

Going Global

Is There a Place for Me in the Global World?

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Rationale

The desire for a sense of belonging is a strong feature of living in communities. However in the 21st century, the push–pull effects of national, global social, economic and political tensions often result in a sense of dislocation. Ask a young person where they most comfortably locate themselves and the result will be wide range of responses, from a suburb, to a city

to a country, within an ethnic group or even a cyberspace chat room group. Young people now have so many options. The homogeneity of the past has long gone. This unit is a valuable study in that it offers opportunities for your students to engage in a number of clarification exercises, to consider if their school offers opportunities for them to practise decision-making skills and to appreciate the diversity of peoples.

Key concepts

The following concepts will be developed throughout this unit.

- Location
- Globalisation
- Citizenship
- Interdependence
- Identity
- Social Justice

This unit will enable to students to:

- understand issues in global and local terms
- analyse and reflect on their role, rights and responsibilities of being a confident, curious, caring and resilient citizen
- enhance their stance for discussing moral and ethical issues
- develop a sense of belonging to community(s)

- articulate informed understandings about the diversity of their local community(s)
- develop their ideas about the ‘good citizen’.

Links to VELs

Physical, personal and social learning

- Civics and Citizenship
- Civic knowledge and understanding
- Community engagement

Discipline based learning

- English
- Speaking and listening

Interdisciplinary learning

- Communication
- Listening, viewing and responding
- Thinking
- Reasoning, processing and inquiry

Specific skills/competencies:

- Collecting, analysing and organising information
- Communicating ideas and information
- Planning and organising activities
- Working with others and in teams
- Solving problems

Unit outline

1 What are the characteristics of a ‘good’ citizen?

Teacher notes

There is now considerable research that indicates that the extent to which a person is willing to empathise with another person depends on their own

sense of well-being and identity. In other words, a person who is insecure with their own sense of belonging is unlikely to bond with another person, particularly if that person is culturally different. An appropriate teaching and learning strategy to explore this issue involves values clarification approaches. In brief, teachers need to be well-informed about issues, to be willing to express a view about the issue and importantly, be able to identify the value positions, origins and assumptions that underpin our views and that of others.

The following activities have the contestable idea of 'good citizen' as the issue.

Key concepts

Inclusion/Exclusion, Identity, Citizen, Human Rights and National Icons

Inquiry

- What are my unique qualities, beliefs and values?
- How are these similar and/or different to others in my class?
- What are the characteristics of a 'good' citizen?

Activity 1.1 Introduction

- 1 Develop a checklist with students what they consider to be the 'good citizen'.
- 2 Discuss why different/similar lists have been developed.
- 3 Students could then conduct their own survey with 'another generation' – teachers, parents – giving a sense of historical, geographical, cultural perspective.
- 4 Using the data analyse in terms of implications and reflection.

Activity 1.2

A reading of the dimensions of citizenship and the concept of the 'citizen' and 'location' and 'inclusion/exclusion' might be useful before beginning this activity. This six dimensional model of citizenship to be a most useful framework for coding the views of people about the role of schools in promoting a global citizenship perspective (Prior 1999).

- Dimension 1: Civic knowledge – for example, understandings about political organizations, decision making processes, institutions, legal requirements.
- Dimension 2: A sense of personal identity – for example, a feeling of self-worth, belonging efficacy, resilience.
- Dimension 3: A sense of community – for example, locating oneself within a community(s), some perhaps imagined communities.
- Dimension 4: Adoption of a code of civil behaviours – for example, civil and ethical behaviour, concern for the welfare of others.
- Dimension 5: An informed and empathetic response to social issues – for example, environmental issues, social justice, equality and equity.
- Dimension 6: A skilled disposition to take social action – for example, community service, active participation in community affairs.

- 1 Obtain a copy of the Australian Pledge from local Council offices for new Australian citizens and examine the wording. This may also be available online.

- 2 Discuss/draw possible national icons/symbols, for example, Sing/analyse Anthem, flag, coins, green and gold. In what ways has Australia been portrayed in recent sporting events such as Commonwealth Games and Olympic Games?
- 3 Develop a conversation around school rules. This may lead to writing of a Preamble embracing students' notions of the 'good citizen' to be included in school documents and policies.
- 4 Discuss the concept of democracy as this is seen in the classroom, school, community, family and government.

2 How democratic are school communities?

Given schooling is the most common experience for all young people, an examination of schools as a social organization is an appropriate context to explore a number of issues about the good citizen. Recent research findings have clearly demonstrated by the positive connections between the extent of opportunities for students to engage in decision-making processes while at school and their disposition to later engage in community affairs after they have left school. Research has also shown the positive connection between the opportunities for student engagement in schools and academic performance

Activity 2.1

The focus of these next activities is on the role school leaders play in an organization. Class discussions could consider the personal qualities of an effective leader, the processes of formulating policies and practices and ways of measuring the extent of effectiveness of leaders.

- 1 Students discuss the purposes of schooling.
- 2 Tour the school, perhaps taking photographs, creating a school collage, interviewing a range of stakeholders about the purposes of schooling.
- 3 Develop a concept map of schools as a mini societies.
- 4 Discuss rule making in the school. Who makes rules? What are rules for?
- 5 Read old schools booklets, magazines to gain a sense of past, present, future perspectives.
- 6 Investigate the opportunities for students to engage in decision-making by inviting s student leader to discuss their role in the school.

Activity 2.2 Roles and responsibilities of the school principal

Scenario: What would happen if I (student) became principal for a day?

- 1 Students could consider the many roles and responsibilities of a school principal and then speculate and reflect on how they might approach the role in terms of policies and practices.
- 2 How would they make decisions?
- 3 Who is included and who is excluded in making these decisions?
- 4 What are the values underpinning their chosen policies and practices?
- 5 How would they know if they were an effective principal?
- 6 Students develop their own scenarios in a group and share these between students.

3 Is it possible for young people to engage in their local community?

The focus of this lesson is participatory citizenship for the common good by developing competencies to work with others in a cooperative way and to take responsibilities for one's roles/duties within society.

Activity 3.1

Scenario: A new law has been proposed which states that all children under the age of 16 years must abide by a daily curfew of 8 pm (this includes weekends).

- 1 Students can speculate why they think such a law has been proposed and what might be the values and assumptions underpinning the makers of this new law.
- 2 A list of advantages and disadvantages of this law can be developed drawing on the reactions of a range of stakeholders.
- 3 Students might then consider their own reactions to this new law and their reasons and values behind their thinking about the law?
- 4 Now turn to the strategic processes of who you would need to convince in order to have this law changed or supported?
- 5 In groups work out a strategy plan/campaign, which might include a publicity poster, a letter to the local newspaper and local politician, a letterbox flyer, dot-point summary notes for a public meeting.
- 6 In pairs select another cultural group in another location and investigate how laws are developed, how they are enforced and how people can respond to 'unjust' laws within their communities.
- 7 A concluding discussion point to this activity might be the role cultural context plays in law making.
- 8 What could be a possible future that would welcome such a law.

As a follow-up activity students could investigate more global 'laws' including the Kyoto Protocol, Laws of the Sea and the role the United Nations and other international agencies in formulating and enforcing international laws.

- How are laws developed in these organisations?
- How are laws maintained and enforced both by members and non-members?
- How effective are these organisations in achieving their goals?
- What are the blockers affecting the success of the implementation of their policies and practices?
- Can global organizations ever be successful?
- How might you measure the extent of success?

Useful websites include:

www.amnesty.org (Amnesty International)
www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/ahric/ (Australian Human Rights Centre)
www.abc.net.au/civics/ (The Common Good : CCE)
www.un.org (United Nations)
www.police.vic.gov.au (Victoria Police).

4 How can I link to the local community?

Activity 4.1

- 1 Read local newspapers to identify local issues and brainstorm and rank the most important issues.
- 2 Invite a speaker from the community, for example, from the local council, police, Indigenous community, to discuss local action processes.
- 3 Students identify issues in their local school community most needing some form of action.
- 4 Discuss possible blockers to effective engagement in community activities, for example, discrimination, violence, cultural/historical factors, financial, gender, time.
- 5 Develop an action plan for addressing the chosen local issue and setting criteria for measuring success.

5 Being a Citizen

Activity 5.1

Students select a case study of a person who is/was an active participant in local or global affairs. In developing their case study, students should consider at least the following.

- Why was the person chosen?
- In what aspects of community affairs is/was the person engaged?
- What were the personal qualities that the person displayed in their activities?
- What elements of leadership did the person display?
- What strategies did the person employ?
- What reasons would you give for their success/or lack of success?

6 Reflections on being a global citizen

Activity 6.1

Students should be encouraged to reflect on:

- their attitudes about the 'good' citizen and the impact of globalisation on our thinking and actions
- how to be well-informed about social issues
- the ways schools might contribute to the common good
- what skills are necessary for effective participation in community affairs
- what they have learnt doing these activities and what they would now like to know more about.

Links to Discovering Democracy resources

Primary level

Australian Readers (Upper Primary Collection) – introduces younger students to complex civic ideas through a range of colourful and interesting texts. A Teacher Guide supports the five themes.

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