refers to beliefs, values, and ways of knowing that are rooted in a cultural heritage. A broader understanding of indigenous makes inclusive classrooms possible in Ontario not only in terms of cultural practices but also with respect to the ways that different groups of people understand the world, share common and unique values, and validate their individual ways of knowing. This inquiry examined the ways that two elementary and two secondary school teachers created spaces for students to explore their personal indigeneity. Through collaborative action research, the teachers began by reflecting on and articulating their personal conception of indigeneity. They then designed and implemented a series of lesson plans within different subject areas—science, social studies, English, and history—with the

aim to raise conversations about indigenous ways of knowing. The findings of this study reveal two distinct conceptions of indigeneity: one emphasizes the marginalization of particular cultural heritages, the other focuses on the ways that individual lived experiences inform the way we know the world. For the participants in this inquiry, these different conceptions formed the basis of distinct approaches in classroom practice.

A broader understanding of indigenous makes inclusive classrooms possible in Ontario not only in terms of cultural practices but also with respect to the ways that different groups of people understand the world, share common and unique values, and validate their individual ways of knowing.

PROJECT FOCUS

This study emerged from the question, How are the individual worldviews of students taken up in Ontario classrooms? Frequently, research in equity and social justice education emphasizes inequities either on the basis of race, class, gender, ability, language, culture, and religion or on the basis of inclusivity with respect to cultural heritage and lived experience. Less explicit in the literature are the ways that students' worldviews are brought into the classroom. For example, less attention is given to such questions as, How do individual students perceive themselves, their beliefs, values, and ways of knowing the world? How have students come to understand the world in this particular way?

How do students validate their belief system of the world? These initial questions led us to the concept of indigeneity.

According to Dei (2008), *indigeneity* is defined as “a way of knowing developed by local/aboriginal peoples over generations” (p. 7). *Indigenous* means that we each come from communities that have particular contexts, “ancestral knowledges as well as the legacies of diverse histories and contexts” (p. 6). These historical legacies and ancestral knowledge, however, must be reclaimed and unravelled in the systemic power relations that have shaped and reshaped them through the processes of both colonialism and immigration.

Today we live in contexts where multiple ways of knowing coexist, but do so unequally. For many cultural communities the proverbs, myths, and beliefs that sustain their communities are marginalized in schools or romanticized in textbooks. Acknowledging the Ontario classroom context, the importance of indigenous ways of knowing to all groups of people, and the distinction between equity, inclusivity, and indigeneity, we used the following questions to frame our study:

- How do teachers understand indigeneity in relation to equity and inclusive education?
- What elements of indigenous identities are expressed (e.g., values, perspectives, cultural practices) in schools beyond religious accommodations or curricular exemptions?
- What instructional approaches would facilitate learning about indigenous perspectives and worldviews?

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

This project consisted of four stages:

1. Identifying participants

A team of four inner-city educators (two elementary and two secondary school teachers) was assembled.

We sought participants who have unique perspectives across the curriculum and who challenge the knowledge gap between the dominant Eurocentric narratives of the curriculum and the actual histories of students in Ontario classrooms.

2. Conceptualizing indigeneity

At the first meeting with participants, the goal was to grapple with our individual conceptions of indigeneity. After engaging with assigned pre-readings and discussions, each participant articulated the understanding of indigeneity that would inform their lesson planning.

3. Planning and lesson implementation

Each participant developed a series of lesson plans (or a unit) that created a space for students to raise, explore, and reflect on indigeneity. As research coordinators, we supported the conceptualization of lessons and had opportunities to observe each participant teach one of their lessons.

4. Reflecting on efficacy

During a reflective session at the end of this study, participants shared how they designed and implemented their lessons, how the lessons were received by students, and whether such approaches were effective in bringing indigenous ways of knowing to the forefront.

DATA COLLECTION

Through collaborative action research (Sagor, 2010), we used four methods of data collection: (a) teachers' written reflections on a series of readings, and their interpretation of indigenous ways of knowing in their pedagogical practice; (b) a review of co-constructed lesson plans, field notes of classroom observations, and student responses during lesson implementation; (c) pre- and post-project reflective meetings with each teacher to learn more about their impressions of the lessons' impact; (d) three semi-structured group

interviews and PD sessions. For the interviews, a series of questions guided the discussions on the implementation process, their expectations, the impact on teaching and learning, and the challenges encountered while facilitating this approach. These discussions were captured through audio-recording, transcribed, and then coded by means of discourse analysis (Gee, 2011).

FINDINGS

Two overarching conceptions of indigeneity

At the outset we found that *indigeneity* was defined and conceptualized differently by each of the four participants. One teacher, for example, described indigenous knowledges as derived from “the ancient, traditional, or historical perspective from whatever country or culture the individual currently lives and has ancestry from ... passed down through caring relationships between parent, teacher, mentor, and student in the form of talk, stories, or working together.”

Another teacher’s definition focused on discontent or lack of engagement in the teaching and learning process. This participant explained, “I ask my students the question, What does it take to live an extraordinary life every day?... This question is at the heart of indigenous knowing because it is a question that can only be answered through community.” This teacher envisioned a direct relation between community and an individual’s sense of belonging. Although each participant articulated a different definition of indigeneity, all understood that the essential components were students’ lived experience, life story, and sense of community belonging.

Two overarching themes emerged from our participants’ unique interpretations of indigeneity. Two participants leaned toward a cultural heritage and global social justice perspective of indigeneity. They focused on social-justice-related topics, such as sweatshops, child labour, the oil industry, and global

poverty, and they brought to their classrooms an exploration of one’s cultural identity as well as the interconnection between communities and social injustices. Two other participants emphasized a self-awareness perspective of indigeneity. They helped students understand how events that influence them also inform the way they see the world around them, and they brought to their classrooms an exploration of personal values, and how one’s values are informed and also intersect with the values of others.

Sankofa: A revitalization of knowing

We found that facilitating learning about one’s indigeneity in classrooms is possible. Each participant raised indigeneity within their curriculum in unique ways:

- The Grade 6 teacher centred indigeneity through a social studies unit on “needs and wants.” Her series of lessons linked personal needs and wants with cultural norms and expectations, and then with the global rights of a child.
- The Grade 7 teacher integrated indigeneity into her history class. As a precursor to the topic of wars, she facilitated a series of lessons on the roots of conflict and how conflicts arise in our personal lives because of differences in values.
- The Grade 11 science teacher approached indigeneity by raising multiple perspectives to scientific inquiry. During lessons on natural resources, he helped students explore indigenous interpretations and implications of mining and the extraction fossil fuels.
- The Grade 12 English teacher used indigeneity as the framework for a unit on exploring how thinking is shaped, what are the implications of the way we think, and how we can rethink our cognitive ways of knowing.

In formulating their content for the design of each unit, the participants employed *purposeful talk*, a concept Ritchhart and Perkins (2008) posit for working with students toward making their thinking visible.

The teachers demonstrated that certain instructional approaches can deepen student engagement because everyone is indigenous in their own right. They found avenues for students to consistently express their own ways of knowing.

In the Grade 12 English lesson, for example, students engaged in dialogue and analysis of two articles by Chuck Klosterman, “The Emo” and “The Lady and the Tiger.” Students were charged with the task of reading, summarizing, and critiquing their own ways of thinking in relation to these texts. The issues that arose include age, time, parents, money, education, race, culture, intelligence, employment, and appearance. During about three lessons, students grappled with who they are in relation to their social context and how that informs what they aspire to be and do. For example, a South Asian female student expressed that “if I were a boy I could...” and listed a series of things she wants or that she did not have due to her gender. Another female student concurred, asserting that there are norms in South Asian culture that inform who we are. A third student asked for more detail about the situation, extolling the pressures of being male. This teaching moment problematized the simplistic notions of what we value, why we value, where those values come from, and the privileges afforded us. Although they could not agree on the role culture plays or the implications of place of origin in gender relations, the entire class agreed that they needed to continue the conversation.

Another conversation between teacher and student after reading a book about needs and wants in a Grade 6 class illustrates purposeful talk:

Teacher: What influence does your culture have on your needs and wants?

Student: Well ... I want to continue my relationship with my grandparent because we do Portuguese wine-making.

Another student: I want to continue ... on improving my Chinese because I can't speak to

my mother or my father because they don't understand English ... and I want to learn how to speak.

Similar incidents occurred in other classrooms.

Through the sharing of these personal transactions, students acquired sensitivity to and an understanding of different ways of meaning-making. Most importantly, students were able to learn more about themselves and each other's worldviews. Participants emphasized the importance of finding avenues for students to demonstrate their learning and to create platforms for self-expression; they saw these as essential ingredients for effective classrooms, engaging pedagogy, and curriculum.

“ *I ask my students the question, What does it take to live an extraordinary life every day?... This question is at the heart of indigenous knowing because it is a question that can only be answered through community.* ”

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

To guide future educational endeavours we need an approach that not only learns from the past but also breaks the constraints of the past. The participants in this study demonstrated that when a particular worldview limits us, we do not serve our community of learners, and negotiating a shift from our present practice is essential for awakening the talents of our students.

In the context of the robust diversity in student populations across the Greater Toronto Area—and where debate is very much alive on Africentric schools, the place of religion in public schools, and the consistent growth of private faith-based schools—there needs to be continued consideration of how we as educators can be inclusive of our students' perspectives, values, and worldviews.

As next steps, we intend to prepare case studies, based on our participants' experiences, as a resource for teachers and teacher candidates in Ontario. Through teacher education conferences we hope to continue to

delve into the ways that inclusive education can more explicitly raise conversations about diverging values and beliefs.

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Growing Together: Partnerships in Environmental and Sustainability Education

Hilary Inwood, Jane Forbes, and Pam Miller

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the potential of using school–university partnerships as a form of professional development in Environmental and Sustainability Education (ESE). Associate teachers and teacher candidates participated in collaborative environmental learning as part of their practica and internship placements. The novice and experienced teachers’ curriculum planning and pedagogical strategies for local and global environmental learning were analyzed, and interviews were conducted individually and collectively. Collaborative professional development proved to be an excellent means for enhancing these educators’ knowledge and encouraging their practice of ESE, resulting in more frequent and richer experiences of environmental learning for themselves and their students.

PROJECT FOCUS

In 2009 the Ontario Ministry of Education established a new policy in environmental education—*Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow*—that requires all K–12 teachers to integrate local and global environmental learning into every subject area, in every grade. Many teachers find this challenging because of a lack of

preparation in Environmental and Sustainability Education (ESE) as part of their BEd program, and minimal guidance from existing curriculum documents. To begin to address this challenge, this project provided an opportunity to examine the professional learning that can occur in ESE when practising teachers work in partnership with OISE teacher candidates.

As part of the United Nations Environment Programme, UNESCO (UNESCO-UNEP, 1988; UNESCO, 2005) has been drawing attention to the need for improved teacher education in ESE for over three decades. However, research shows there has been little improvement in ESE within teacher education in Canada in recent years (Lin, 2002; Beckford, 2008). While many teacher education faculty see ESE as yet another addition to an already crowded curriculum (Powers, 2004), others note the lack of opportunity for teacher candidates to observe, learn about, or teach ESE as part of their practicum experiences (Beckford, 2008). Without adequate training in ESE as a part of initial teacher education, novice teachers will not have adequate knowledge or the necessary pedagogical skills to inform their practice in their own future classrooms (Cutter-MacKenzie & Tidbury, 2002; Plevyak et al., 2001).

With the aim to explore collaborative learning in ESE among associate teachers and teacher candidates, this project investigated how school-university partnerships can support professional development in local and global forms of ESE. This acknowledges the role of partnerships as one component of successful ESE implementation in teacher education programs (Ferreira, Ryan, & Tilbury, 2007) and the call for more practice of ESE in classrooms by teacher candidates (Powers, 2004).

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

Ten associate teachers and nine teacher candidates in nine schools participated in this project between May 2012 and May 2013; these teachers taught in classes ranging from kindergarten to Grade 12. The research coordinators met initially with each set of associate teacher-teacher candidate partners to discuss their needs, expectations, and plans for teaching and learning together about ESE. The partners were asked to document their activities, reactions, and reflections on the successes and challenges of working and learning collaboratively in ESE.

As the associate teachers and teacher candidates worked together during the four-week practicum or internship, they introduced a variety of lessons and learning activities focused on local and global environmental learning. At the end of the term, the researchers held focus groups for the associate teachers and teacher candidates separately. The focus groups were guided by questions that examined the types of curriculum and instructional practices in ESE that they used, the supports and strategies needed to support their learning, and the roles that all stakeholders played in supporting environmentally focused professional learning. Seven focus groups took place throughout the project, providing opportunity for educators to share questions, practices, and reflections about ESE; these rich conversations were an unexpected benefit of the project design.

In addition to these qualitative strategies, all OISE teacher candidates were invited at the end of their BEd program to complete an online survey about ESE. This allowed for a deeper understanding of their expectations, attitudes, and needs in relation to environmental learning.

DATA COLLECTION

A mixed-methods framework was used for data collection, including quantitative methods (the teacher candidate survey), and qualitative methods (interviews, journals, and focus groups). Initial interviews with each set of partners and the facilitated discussions of the focus groups with the associate teachers and teacher candidates were recorded and transcribed. Data from these meetings along with that from the co-researchers' journals was coded thematically, analyzed, and then triangulated across all three rounds of data collection in the spring of 2012, the winter of 2013, and the spring of 2013. Data collected from the online survey completed by OISE's teacher candidates was also collated and analyzed. Member-checking helped to ensure that the co-researchers' perspectives were accurately recorded and analyzed.

FINDINGS

Needs and expectations of teacher candidates and associate teachers

The online survey completed by OISE teacher candidates shows that more than 70 percent of those who responded believe that ESE is needed as a part of their BEd program. As one teacher candidate said,

My background in environmental sustainability is definitely limited. It's as much these days I make conscious efforts in recycling and what I buy and make sure not to bring plastic bags, and I mean the little things I can incorporate in my day-to-day lives. But as far as the curriculum and the type of teacher that I know I want to be, it's definitely something that I want to be a driving force in my education for the kids.

The teacher candidates who participated in this project said at the outset that immersive learning in ESE alongside an experienced teacher would be most useful to fill this need. While many of the teacher candidates were hesitant to teach ESE because they

felt they lacked sufficient knowledge in environmental issues, the associate teachers felt ready to forge ahead and learn alongside them. The associate teachers declared that "an extra set of hands" would be helpful to implement environmental learning in their classes. They looked forward to having a teacher candidate who could plan age-appropriate learning activities to be integrated into the existing curriculum.

Kindergarten students learned about the lives of insects, animals, and trees; junior learners studied food production and security, upcycling, resource extraction, marine biodiversity, and community gardening; and intermediate students investigated consumerism, globalization, the impacts of oil and gas production, and their eco-footprint.

Approaches to local and global environmental learning in classrooms

As a result of the partnerships, students learned about local and global environmental impacts in age-appropriate ways. For example one Grade 6 class learned about the richness of the world's oceans in relation to local wetlands before broadening their understanding of human impacts on oceans around the world.

Associate teachers and teacher candidates used curricular and instructional practices that exemplified a range of practices in ESE. Many learning activities were integrated, experiential, and holistic, and aimed to meet the needs of a variety of learning styles. Kindergarten students learned about the lives of insects, animals, and trees; junior learners studied food production and security, upcycling, resource extraction, marine biodiversity, and community gardening; and intermediate students investigated consumerism, globalization, the impacts of oil and gas production, and their eco-footprint. The one secondary class in the study conducted life cycle analysis in relation to electrochemistry.

Teacher candidates often used digital technologies, such as computers, cameras, Smart Boards, and iPads, to document the local and make the global accessible. For example, one class created a PowerPoint presentation on local environmental issues to share at a school assembly; another accessed videos about water issues around the globe. As well, place-based learning occurred in schoolyard activities, community walks, and field trips, in part because it was easier to do this with two educators present. One associate teacher said, “As soon as [the teacher candidate] was in my room, I planned an outdoor activity, and once outside, it was like a tonic to me. The kids were so happy and engaged.”

Partnerships as professional learning

All of the partners were very satisfied with their collaborative experiences in ESE, and said this was an effective form of teacher education and professional development. They learned more about environmental issues by sharing their learning with each other through dialogue, observation, and modelling resource use (such as books, websites, TED talks, and documentaries). One teacher candidate wrote,

My expectations were exceeded. I was hoping for a mentorship, where I could learn about ESE issues from my supervisor. This was certainly part of what happened, but it actually became more of a partnership, where [the associate teacher] and I (and the students) were learning about specific issues together.

Many associate teachers and teacher candidates noted that their partnership was a great way to reflect on their own practice, and develop ideas for future collaborations in ESE with others.

IMPACT

The associate teachers asserted that their partnerships were a highly satisfactory form of professional environmental learning. Many commented on the positive effects on their teaching practice, such as a greater impetus to have this type of learning in their class, an increased frequency of taking their students outside, or more enthusiasm for supporting students’ environmental activism. One associate teacher wrote in her journal, “Being involved in ESE has refined my pedagogy in distinct ways ... the spring internship was instrumental in making me seek out strategies and skills to deal with complex environmental issues in the classroom.”

The school communities that hosted these partnerships experienced an increase in environmental learning: for example, from vermicomposting of lunch leftovers, new display boards and assembly presentations, to increased involvement in the school garden. The project had an impact at OISE in terms of new lesson plans, activity ideas, and materials to share with others on its ESE website. Some of the teacher candidates noted a shift in their own behaviours (such as biking more or starting their own vermicomposter), and one even landed a permanent teaching position based on his field placement.

The participants also learned about the challenges of this work. Some cited concerns about the emotional impact of ESE on their students, or the lack of accessible outdoor learning spaces. But all were clear that it was a lack of time that was the biggest hindrance, as there was not enough time to go into the depth of learning that they would have liked. As one associate teacher said, “We need more time—four step days and four weeks isn’t long enough to change the world.”

IMPLICATIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

This project has provided a clear picture of how environmental learning can take place through partnerships between associate teachers and teacher candidates. The strategies that best support environmental learning between these partners include ensuring adequate planning time for curricular development, providing resources in ESE, encouraging co-teaching and co-reflection between partners, and modelling content and pedagogies that have been introduced on campus. TDSB instructional leaders and OISE faculty play an important role in encouraging these relationships: for example, by supporting the learning of school-based Ecoteams, or developing networks to connect greater numbers of associate teachers and teacher candidates. This will help ensure that environmental learning will continue to be fostered on campus and in the school system, and that teacher candidates and associate teachers will continue to feel supported and recognized for their vital work in ESE.

“ *I know from my own experience that ESE wasn't a part of teacher training and learning when I was in teachers' college.... I want to help them to be able to incorporate the principles of ESE into their teaching. I believe ESE doesn't have to be an add-on to teaching.* ”

NEXT STEPS

By sharing this study's findings through writings and presentations, we hope to encourage initial teacher education programs to develop more practica and internships that focus on local and global forms of ESE. In future research we want to investigate questions that were raised during the study, particularly

how to deepen the benefits of collaborative environmental learning and extend them to a wider group of experienced and novice teachers. These findings will inform professional development in ESE both through the Toronto District School Board's planning for its burgeoning Ecoschools program, and also for new curricula for future teacher education programs in Ontario.

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Pam Miller supports K–12 teachers to implement ecological literacy in their classroom instruction in her role as the TDSB EcoSchools’ instructional leader. Her work includes fostering best practices, developing resources, and building collaborative learning networks among teachers and staff to deepen teachers’ skills and knowledge in and approaches to environmental education.

Toward a Personal and Global Understanding of “Home”: A Literacy, Media, and Inquiry Approach

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Debbie Nyman: Drama consultant

ABSTRACT

As an inquiry into global understanding, this project explored the thoughts and feelings of people who have chosen to immigrate and those who have lost their homes and can never return to them again. The intention of this project was to have university researchers, associate teachers, and teacher candidates work together to provide resources and strategies to help elementary students wrestle with questions of how society can take responsibility to understand the

experiences of immigrants and refugees. During this project, reading, writing, and arts-based activities were used to support students' progress in understanding experiences of being an immigrant or refugee and finding a place they can call home.

PROJECT FOCUS

The project took place at Joyce Public School, which is located in the northwest quadrant of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). With approximately 300 students, the school population represents a diverse student body, and most of them come from families who immigrated to Canada in the past decade. About 60 percent of students' primary language is other than English.

The project team included the following participants: two project coordinators, two associate teachers and 25 students in each of their Grade 5 and 6 classes, two teacher candidates from OISE, the teacher librarian, and a special education resource teacher. The project team collaborated in planning how to engage students with the topic of globalization and home. The possibilities for reading about immigrants, researching the lives of immigrants, writing personal narratives, and role-playing the lives of those who sought home in Canada offered a central focus for the research project. Our inquiry was guided by the words of Gay (2010):

The world we must care enough to see and help students transform is both inside and outside schools and classrooms.... Thus caring-based education has academic, civic, social, personal, cultural, political, moral, and transformative learning goals and behavioural dimensions (p. 51).

The goals of the project were to support teachers in helping students become more respectful, open-minded, and understanding of individual differences.

The following questions guided this project:

- How can educators inform and challenge students' personal views and feelings about immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers?
- What resources and strategies best develop students' knowledge and understanding of the reasons why individuals have chosen, or been forced, to leave their country of origin?

During this project, reading, writing, and arts-based activities were used to support students' progress in understanding experiences of being an immigrant or refugee and finding a place they can call home.

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The following describes the meetings and interviews with the associate teachers and teacher candidates and a series of lessons with the Grade 5 and 6 students.

Pre-project group interview. An initial meeting was held with the two associate teachers and their teacher candidates, the teacher librarian, and special education teachers to clarify the research focus and discuss project goals and proposed research methods.

Unit and lesson planning. Research coordinators met with teacher candidates to plan and map out integrated activities that would meet curriculum expectations for reading, writing, media, and drama. A library of picture books, novels, and information texts was assembled to support the teacher candidates in developing their lessons.

Lesson 1: "I am an immigrant" research project

Students conducted an interview with family or community members about their immigration experiences. Focus questions included, What were the circumstances of choosing to come to Canada? What were their hopes and challenges? The results of these interviews were shared in Google Docs.

Lesson 2. Response to text

Groups of students were assigned a picture book on the topic of refugees and immigration and then invited to create a book trailer to promote the book using presentation software such as Movie Maker or PowerPoint.

Lesson 3. Response to Ted Talk YouTube videos¹

Students identified key points of two videos on Tan Le, a Vietnamese-Australian bioscience entrepreneur. The class discussed the strengths and challenges of her personal narrative of escaping war in Vietnam, and drew connections to other stories they had heard.

Lesson 4. Demonstration lesson with Larry Swartz.

Students watched an excerpt from the documentary video, *God Grew Tired of Us* (2007). They were invited to consider the circumstances that require someone to leave a country by choice or by force, and then they role-played as social workers planning to welcome refugees into their school.

¹ http://www.ted.com/talks/tan_le_my_immigration_story.html

Lesson 5. Simulation games

Activities such as the Circle Game, the Millennia Bowl, the Cost of Life, provided opportunities for students working in groups to experience “what-if” situations of survival. One scenario invited students to consider qualifications for immigration and sponsorship.

Lesson 6. Demonstration lesson with guest teacher

Debbie Nyman helped students consider, through role- playing, how a refugee might settle into a North American community. Students then posted comments on a blog related to the question, If you were hosting a 14-year-old child fleeing from his country what do you think would help him feel safe at home in Canada?

Post-project group interview. The project participants considered the success of meeting the project goals, the challenges that were involved, and also offered suggestions for next steps, outlining changes that they would make and further learning opportunities that might be available in delivering curriculum connected to this topic.

DATA COLLECTION

At each stage of the project, qualitative data were collected and analyzed. These data included transcripts of the audio-recorded pre- and post-project group interviews, the students’ media presentations and writing samples, observations of the class, and student art work.

FINDINGS

The major themes that emerged from the data analysis reflect changes in students’ thinking—as perceived by the teacher participants—and attitudes about global understanding of citizenship. These changes are discussed in the following sections in relation to

what occurred at the beginning, middle, and end of the project.

Views at beginning of the project

At first the definition many students had of *immigration* was simplistic, narrow, and factual: that is, immigration involved individuals moving to a new country, and refugees were those who escaped their country of origin for their own safety. The associate teachers and teacher candidates saw that students needed an in-depth learning of the immigration and refugee experience to develop values and attitudes of respect, appreciation, and open-mindedness. One associate teacher said, “I thought the biggest challenge from the beginning of the unit was for the kids to see immigrants as something that was actually empowering instead of like, oh, we feel so sorry for them, they are immigrants, and they need our help. We needed to switch from that perspective.” The librarian commented, “Our students ... they are kids of immigrant parents ... they are first generation, but there’s almost kind of a lack of pride and almost resistance to talk about the fact that their parents are immigrants.”

Views at the mid-point of the project

As the lessons were implemented daily during the practicum, we observed changes in the students’ understanding of the immigration and refugee experience. Specifically, most students began to understand that part of their identity stemmed from their family immigrating to Canada. Also, students came to understand that the immigrant or refugee experience is diverse. Students began to appreciate the notion of immigration through a personal perspective and to respect the challenges and barriers that immigrants face while settling into their new country. These new understandings became apparent after the “I am an immigrant” research project, in which students interviewed a family member, friend, or community member who had immigrated to Canada. Students presented their interview results via PowerPoint. One teacher candidate noted:

[The students] really got a global perspective because when we did the “I am an immigrant” presentations they shared each other’s stories. After watching everyone else’s presentation, students were amazed to learn the different perspectives of other students’ parents and family members immigrating to Canada. So I think they became more aware and they made more of a connection to what being an immigrant was, whereas in the beginning I think they thought “I’m just a Canadian, I don’t have an immigration background.”

According to one associate teacher, the books that told the beautiful stories of immigrants contributed to students’ expanded learning: “Both the picture books and novels really helped students connect to what home really means. It made them think beyond materialistic wants, and appreciated that everyone has the right to a safe and caring home.”

As well, the associate teachers and teacher candidates felt that students showed valuable insight during their response to the Ted Talk videos about Tan Le. One associate teacher said,

The first video was about her amazing accomplishments as a bioscience entrepreneur. Students had no idea about her immigrant background. Then the second video was about her immigration story, what it was like being on the boat, the challenges in Vietnam. So first they saw this really brilliant and accomplished woman, but behind this there’s a whole history. The students suddenly realized that immigrants contribute to our society in fundamental ways.

Views near the end of the project

By the end of the unit, the participating Grade 5 and 6 students showed they had gained a deeper knowledge base of the immigrant and refugee experience and their sense of what home meant was

expanded. Students were beginning to conceptualize the important contributions immigrants and refugees have made to Canada.

The associate teachers and teacher candidates felt that students gained pride in their immigration family background, but they required more opportunity to critically think about stereotypes and misrepresentations of the immigrant and refugee population. As a future goal, they want to focus more on the critical analysis of how the media portrays immigrants and refugees. In the words of one associate teacher,

I felt like we gave the students an awareness, appreciation, and some personal pride about the immigration experience, but I don’t think we got into the critical analysis ... like examining policies, what is really behind the admission policy? We could have looked at the historical policy of the Chinese head tax in the 1880s. We could have explored current issues like how the term *free loaders* is used by politicians to describe immigrants coming to Canada.

“ *Both the picture books and novels really helped students connect to what home really means.* ”

IMPACT

This project provided opportunities for 50 students in two junior classes (Grades 5 and 6) to gain insight into global matters. Throughout the inquiry, students’ responses demonstrated a growing depth of understanding of a particular aspect of globalization. At the end of the project the team considered how successfully the project goals had been met. The following comment by an associate teacher demonstrates the positive impact of the project:

We hoped that the students could get a good grasp of the mosaic of individuals that form their country, their city, their community, their classroom. By providing texts that told the stories of others and by having the students share their own experiences, the students came to a better understanding of how everyone becomes a part of a unique environment where generations of people who have lived in Canada meet and live with new immigrants to create an environment in which they live.

At the outset, many students had little insight into what it meant to be an immigrant. Many students had been born in Canada and identified themselves as Canadians, but they had limited understanding of their family's immigration stories. However, students' understanding of others' life journeys increased after they experienced the lessons and resources provided by the project activities. Their eyes and hearts were opened to understanding that "everyone has a story" and everyone has a right to a safe home. In this way the researchers, the associate teachers, and the teacher candidates felt the project's goals were achieved.

To confirm the impact this project had on the student participants, it is worth noting that in the midst of this unit, a new student from Peru was enrolled in the classroom. For the students in the class, the experience of making someone feel welcomed and comfortable in a new home became a reality. One girl remarked that the new boy's background was just like the one the class had read about in the picture book *My Name is Sangoel*. The new student became aware of the research that was going on class, and he felt validated by his classmates when they learned about his story.

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

As a result of this project the two teacher candidates saw the importance of introducing young people to issues connected to global understanding. The

associate teachers valued the opportunity provided by the project to gather materials, plan and develop lessons for their own classrooms on a significant global issue and, at the same time, meet a range of curriculum expectations. One of the associate teachers explained the importance of partnerships as follows:

I think there was an important partnership that was in place when teacher candidates came to our classrooms and we were able to talk to them and they were able to connect with the OISE instructors. Also, we were able to partner with the teacher librarian and the special education teacher. I think the rich sense of partnership throughout this project was a significant aspect of this inquiry.

This project confirms the importance of implementing a variety of teaching strategies for the exploration of immigrant and refugee experiences: introduce literature; have meaningful discussions; and offer students opportunities to work independently and in small groups to read fiction and information texts, research and report, write in role and out of role, and use technology to present ideas as they work towards an understanding of complex issues. (See Figure 1.) The project's literacy, technology, and arts approaches can be used by other educators to promote global awareness related to experiences of immigrants and refugees.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the fine team of junior teachers at Joyce Public School, true partners in gathering resources, developing lessons, and providing data that allowed us to meet the goals of this project. The insights and instructional repertoire of the two teacher candidates, Danielle Kolenko and Jennifer Nash, further informed the research and enriched the partnership between OISE and the Grade 6 classrooms. Thanks too to Debbie Nyman, who provided drama lessons that helped consolidate the learning about refugee issues.

Figure 1. Suggestions for classroom activities

Finding a definition of *home*

Students work in groups to write a definition of the word *home* using the following context: A new dictionary is about to be published, but home has yet to be defined. Students as dictionary editors have been called upon for their input. Students are given file cards to independently write a personal definition of home. They can then work with a partner to compare definitions. Some follow-up activities may include (a) partners work together to create a single definition, (b) students work in small groups to collaborate on a definition, (c) they create a definition that's exactly 25 words long.

Working in role of refugees

Each student is given a profile of a refugee. The book *Making it Home* is a collection of real-life stories of children—from places such as Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq—who were forced to flee their countries. After reading the selection of stories, students in small groups work in role. Each student is given the chance to role-play the refugee he or she has read about. The context of the interview involves the refugee being interviewed by Canadian immigration officers who are responsible for gathering information about those who are entering the country. As a follow-up to this activity, students can write in role as the refugee and record their experiences in a log book or diary. Students can also retell a situation from the information text or invent a new story that would convey some of the successes and challenges of adapting to a new life.

“I am an immigrant”: primary research and PowerPoint presentations

Students interview someone who has immigrated to Canada. Many students in the school may have parents or relatives who have recently immigrated. Some students may choose to interview other students, teachers, or community members who have an immigration story to share. Some focus questions include, when did you come to Canada? What were some decisions you needed to make in choosing to leave home? What were some of your hopes and dreams? What successes and challenges did you encounter in your immigration experience? How was life similar or different to the one you were familiar with? Students present their interview project through a PowerPoint presentation. As a follow-up to this activity, students share the story of the person they interviewed on Google Docs.

Investigating websites and sharing opinions

Students are introduced to the UNICEF website “Voices of Youth,” which addresses global youth issues such as employment, environment, and equity (see <http://www.voicesofyouth.org/>). Students choose an article from the website to better understand issues of young people who live in different areas of the world. Students then post online reactions to the information and stories they read from this website.

Further resources and strategies

A number of resources and drama strategies for working inside and outside the theme of home can be found in Chapter 6 (pp. 112–129) of *Drama Schemes, Themes and Dreams*, by L. Swartz & D. Nyman (2010), Pembroke Publishers.

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Bend without Breaking: Applying Critical Reflexive Practice in Global Citizenship Education

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the benefits and challenges of critical reflexive practice (CRP) within the context of global citizenship education curricula. The participants

included two instructors of an OISE global and international education course, four teachers who were former teacher candidates in that course, and four groups of K–12 students who were taught by those teachers. The data were collected between 2010 and 2013 during a period when participants were teaching and learning about CRP. The key finding of this study is that CRP enabled teachers to probe notions of perspective and difference and engage more deeply with their own and their students' identities. In this paper we discuss this central finding and examine its implications for critical global citizenship education.

PROJECT FOCUS

flexible (*fleksabl*) can bend without breakingⁱ

Critical reflexive practice (CRP) is an important, albeit uncomfortable, component of critical global citizenship education. It is important because it invites teachers and learners to prioritize equity and justice, rather than equality and charity, when global education is being taught. It is uncomfortable because it involves dwelling in difficult and complicated relationships. This in turn requires consistent engagement with the complexity of identity and experience

ⁱ Source: Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary

that is implicated not only in people's everyday lives and material well-being but also in places and processes within local, regional, national, and global spheres. Rather than a movement outward, critical reflexive practice involves a continual bending back toward the self as a primary source for critique and inquiry and the connecting of one's inner world with outer structures that shape identity and experience.

Rather than a movement outward, critical reflexive practice involves a continual bending back toward the self as a primary source for critique and inquiry and the connecting of one's inner world with outer structures that shape identity and experience.

CRP involves engaging with difficult questions about our social-identity positions, assumptions, biases, beliefs, privileges, values, and behaviours, as well as inquiring into the complex and difficult ways that these perspectives are implicated in transnational harm. Moreover, critical global citizenship education is concerned not only with relationships between individuals or between countries but also with relationships within countries and within the self. Therefore, CRP requires intentional engagement with multiple identity locations—those of teachers and students—and also with the conflicts and tensions that these locations may induce. CRP thus involves paying attention to behaviours and ways of thinking and knowing, including ways of thinking about and practising what it means to be a global citizen and what it means to be a global citizenship educator.

Central to CRP is questioning and working through uncertainty. An intended outcome of this practice is to be moved, agitated, galvanized, and also to “bend without breaking”: which refers to engaging without becoming paralyzed by feelings of powerlessness, anger, or guilt (Andreotti, 2006). The productive outcome is the mobilization of critique for transformative possibility and a more equitable world.

To these ends, we investigated the benefits and challenges of CRP experienced by (a) two instructors of an OISE global education course on issues in global and international education; (b) four teacher candidates who took that course (referred to throughout as “teachers”); and (c) four groups of K–12 students who were later taught by those teachers. The focus of our study was on investigating the benefits and challenges of CRP within the context of global citizenship education curricula. A central goal of the study was to be able to identify specific pedagogical considerations and priorities for teacher education, development, and curriculum program planning.

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

Between September 2010 and July 2013 Angela and Gary co-taught the OISE related studies course Issues in Global and International Education (IIGE) in two separate terms. Following many discussions about our joint experience of introducing CRP as a component of IIGE and our students' experiences with CRP during our course and later in their own classrooms (as evidenced through their course work and in correspondence with us), we decided to undertake this study to look more purposefully at the benefits and challenges involved in this practice. Specifically, we were interested in investigating the teaching and learning of CRP as a component of global and international education from multiple vantage points: (a) our own as instructors of this course, (b) the teacher candidates in our course, and (c) the candidates' own students as they began their own classroom teaching practice.

The ensuing research project examined participants' experiences and perspectives of CRP through three stages: those of instructors and teachers during the IIGE courses, those of four selected teachers prior to the deliberate implementation of a CRP lesson in their own respective classrooms once they were teachers, and those of teachers and students following the lesson.

DATA COLLECTION

In the first stage of the project (Sept. 2010 to April 2012), data were collected through reflexive writing assignments undertaken by teachers and instructors during the IIGE course. We analyzed this data using critical discourse analysis. In the second stage (Sept. to Dec. 2012), we interviewed the four selected teachers about their plans to implement a lesson that would enable their students to become engaged in CRP. The third stage involved a follow-up interview with each of these teachers to learn of their insights on the lesson and their students' engagement with CRP. We also collected teaching plans and resources used for the lesson. In this article the findings are condensed to represent the data from the three elementary teachers: here given the pseudonyms Hannah (Grade 2), Linda (Grade 5) and Monique (Grade 6).

FINDINGS

CRP enabled teachers to link the notion of sociocultural difference with an in-depth understanding of the role of identity. This connection underscored both the benefits and challenges of using CRP to recognize tangible, constructed, and perceptive differences in the world through understanding how opinions and perspectives are formed.

Benefits and challenges of unpacking “difference”

As an outcome of their students' experiences with CRP, teachers observed an increased understanding of difference through building tolerance, inclusion, non-judgmental attitudes, and *perspective-consciousness* (see Hanvey, 1982). For example, Linda planned a unit based on the book *My Story: Halima from Kenya*. The unit culminated with an activity involving the comparison of the lives of a student in Kenya and one in Canada. Linda facilitated this lesson with the class through the use of a Venn diagram in which students noted what characteristics they found were different or

similar between themselves and Halima. (see Figure 1.) Linda's students deepened their understanding of how people around the world live their lives in different ways and that they have different perspectives, including differences in values, beliefs, and worldviews. Linda relayed her students' realizations that “there is more than one story, more than one perspective, more than one side, and more than one way of being.”

Both Hannah and Linda pointed out the challenges involved in learning about difference: their students found it difficult to conceptualize difference without bringing an evaluative dimension (i.e., that something is superior or inferior). But in the view of these teachers, CRP afforded the opportunity to move beyond judging. Linda commented,

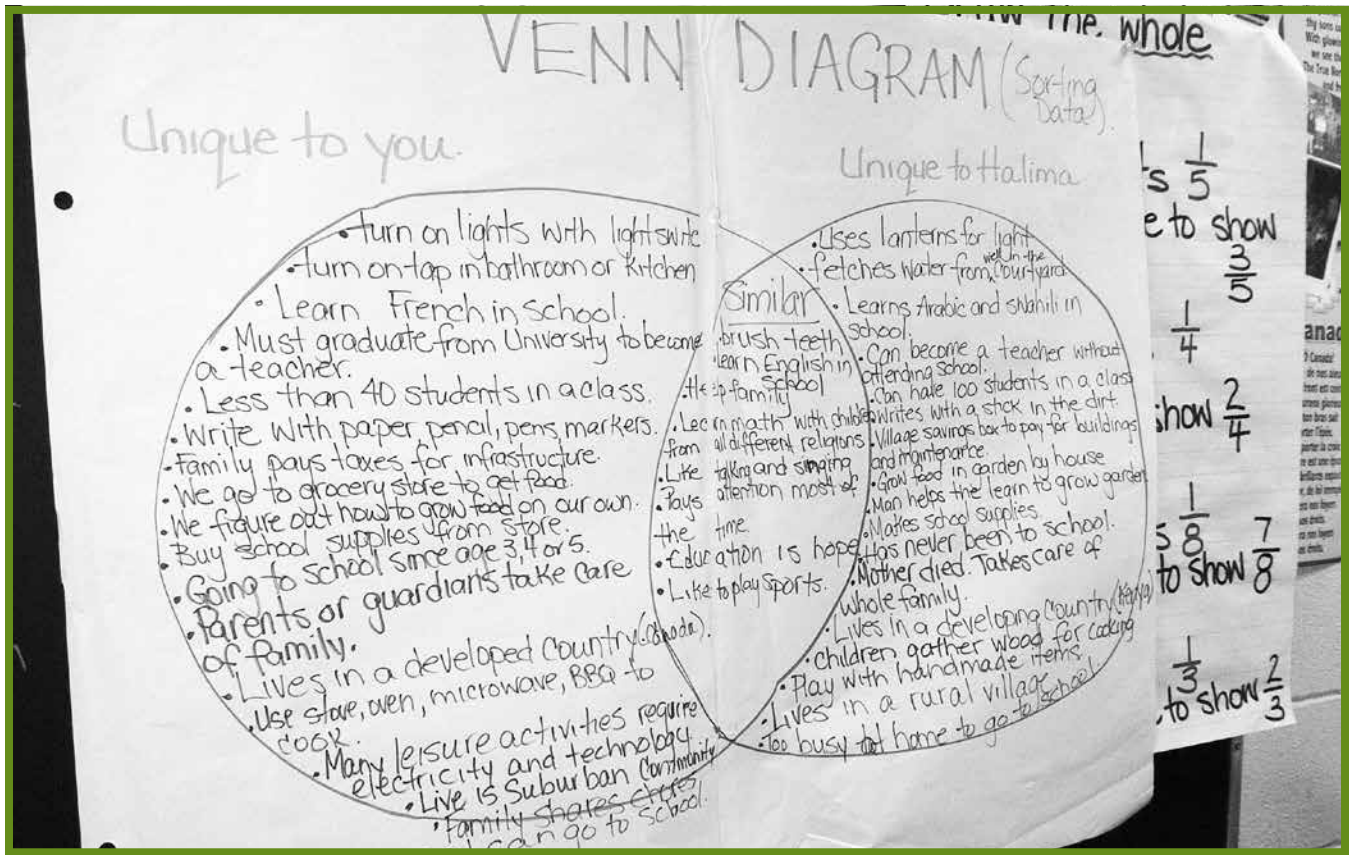
When I am teaching them about schools of the world, I explain that we're not talking about better and worse, we're talking about similarity and difference. I want to change the focus from “Oh, poor them” to “Is their experience worse, or just different?”

At the same time, in wanting to avoid judgement, some teachers avoided critical questions concerning why some people and places experience better and worse impacts of structural inequity.

Benefits and challenges of focusing on identity

Teaching for CRP created opportunities for responsive pedagogy because it led teachers to learn about their students' ethno-cultural identity and experiences and to meaningfully account for these in their curriculum program planning. The teachers thought more deeply about the relationship between their own and their students' identity. In several instances this resulted in teachers opening more space in their classrooms for the perspectives of parents and increasing communication between teachers and parents. This impacted their curricular and instructional decision-making and their attitudes toward students as teachers and contributors. When Linda showed her students an image of

Figure 1. Venn diagram comparing the life of Grade 5 students in the Greater Toronto Area and that of Halima from Kenya



an outdoor school in Pakistan, she was surprised when one of her young students shared that it looked just like the school she went to in Pakistan. Hannah also learned more about her students' identities through CRP activities: "I noticed that they have had so many life experiences that I wasn't even expecting, so now when I am planning lessons I can take these things into account."

Because reflexivity is fundamentally an exercise in confronting and challenging one's values and beliefs, participants experienced the feelings of shock and confusion that accompany teaching and learning about difference. Linda and Hannah, for example, shared several examples of the challenge of broadening students' perspectives beyond those they were familiar with, and at times they struggled with the ideological tensions this presented. Linda stressed, "It's not our job to teach students what to believe," but she felt that

it was her responsibility to develop her students' awareness of the complexity inherent in their perspectives. When she taught her students that in some places in the world, girls are not permitted to go to school, she described their reaction as "complete shock."

The other teachers also described the emotional responses of their students. When Monique showed her students pictures of child labourers, "a lot of them hadn't seen pictures like this before, and they couldn't get over the fact that not only did the kids have to work but they didn't get paid." After facilitating a discussion on gender politics in the context of the 2013 shooting of young Pakistani education advocate Malala Yousafzai, Hannah observed a rift between the boys and girls in her class. She explained, "If anything comes up, they'll [boys] just be very aggressive. If there's anything remotely related to that kind of issue, the discussion becomes very aggressive very quickly."

These responses point to the importance of teaching facilitation skills for discussion and for engaging with conflict as part of instruction on critical reflexive practice.

IMPACT

Central to the study and practice of global citizenship education is the primacy of identity and the need to create more space in education for the purposeful take-up of identity as material for learning. Teachers noted they gave more attention to their students' identities and they thought more about the relationship between their own and their students' identities and the learning material. Also significant was that the research interviews served as a vital tool in developing CRP for both the researchers and teachers. To varying degrees, many students were able to enter into CRP and sophisticatedly engage with issues of identity, particularly when their teacher facilitated discussions through complex questions. Although engaging with notions of difference and identity can make for precarious classroom pedagogy, it enables teachers to address important issues of structural inequity and unequal power relationships in global citizenship education.

IMPLICATIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

These findings had epistemological, inter- and intra-personal, and sociopolitical implications, particularly for initial teacher education. Work with CRP in global citizenship education should focus on further clarifying and developing CRP, delineating related concepts, and providing consistent opportunities for practice during teacher candidates' learning. It is important that teacher education pedagogy interweave global issues of power and inequity with local examples such as the ones that Hannah, Linda, and Monique described. Teacher candidates need a space, the skills, and encouragement to take risks in teaching controversial issues that are critical for fostering CRP.

It is imperative that CRP enables teacher candidates to engage the affective, psychic, and cognitive dimensions of local and global inequities and suffering, including what could be done at the levels of individual and systemic reparation.

NEXT STEPS

We propose continued, thoughtful investigation of specific ways that identity matters in doing this work of CRP within the context of teaching global matters in K–12 classrooms. We want to encourage more descriptive reflections of teachers' experiences as they experiment with CRP as a pedagogical tool, as well as further research that probes the limits of CRP in global education. It will be important to learn whether teachers can sustain the enthusiasm and commitment to teach reflexivity beyond the early years of teaching; if CRP becomes an internalized process and is applied across subjects; how teachers instructionally respond to the initial challenges they face; and what creative solutions and strategies teachers develop in response to greater workloads, pressures of conformity, and curriculum standardization.

“ *Students realized there is more than one story, more than one perspective, more than one side, and more than one way of being.* ”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to extend our appreciation to all our IIGE teacher candidates between 2010 and 2012 who sincerely engaged in these important processes of CRP, and especially the four current teachers who agreed to share their experiences of reflexivity in global education for the purposes of this research. In addition, we wish to thank the four education jurisdictions, schools, and their principals, and the groups of students who facilitated and authorized this study.

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RESOURCES

Compiled by Jill Goodreau and Stephen Antolin

These resources have been selected for their relevance on themes and issues related to teaching and learning global matters in the Canadian context, their focus on classroom practice and strategies, and their ability to raise awareness of the complicated nature of this work for educators.

BOOKS, CHAPTERS, AND ARTICLES

Abdi, A., & Shultz, L. (Eds.). (2008). *Educating for human rights and global citizenship*. New York: SUNY Press.

The articles in this book provide an analysis of the historical and current practices in education for human rights and global citizenship. From diverse perspectives, the contributing authors highlight the role of education in working toward inclusive citizenship and human rights for all.

Andreotti, V. (2006). **Soft versus critical global citizenship education.** *Policy and Practice: Development Education Review*, 3, 83–98. <http://www.developmenteeducationreview.com/issue3>

In this article Andreotti presents an accessible framework for analyzing global issues. This approach to critical global citizenship education encourages learners to examine a complex web of cultural and material processes and contexts on local and global levels. The idea is not right versus wrong correlating with soft versus critical; rather, it is about making assumptions visible and recognizing the contexts and relations of power.

Banks, J., McGee Banks, C., Cortés, C., Hahn, C., Merryfield, M., Moodley, K., ... Parker, W. (2005). *Democracy and diversity: Principles and concepts for educating citizens in a global age*. Seattle: Centre for Multicultural Education, University of Washington. <http://depts.washington.edu/centerme/DemDiv.pdf>

This resource provides principles, concepts, and guidelines or checklists that educators can use to develop (or enhance) citizenship education programs that are responsive to diversity and prepare students to become effective global citizens. This resource came out of the 10-member Diversity, Citizenship, and Global Education Consensus Panel as a way to respond to the challenge of balancing unity and diversity in multicultural nation-states.

Beckford, C., & Nadhee, R. (2010). *Teaching for ecological sustainability: Incorporating indigenous philosophies and practices*. Toronto: Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and Ontario Association Deans of Education. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/WW_Teaching_Ecological.pdf

This research-into-practice monograph explores how teachers and schools can incorporate indigenous ecological perspectives into mainstream education. Resource subheadings include insights of Aboriginal scholarship, key tenets of Aboriginal philosophy, and teaching aboriginal content in mainstream classrooms.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA). (2013). <http://www.policyalternatives.ca>

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives is concerned with issues of social, economic, and environmental justice. Its articles, research studies, and multimedia resources relate to Aboriginal people, housing and homelessness, human rights, inequality, poverty and other issues. CCPA also publishes *Our Schools/Our Selves*, a quarterly education journal that provides a forum for discussion and debate on important issues in education.

Centre for Global Education. (2013). *Policy & practice: A development education review.*

<http://www.developmenteducationreview.com>

This open-access, peer-reviewed journal is published biannually by the Centre for Global Education (Ireland). It provides a space for global educators to critically reflect on their practice and to discuss relevant issues, policies, and challenges in the field of development and global education.

Centre for Social Justice. (2013). <http://www.socialjustice.org>

The Centre for Social Justice conducts research, education, and advocacy on issues of inequality and democracy. This site includes thematically organized educational print materials. Free, downloadable reports and booklets support teacher professional development related to themes of economic, racial, gender, and health inequality.

Citized. (n.d.). <http://www.citized.info>

This organization is dedicated to supporting and advancing the capacity of educators to promote democratic citizenship and the ideals of equality, justice, respect, and democratic participation. On this website educators can access conferences, seminars, workshops, research papers, and resources for teaching citizenship education.

Evans, M., Ingram, L., MacDonald, A., & Weber, N. (2009). Mapping the “global dimension” of citizenship education in Canada: The complex interplay of theory, practice, and context. *Citizenship, Teaching and Learning*, 5(2), 16–34.

This article maps out the global dimension of citizenship as it is expressed in the literature. It proposes a series of “working” conceptual frameworks for global citizen education, and it provides an overview of education for global citizenship within the Canadian context.

Gaudelli, W. (2003). *World class: Teaching and learning in global times.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

This book on global education is organized into three sections: Contexts, Problems, and Alternatives. The first section considers global education from multiple perspectives: teacher, student, administrator, community member, and scholar. The second section focuses on pedagogical challenges associated with global education, and the third provides considerations for different ways to engage in global teaching and learning.

Hicks, D., & Holden, C. (2007). *Teaching the global dimension: Key principles and effective practice.* London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

This book explores how teachers can effectively and practically incorporate a global dimension into their curriculum. Its chapters, written by global educators in the field, explore its key concepts and respond to global concerns such as inequality, justice, environment, and conflict.

Kanu, Y. (2011). *Integrating aboriginal perspectives into the school curriculum: Purposes, possibilities and challenges.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

This book explores the challenges, contexts, and possibilities of integrating Aboriginal perspectives into mainstream classrooms. Based on six years of research, Kanu offers insights from youth, educators, and school administrators to support student success and engagement. These insights can apply across subject areas and diverse cultural groups.

Kielburger, C., & Kielburger, M. (2010). *Global voices.* Vancouver, BC: Greystone Books/Me to We Books.

Global Voices is a compilation of Craig and Mark Kielburger’s nationally syndicated column that tries to tell the untold stories of people and issues from around the world. An accompanying curriculum available for classroom use supports the development of students’ journalistic skills through the Junior Journalist Program.

Longview Foundation. (2008). *Teacher preparation for the global age: The imperative for change.* Silver Spring, MD: Longview Foundation for Education in World Affairs and International Understanding Inc.

<http://www.longviewfdn.org/files/44.pdf>

This report gathers promising practices from teacher education programs across the United States on what is being done to educate teachers in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that can support them in preparing students for their roles in an increasingly interdependent world. This report presents an emerging framework for comprehensive internationalization of teacher preparation.

Manji, I. (2011). *Allah, liberty & love: The courage to reconcile faith and freedom.* Toronto, ON: Random House Canada.

This book explores how Muslims and non-Muslims can transcend the fears that prevent many people from living with integrity, such as the fear of offending others in a multicultural world or the fear of questioning our own communities. Manji explains how we can reconcile faith and freedom by developing moral courage—the willingness to speak up when everybody else wants to shut you up.

Mansilla, V. B., & Jackson, A. (2011). *Educating for global competence: Preparing our youth to engage the world.* E. Omerso (Ed.), New York, NY: Asia Society/CCSSO.

<http://asiasociety.org/files/book-globalcompetence.pdf>

This resource supports a variety of educational stakeholders in preparing youth to respond to the opportunities and challenges facing the global community. It offers a framework for developing students' ability to investigate the world, to recognize perspectives, to communicate effectively, and to take action to improve the world.

Martusewicz, R., Edmundson, J., & Lupinacii, J. (2011). *Ecojustice education: Towards diverse, democratic and sustainable communities.* New York: Routledge. <http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415872515/>

This text, written for social foundations or multicultural education courses, uses an EcoJustice framework to approach issues related to diversity and democracy, including racism, sexism, and socioeconomic injustice. This model provides information and classroom practices that educators can use to develop citizens who are prepared to work toward diverse, democratic, and sustainable societies.

Merryfield, M. (2011). *Global education: Responding to a changing world.* In W. B. Russell (Ed.), *Contemporary social studies: An essential reader* (pp. 57–76). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Merryfield makes a case for global education in social studies classrooms. Connected to the global education constructs of perspectives consciousness and global interconnectedness, she offers concepts, enduring understandings, and teaching ideas to support teachers in making connections between time and space, recognizing how culture affects perceptions and interactions, and decolonizing imperial worldviews.

Mundy, K., Bickmore, K., Hayhoe, R., Madden, M., & Madjidi, K. (Eds.). (2010). *Comparative education: Issues for teachers.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Drawing on comparative research from the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, this text explores such themes as the history and philosophy of comparative education, the right to education, teacher formation, alternative pedagogies, gender, international assessments, Indigenous knowledge, peace building, and global citizenship education.

Mundy, K., Manion, C., Masemann, V., & Haggerty, M. (2007). *Charting global education in Canada's elementary schools: Provincial, district and school-level perspectives.* Toronto, Canada: OISE/ University of Toronto & UNICEF Canada.

This cross-Canada study responds to the following questions: (1) What is the current state of global education in Canadian elementary schools, and how is this being supported by schools, districts, provincial ministries, and NGOs? (2) How can Canadian organizations better encourage and support global education in schools?

O’ Sullivan, M., & Pashby, K. (Eds.). (2008). *Citizenship education in the era of globalization: Canadian perspectives*. Rotterdam, NL: Sense Publishers.

The articles in this collection engage with issues and discourses about global orientations to citizenship education that currently define scholarly work and teaching practices in Canada. The articles map the history of citizenship, citizenship education, and global studies and discuss the possibilities and challenges of educating for global citizenship in these global times.

Oxley, L., & Morris, P. (2013). *Global citizenship: A typology for distinguishing its multiple conceptions*. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 61, 301–325.

This article considers two general forms of global citizenship (cosmopolitan-based and advocacy-based) and presents a typology to identify and distinguish the diverse conceptions of global citizenship (GC). The typology can be used to analyze key features of educational policies and programs that promote GC.

Pike, G. (2008) *Reconstructing the legend: Educating for global citizenship*. In A. Abdi & L. Shultz (Eds.), *Educating for human rights and global citizenship* (pp. 223–237). New York: State University of New York Press.

Pike maps the field of global education over the years and highlights that the plethora of initiatives aimed at implementing global education in schools have resulted in very little. He explores the problematic concept of global citizenship and the challenges it poses for educators. He describes the “prevailing legend” of our world shaped by patriarchy and colonialism and offers concrete ways that educators can “reconstruct the legend.”

Richardson, G. H. (2008). *Conflicting imaginaries: Global citizenship education in Canada as a site of contestation*. In M. A. Peters, H. Blee, & A. Britton (Eds.), *Global citizenship education: Philosophy, theory and pedagogy* (pp. 115–132). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

In this article, Richardson outlines how global citizenship within Canadian curricula has been tied to our evolving national identity within imperial, cold-war, peace-keeping, and neoliberal agendas. His review of global citizenship education over the past century highlights that curricula continues to define what it means to be Canadian by characterizing “others” by how Western they are and by comparing them to an unexamined ideal of Canada.

Seager, J. (2009). *Penguin atlas of women in the world, 4th Edition*. USA: Penguin Books.

This book provides visually appealing and easy-to-understand graphs and analysis on key issues facing women in the world today, including equality, motherhood, women in government, and many more.

Sears, A. (Ed.). (2009). *Canadian perspectives on democracy, diversity and citizenship education*.

The International Journal of Citizenship, Teaching and Learning, 5(2). Online at <http://www.citized.info/>

This collection provides multiple perspectives about different aspects of democratic citizenship and global citizenship education in the Canadian contexts. It includes articles published by leading scholars in the field that explore issues pertaining to the theory, policy, practice history, and implications of citizenship education in Canada.

Sensoy, O., & DiAngelo, R. (2012). *Is everyone really equal? An introduction to key concepts in social justice education*. J. A. Banks (Ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

This handbook introduces readers to social justice education, by exploring key concepts such as power, privilege, discrimination, and oppression. It defines key terms and provides alternative perspectives, discussion questions, and extension activities that support the integration of social justice themes in the classroom.

Shultz, L. (2007). *Educating for global citizenship: Conflicting agendas and understandings*. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 53(3), 248–258.

This study examines the variations in intent and approach to global education and educating for global citizenship. Through an analysis of three global education policies and their citizenship education approaches, Shultz highlights that education for global citizenship is a complex and contested concept and that educators who claim to be educating for global citizenship must be clear on the implications of their work.

Sium, A., & Ritskes, E. (Eds.). (2013). *Decolonization: Indigeneity, education & society.*

<http://decolonization.org/index.php/des>

This is a peer-reviewed open-access journal whose aim is to provide a space for discussions about indigenous knowledge and decolonization initiatives happening around the world. This project developed out of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and includes a world class editorial board.

Smith, D. (2012). *Penguin State of the World Atlas, 9th Edition.* USA: Penguin Books.

This atlas provides an accessible and engaging visual survey that documents global trends and events. Through easy-to-understand graphs and the accompanying text, it presents information on a variety of global trends and issues, including information technology, militarization, peace keeping, and food and water.

Re-Thinking Schools. (2013). <http://www.rethinkingschools.org/index.shtml>

Rethinking Schools is a non-profit, independent publisher of educational materials relevant to teachers from K-12. Rethinking Schools publications primarily focus on teaching for social justice, anti-racist education, and equity in public education policy and practice. Resources include Rethinking Columbus, Rethinking Globalization, and more.

LEARNING AND TEACHING RESOURCES

Amnesty International. (2013). *Education for human dignity project.* London, UK: Amnesty International.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/projects-initiatives/e4hd>

The Education for Human Dignity Project aims to develop understanding about how poverty leads to human rights violations and how these violations in turn deepen poverty. This site provides a guide for using participatory methodologies for human rights education; it includes modules focused on poverty and housing and a link to an interactive website that engages youth in learning about and taking action against issues related to human rights and poverty.

Amnesty International. (2013). *Learn about human rights.* <http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights>

This website has information on issues related to human rights in more than 150 countries. Search by country or topic for information, articles, and slideshows on topics such as human rights education, women's rights, and arms control. Included are facilitation guides, classroom modules, and activist toolkits for youth ages 15 to 22.

Andreotti V., & Souza, L. (2008). *Learning to read the world through other eyes.* Derby: Global Education.

https://www.academia.edu/575387/Learning_to_Read_the_World_Through_Other_Eyes_2008_

This program of study offers a theoretical framework and methodology to support educators to engage with indigenous perceptions of global issues. This cross-cultural exercise invites learners to examine the origins of their own perceptions, values, and assumptions; to develop self-reflexivity; to re-evaluate their own positions in the global context; and to learn from other local ways of knowing and seeing.

Andreotti V. (2006). *Critical literacy in global citizenship education.* Derby: Global Education.

https://www.academia.edu/194048/Critical_Literacy_in_Global_Citizenship_Education_2006_

This set of resources uses an innovative, dialogue-based methodology to support participants in engaging critically with a range of global issues and perspectives. Each activity, related to a global and controversial issue, was designed to structure safe spaces for dialogue and enquiry—where the way one relates to others is as important as what is learned.

Centre for Urban Schooling. (2013). *Teacher resources*. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. http://cus.oise.utoronto.ca/Resources/Teacher_Resources.html

This site provides integrated social justice units for elementary school teachers. There are also a number of lesson plans connecting math and social justice and a lesson for making mathematics culturally relevant. These lessons have been developed by elementary teacher candidates in OISE's Inner City Option.

Chiarotto, L. (2011). *Natural curiosity: Building children's understanding of the world through environmental inquiry/ A resource for teachers*. Toronto: The Laboratory School at The Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, OISE, University of Toronto. <http://www.naturalcuriosity.ca/>

This resource advocates for an inquiry-based, experiential, and integrated approach to Environmental and Sustainability Education (ESE). Best practices for ESE in K-6 classrooms from OISE's Institute of Child Study and other schools make it a very practical document for teacher use.

Classroom Connections. (2002, 2004). <http://www.classroomconnections.ca/en/index.html>

Classroom Connections is a Canadian organization that develops educational resources related to diversity, immigration, peace building, Aboriginal education, and global and active citizenship. Bridges that Unite (elementary) and Cultivating Peace (secondary) are two resources that support teachers in addressing global issues and in working towards a culture of peace.

Deepening Knowledge Project. (2013). *Resources for and about aboriginal education*. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/deepeningknowledge/>

This project provides information about the history and traditions of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Native American cultures, and about the challenges facing Aboriginal communities in Canada today. It also includes information and resources for K-12 teachers looking to incorporate themes of Aboriginal education into their classrooms.

Developing a Global Perspective for Educators. (2012). <http://www.developingaglobalperspective.ca>

This site has developed out of the University of Ottawa's global education cohort. It provides a space for these primary/junior teacher candidates to develop their lesson and unit plans, theory-into-practice projects, and annotated resources related to developing global perspectives in classrooms and schools.

Elections Canada. (2012). *Canada's democracy week*.

<http://democracy-democratie.ca/content.asp?section=dmw&document=index&lang=e>

This website promotes democracy and helps students understand and explore the nature of governmental structures locally and globally. It includes a Newsroom with links to articles related to democracy in Canada, a Learning Resources section for educators, and a National Democracy Challenge section.

Environmental and Sustainability Education. (2013). Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ease>

This website is a great place for beginners to gain an introduction to the resources, readings, concepts, and practices central to Environmental and Sustainability Education (ESE).

Elementary Teacher's Federation of Ontario. (2012). *Resources*.

<http://www.etfo.ca/resources/pages/default.aspx>

The Elementary Teacher's Federation of Ontario hosts an online resource bank that supports teachers' efforts at enriching their programs to include diversity and social justice. Resources are listed alphabetically by theme and include book lists, lesson plans, and scholarly articles.

Evans, M., & Reynolds, C. (Eds.). (2004). *Educating for global citizenship in a changing world: A teacher's resource handbook*. Toronto, ON: OISE/CIDA.

http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/cidec/Research/Global_Citizenship_Education.html

This resource provides a range of ideas and practices for teaching and learning about citizenship within today's global context. It supports educators' efforts to infuse global perspectives in classroom and school-wide programs by detailing practices investigated, developed, and piloted by practising teachers in Toronto-area schools.

GapMinder. (n.d). <http://www.gapminder.org>

This application displays time-spanned statistical information about health, climate, economy, education, global trends, and technology. The data are presented in graphs that illustrate the development of particular trends over time.

Global Teacher Education. (2013). *Global teacher education: Education preparation resources for a global age.*

<http://www.globalteachereducation.org/>

This site supports teacher educators interested in internationalizing teacher education and promoting the development of global competencies. Resources connect to the praxis of developing globally oriented programs, strategies, and methods and to opportunities for connecting with professionals through webinars, blogs, forums, and videos.

Khan Academy. (2013). <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

The Khan Academy is a not-for-profit educational website created by educator Salman Khan, an MIT and Harvard Business School graduate. The goal is to improve education by offering "a free world-class education for anyone anywhere." Since 2006 it has delivered over 300 million lessons through its extensive library of content, including interactive challenges, assessments, and over 4300 videos.

Kozak, S., & Elliot, S. (2011). *Connecting the dots: Key strategies for environmental education, citizenship and sustainability*. Toronto: Learning for a Sustainable Future.

http://lsf-lst.ca/media/LSF_Connecting_the_DOTS_ExecutiveSummary.pdf

This K–12 resource offers an overview of seven learning strategies related to environmental education, citizenship, and sustainability. The questions, What is it? Why use it? How to use it? as well as examples of real-world practice are offered for each strategy. By using these strategies together students gain an interconnected view of local and global communities, and they become engaged in learning through relevant, local issues.

Larsen, M. (2008). *ACT! Active citizens today: Global citizenship for local schools*. London, University of Western Ontario. <http://www.oaje.org/data/ACT%20Teaching%20Kit.pdf>

This resource provides Grade 6 teachers with 38 fully developed lessons and assessment strategies on the theme of global citizenship. Through the lessons, students learn about interconnections between Canada and the rest of the world, global issues, and practical strategies to improve the quality of life, locally and globally.

Learning for a Sustainable Future. (2012). <http://www.lsf-lst.ca/en>

This is a Canadian non-profit organization that supports the integration of sustainability education into K–12 classrooms and schools. It offers a range of resources for teachers and students that promote the knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to support social, economic, and environmental sustainability education; it includes links to a variety of organizations that support similar efforts. This website is available in both French and English.

Ontario School Library Association. (2005). *Be the change*.

<http://www.accessola.com/osla/bethechange/background.html>

This website, hosted by the Ontario School Library Association, promotes active, global citizenship around the United Nations Rights of the Child convention. It publishes lessons and unit plans for use in K–12 classrooms and also includes links to blackline masters, assessment ideas, students' samples, and additional resources lists.

Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation. (2013). *Common Threads*.

<http://www.osstf.on.ca/commonthreads>

Common Threads is OSSTF's International Solidarity Program. In collaboration with an international partner, a team of teachers conducts field-based research on a critical, current topic and then develops classroom resources to support learning on this topic. Past resources include sweatshops; HIV/AIDS; the world water crisis; food and food security; and First Nation, Métis, and Inuit ways of knowing.

Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation. (n.d.). *Socially-based curriculum units*. Toronto, ON: OSSTF. <http://www.osstf.on.ca/SBCU>

The OSSTF has compiled a number of society-based curriculum units ready for use in secondary school classrooms and focused on issues such as globalization, world peace, and poverty.

Outreach World. (2011). *Resources*. <http://www.outreachworld.org/searchresources.asp>

Outreach World is an international education resource for K–12 teachers; it hosts an extensive database of resources searchable, for example, by grade level, global region, country, subject. With the tagline of “a resource for teaching kids about the world,” this site is supported by a 127 university-based National Research Centers and the US Department of Education. This site plans to expand to provide teacher education materials and more.

Oxfam Canada. (2013). *Educational resources*.

<http://www.oxfam.ca/news-and-publications/educational-resources>

Oxfam Canada offers a range of ideas, resources, and support for developing the global dimension in secondary classrooms and schools. Resources include ready-to-deliver workshops, presentations, and lesson plans on issues such as sustainable development, food security, and fair trade.

Oxfam UK. (n.d.). *Oxfam education*. <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/>

Oxfam UK offers an extensive range of ideas, resources, and support for developing active global citizenship in K–12 classrooms and schools. Resources are structured around a Learn–Think–Act approach and include global citizenship guides, resource guides about global issues, lesson plans, ready-to-deliver workshops, and whole-school project and activity ideas.

Radical Math. (2007). <http://www.radicalmath.org>

This website includes a comprehensive list of resources for grades K–12 that support educators' efforts to integrate social- and economic-justice teaching into their math classes and curriculum. Resources include lesson plans, articles, graphs, and data sets. The site can be browsed according to math topic, social justice issue, or resource type.

Rodrigue, A., Evans, M., & Broad, K. (Eds.). (2010). *Educating for global citizenship: An ETFO curriculum development inquiry initiative*. Toronto, ON: Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario.

<http://www.youblisher.com/p/12505-Global-Education-WebBook/>

This resource is a compilation of elementary educators' experiences in a collaborative learning community that investigated perspectives and practices for educating for global citizenship. It details their efforts in selecting, developing, and piloting curriculum ideas for classroom and school-wide use related to various aspects of educating for global citizenship identified in the Ontario curriculum.

The Paulo and Nita Friere International Project for Critical Pedagogy. (n.d.). *Teacher resources*.

<http://www.freireproject.org/content/teacher-resources>

This website is dedicated to advancing social justice causes by promoting critical pedagogy in the classroom. The site includes recommended books, lesson plans, websites, and forums where teachers can discuss issues related to using critical pedagogy in the classroom.

Think Global. (2013). Global dimension: *The world in your classroom*. <http://globaldimension.org.uk/>

This site brings together hundreds of teaching resources to assist K–12 teachers in bringing a global dimension into their classrooms. Resources are searchable by age, subject, topic, publisher, and more. Resources focus on concepts such as interdependence, global citizenship, diversity, sustainable development, social justice, values and perceptions, conflict resolution, and human rights.

Tunney, S., O’Donoghue, H., West, D., Gallagher, R., Gerard, L., & Molloy, A. (Eds.). (2008). *Voice our concern*. Amnesty International/Irish Aid/NAPD. <http://www.amnesty.ie/voice-our-concern>

This guide supports the efforts of Grade 9–12 educators to explore issues related to human rights through creative, participatory, and empowering ways. It focuses on developing students’ literacy and artistic abilities by educating them about and encouraging them to take action on human rights issues.

UNESCO. (2010). *Teaching and learning for a sustainable future*. <http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/>

This multimedia education program is suitable for Grades 7–12. This site hosts 27 modules organized under the following headings: Curriculum Rationale, Sustainable Development Across the Curriculum, Contemporary Issues, and Teaching and Learning Strategies. This project, originally developed for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, was most recently updated in 2010.

UNICEF. (2013). *TeachUNICEF*. <http://teachunicef.org>

TeachUNICEF is a storehouse of free global education resources. This website provides lesson plans, stories, and multimedia resources for a variety of subjects from Grades JK–12 that explore issues such as armed conflict, child labour, and peace education.

United Nations Global Teaching and Learning Project. (2002). *United Nations cyber school bus*.

<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/index.shtml>

The United Nations Cyber School Bus is an online hub whose mission is to promote education about international issues and the United Nations. It produces teaching materials for K–12 students and teachers on topics such as peace education, human rights, and world hunger. These materials include curriculum resources, online games, webcasts of the latest UN meetings, conferences and events, and in-depth country profiles.

University of Southampton, School of Social Sciences. (2007). *Teaching citizenship in higher education*.

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/citizened/activities/index2.shtml>

This website includes 11 fully developed learning activities that explore different aspects of citizenship in contemporary society. Examples include Active Citizenship, Disability and Citizenship, Environmental Citizenship and Global Citizenship. Activities incorporate a range of instructional approaches, including analysis and reflection on academic debates and students’ own attitudes and behaviours as citizens.

War Child Canada: get loud. (2013). <http://www.getloud.ca/en/educatorscentre.asp>

Get Loud is an initiative that promotes global citizenship education through new media and popular culture. The website offers teachers manuals, study guides, lesson plans, and a variety of other resources that support integrating global citizenship education into the secondary classroom. It focuses on four key strands: Peace Education, Environmental Education, Human Rights Education, and Development Education.

World Savvy. (2010). <http://worldsavvy.org/>

World Savvy was created in 2002 to promote global competency and 21st century skills among K–12 students in the U.S. Its resources link provides a comprehensive list of free resources on the theme of sustainable communities and on other global education themes. Included on this website are links to lesson plans, curriculum, video and web resources, as well as publications that provide necessary background information on a range of topics and issues.

FILM, VIDEO, AND GAMING RESOURCES

Canadian International Development Agency. (2012). *Teacher zone*. Ottawa, ON: CIDA.

<http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/CAR-621131330-N7Z>

Teacher Zone is a website hosted by the former Canadian International Development Agency. It offers online games and a collection of Grades 1–12 resources that support educators in teaching about international development and world issues.

Cizek, K. (2010). *Out my window: Interactive views from the global highrise*.

<http://outmywindow.nfb.ca/#/outmywindow>

This interactive, multimedia documentary project explores vertical living in 13 of the world's cities. This site allows students to look in the window of high-rise apartments and hear the stories of people who live inside. By personalizing issues of urbanization, this site helps students explore the hopes and challenges of the inhabitants of high-rises, and also the causes and consequences of urbanization worldwide.

Films for Action. (n.d.). <http://www.filmsforaction.org>

This website features over 1500 downloadable films that highlight important social, environmental, and media-related issues not covered by the mainstream news. The site's goal is to provide people with the information and perspectives needed to work towards more just, sustainable, and democratic societies.

Fox, L. (Director). (2007). *The story of stuff*. San Francisco, CA: Tides Center. <http://www.storyofstuff.org/>

This website explores how our choices as consumers have far-reaching implications on global systems and the global community. Included on the website are blog postings, movies, podcasts, and resources that are useful for exploring issues related to consumption and waste in classrooms at any grade level.

Gabbert, L., & Schein, J. (Directors). (2009). *No impact man*. [Motion picture] USA: Oscilloscope Pictures. <http://noimpactproject.org>

This website is based on the film and book *No Impact Man*, which follows Colin Beavan and his family's year-long experiment living a zero-waste lifestyle. It includes free lesson plans on the topics of consumption, energy, food, water, and transportation that encourage service to community and habitat and promote sustainable living.

McLeod, I. (Director). (2007). *Faith without fear*. [Motion picture]. Montreal, QC: National Film Board of Canada. <http://faithwithoutfear.moralcourage.com>

This documentary shows individuals how to turn their fear of other people's judgments into faith in their ability to think for themselves and to promote positive change in their communities. The film follows Irshad Manji as she attempts to speak out and confront injustices in her faith community using the framework of "moral courage."

McMahon, K. (Director). (2007). *Water life*. [Motion picture]. Montreal, QC: National Film Board of Canada. <http://waterlife.nfb.ca>

Waterlife is a film and accompanying interactive multimedia website focused on the Great Lakes, the last great supply of fresh water on earth. Watch the movie and visit the website with your students to tour the Great Lakes and learn about issues affecting the waters from Lake Superior to the Atlantic Ocean.

Media Education Foundation. (n.d.) *Educational videos about media, culture, and society for the classroom*.

<http://www.mediaed.org/cgi-bin/commerce.cgi?display=home>

Media Education Foundation produces and distributes documentary films and other educational resources that foster critical thinking about the social, political, and cultural impact of mass media. These resources explore issues of race, gender, health, politics, consumerism, and the mass media.

National Film Board of Canada. (n.d). *Contemporary voices: Films for global education.* Montreal, QC:

National Film Board of Canada. <http://www.nfb.ca/playlists/global-issues/>

This collection of documentaries compiled by the NFB helps educators integrate films about various global issues into secondary classrooms. The films and supporting curricular materials explore global issues in relation to topics such as Environment, Conservation, and Sustainability; Human Rights, Social Justice, and Globalization; War, Conflict, and Peace; and International Development.

National Film of Canada. (n.d). *Films for change: A pedagogical template for sustainable education.* Montreal, QC: **National Film Board of Canada.** <http://www.nfb.ca/playlists/films-change/>

Films for Change is a bilingual program designed to integrate documentary films about the environment into secondary classrooms. The films, teachers' guides, and online resources help students develop media literacy and environmental advocacy skills.

National Film of Canada. (n.d). *Footprints: Environment and the way we live.* Montreal, QC: **National Film Board of Canada.** <http://www3.nfb.ca/footprints/>

This website documents the relationship between environmental questions and the social and cultural lives of Canadians. The website includes films excerpts, archival artifacts, a glossary of terms, interviews with environmental experts, and a teacher resource list to assist with the implementation of these themes in classrooms.

National Geographic Society. (2013). *National Geographic education beta.*

http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/teaching-resources/?ar_a=1

This website has a range of educational resources for people interested in learning about the interconnectedness and interaction between humans and the environment. Resources include lesson plans, photos, videos, and interactive maps, which explore topics such as the economic impact of an oil spill and mapping extreme natural events.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (n.d.) *Teaching mathematics through a social justice lens.*

<http://resources.curriculum.org/secretariat/justice/index.html>

This Ministry of Education website promotes the integration of social justice teaching into a math classroom by using a variety of videos to explain and expand on concepts and approaches to such teaching. It also includes a variety of print resources that support the integration of social justice education into lesson, unit, and course plans.

Starowicz, M. (Director). (2013). *The 8th fire: Aboriginal peoples, Canada & the way forward.* Toronto, ON: **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.** <http://www.cbc.ca/player/Shows/Shows/Doc+Zone/8th+Fire/>

8TH FIRE is a four-part film series that explores Aboriginal communities in Canada and Canada's complex relationship with indigenous peoples: a relationship mired in colonialism, conflict, and denial. The website includes interview excerpts, radio clips, and interactive maps about Aboriginal issues.

Swerhone, E., Buffie, E., Corkery, J., & Downie, M. (Directors). (2010) *One ocean.* [Motion picture]. Toronto, ON: **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/National Geographic Channels/Science Channel/Merit Motion Pictures.** <http://oneocean.cbc.ca/series/episodes>

This four-part documentary series explores the history of the ocean, the diversity of its life-forms, the impact of humans, and calls for a more sustainable relationship between humans and nature. The website also offers webisodes, podcasts, and interactive features that allow for further exploration of the issues and potential solutions.

GLOBAL COLLABORATION RESOURCES

E-Pals (2013). <http://www.epals.com/#!/main>

E-Pals connects students to classrooms around the world and provides opportunities for students to collaborate on cross-cultural and interactive projects. Students collaborate via Skype, email, language translation, discussion boards, maps, and more. This site also provides JK–12 teacher and student resources and activities.

The Global Teenager Project. (n.d.) <http://www.globalteenager.org/>

The Global Teenager Project (GTP) connects students through online learning circles in global collaboration to answer world issues. This global classroom enables students to participate in discussions about a range of topics from water to immigration to HIV. The GTP promotes intercultural awareness and sensitivity and communication skills through the use of information communication technologies and structured learning circles.

iEARN (International Education and Resource Network). (2013). <http://www.iearn.org/>

iEARN is a non-profit organization made up of over 50,000 educators and two million youth in more than 140 countries. This global network enables teachers and youth to use the Internet and other information communication technologies to collaborate on projects that enhance learning and make a difference in the world.

National Association of Independent Schools. (2012). *Challenge 20/20.* Washington, DC: NAIS.

<http://www.nais.org/Articles/Pages/Challenge-20-20.aspx>

Challenge 20/20 is an Internet-based program that partners classes at any grade level (K–12) from around the world with classes in the United States. Together these classes are challenged to collaborate in an online community as they work to find solutions of one of 20 global problems.

TakingITGlobal. (2012). <http://www.tigweb.org>

This is a social network site for global citizenship. It connects organizations and individuals from around the world that are committed to educating for a more inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable world. It hosts forums, online classes, and databases where educators can learn about, discuss, and access lesson plans, multimedia resources, and information related to global issues. Target age is secondary and post-secondary students.

UNESCO Associated Schools Project. (n.d.). <http://unesco.ca/en/home-accueil/aspnet-reseau>

UNESCO Associated Schools is a global network of 9900 educational institutions in 180 countries, including Canada. Schools that join the network make a commitment to work in support of international understanding, peace, intercultural dialogue, sustainable development, and quality education in practice.

Virtual Researcher On Call. (2013). <http://www.vroc.ca/vroc/en/>

Virtual Researcher On Call (VROC) allows teachers to connect to researchers around the world for real-time, interactive conversations. Teachers can search for researchers by topic or curriculum subject. This site also hosts videos on a variety of topics in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).



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