

Educating The Next Generation Of Global Citizens Through Teacher Education, One New Teacher At A Time.^{E1}

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Abstract

Judging from public debate and policy, there is renewed interest about the state of young peoples' civic engagement, their character development and their knowledge levels about public issues. At the same time, there are persistent concerns about the narrow and nationalist construction of the very curriculum which should be challenging young peoples' ideas and perceptions of the world in Social Studies or History curricula. The following article discusses some of the ways in which the Developing a Global Perspective for Educators/Développement d'une perspective globale pour enseignants et enseignantes" initiative at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa aims to address the knowledge deficit, the paucity of pedagogical skills and the provision of curricula with pre-service students.

Judging from public debate and policy, there is renewed interest about the state of young peoples' civic engagement, their character development and their knowledge levels about public issues. To assert that these worries are not new, indeed, that they extend at least back to Plato, provides little comfort in an era preoccupied with consumerism, especially, as some maintain, amongst the young. At the same time, there are persistent concerns about the narrow and nationalist construction of the very curriculum which should be challenging young peoples' ideas and perceptions of the world in Social Studies or History curricula. But even if the curriculum provided a stronger incentive than it does for Canadian youths to act as responsible global citizens, concerns remain about the kind of preparation which teachers receive to effectively teach these issues.

Those preparing to be teachers of Social Studies, Civics, History or Geography need to be introduced to current information about the challenges of the Developing World and of our own. They need specific pedagogical skills to teach these topics to adolescents preoccupied with their own worries and hopes, and they need classroom-ready curricula on which to draw to integrate global citizenship topics into provincially-approved curricula. The following

article discusses some of the ways in which the Developing a Global Perspective for Educators/Développement d'une perspective globale pour enseignants et enseignantes' initiative at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa aims to address the knowledge deficit, the paucity of pedagogical skills and the provision of curricula with pre-service students.

The initiative is based on several assumptions for both student and teacher. First, we believe that the classroom is a central site for raising these issues and questioning attitudes among young Canadians. Second, at this formative stage of their professional development, new teachers are receptive to integrating new themes, such as international development and gender equity, into a curriculum which can accommodate such topics, while not specifically mandating them. Third, the Developing a Global Perspective Initiative assumes that the introduction of such themes not only benefits the international community, but also Canadian society. Character and citizenship education which focuses on the developing world expands the possibilities of convincing Canadian adolescents of their opportunities and choices, allowing them to explore issues of justice and equity in other local, national, and international sites. Finally, the initiative is based on partnerships with Canadian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), other researchers in the Faculty of Education, community activists, and the local educational community. It does not assume that teacher education is the sole agent for this or any other societal change; rather, by forging partnerships with like-minded groups, teachers and teacher education facilities can participate in a broad programme of effective social change, while supporting longstanding and high quality products already available.

The Developing a Global Perspective initiative has evolved over the past three years to include on-campus institutes at various times of the year, a resource fair, a speakers' and film series, an off-site retreat and an in-school component where student teachers act as resource teachers in our partner schools. It is supported by a Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) grant under the Global Classroom Initiative Programme, for which details are available on the CIDA website (www.acdi-cida.gc.ca). Similar to the themes promoted by CIDA, Developing a Global Perspective takes up questions of the basic human needs of health and nutrition, HIV/AIDS, gender equality in conflict situations and beyond, human rights, democracy and governance, environmental protection, peacemaking and peaceful coexistence. It attempts to disseminate curricula and classroom activities which have been developed by Canadian NGOs and other private groups profiling one project or site for development, and curricular units developed by teachers across Canada. Many of these materials and strategies are creative and effective, and yet the possibility of teachers encountering them is still minimal. Most are web-based. Thus, new teachers who are fully conversant with, and comfortable in, accessing resources from the web are a natural focus for our efforts. Our task is to reinforce our teacher education students' interest in the many components of global citizenship through adding to their knowledge base, pedagogical skills and curriculum units of study and lesson plans for classroom use. To demonstrate the knowledge, skills and curricula made available to these students, we next profile several curriculum packages, some of which are available in both English and French as web-based products, and all of which address a range of issues at all levels of the school system.

The first example of a classroom-ready resource, appropriate for the middle or secondary school classroom and available free of charge, is a curriculum unit produced by CHF (formerly the Canadian Hunger Foundation). Available on line at www.chf-partners.ca, an introductory lesson on sustainable development is structured around photograph analysis. CHF provides a chart before each lesson, keying the objectives into official curriculum

guideline learning outcomes, usually for Ontario. However, the links to other provincial curricula and other subject areas are not difficult to identify.

In this case, Intermediate-level students in Geography, Media Studies or Canadian and World Studies consider "what is right" in a series of five pictures of working life in a "typical" developing country profiled here by a single example from the CHF website <http://www.chf-partners.ca>. One of the lesson's goal's is for students to move beyond the sympathy or even pity which might be elicited from observing a dwelling patched with pieces of tin, unmechanized farming practices and packed-earth floors and rough benches as the site for a village council meeting, all of which are displayed in the sample photographs. To accomplish this, the lesson recommends an opening activity directed by the teacher, and using one of the images to emphasize the positive, if unfamiliar, features of the first photograph. In this image, despite the patched hut which serves as home for a mother and her child, peaking impishly from the window, the teacher has the students note such details as the adequacy of the shelter for the climate, the presence of water, household items for cooking and the fact that the family appears healthy. All of these details, and others besides, are "what is right about this picture." The principle emphasized in this portion of the lesson is that all developing countries, even those in greatest need of aid, have community strengths and assets which must become the basis for effective long-term sustainable development. In the open-forum session, therefore, the teacher draws from the students evidence from the photograph of possible assets, and based on this, a possible project is identified which might enhance this community's success with maximizing the strength. For example, the photograph shows that the village has water, but is it potable? Might a project involve a water purification system? If so, who would benefit from the project, and what other considerations need to be given to community standards and norms for this project to succeed? All of these issues are set out on a classroom organizer, a copy of which can be provided to each student.

With this one photograph analysis as a model, the lesson plan recommends that students break into small groups, each receiving their own photograph for analysis. They are warned that as "development officers" for CHF, they would normally discuss any idea for a project with the local people; in this case, they are to interrogate the photograph alone, requiring even sharper analytical and synthesis skills than regular field officers. Every lesson provides teachers with assessment rubrics and suggestions for additional resources, most of which are web based. To counteract anxiety about knowing too little, teachers are also offered short, relevant explanations for terms or concepts distinctive to the theme under discussion. Hence, in one workable lesson plan, teachers have access to the necessary information to teach the theme effectively, appropriate pedagogical suggestions, and resources which relate to the intermediate division.

The second example of a classroom-ready resource, *Common Threads: Globalization, Sweatshops, and the Clothes We Wear*, was prepared by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) with the assistance of funding from CIDA. Although the target curricula are referenced according to Ontario's grade 10 Civics, grade 11 Fashion and Creative Expression, Philosophy, Canadian and World Politics and Grade 12 University Preparation courses, the topics could be applied to other subject areas such as Social Studies, History, Geography, English, Art, Economics and Law in the junior, intermediate and senior sectors. The adaptability of the materials and the range of multi-media options also make this resource suitable for English as Second Language students and for integration of multiple subjects. In addition, all required materials, including the video, website listing, CD-ROM, student activity sheets and assessment rubrics are provided in the kit which is available for a \$50. fee (non-members) and \$40.00 (members) from The Ontario Secondary School

Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) office in Toronto, and on the web at www.commonthreads.ca.

This comprehensive teacher resource consists of individual lesson modules which highlight basic human needs, industrial relations, human rights, democracy, and gender (in) equality, fair trade and globalization. To accomplish these objectives the project focuses on the sweatshops in Guatemala's three hundred "maquillas" or garment factories and the complex social, political and economic factors that have contributed to the emergence and sustainability of these industries. The sample worksheets from the website www.commonthreads.ca, demonstrate one such creative approach to classroom instruction that could be integrated into the Social Studies, Grade 6, Ontario Curriculum strand on "Canada's Links to the World" which addresses issues of trade between Canada and other countries. While students frequently view this topic as an abstract concept, unrelated to their day to day lives, the example cited here profiles the links between clothing purchased by Canadian youths and broader issues of human rights, gender (in)equality, labour practices, fair trade and globalization. Here, students compare their estimated cost of a sweatshirt (retail store, materials, wages etc.) with "The Real Cost of Your Clothes" as presented in the second worksheet. The comparative approach to the lesson highlights the disparity in wages and costs between what the student in Canada pays for a garment and the meager wages of the often young female worker.

In recognizing the sensitive nature of the resource's subject matter, the Guide recommends that care must be taken "to ensure that students are not made to feel uncomfortable or guilty during the course of the lesson... Students should be reminded that the lesson is not meant to imply a criticism of themselves, their families or the lives they lead, but to raise awareness about the potential impact of choices they make every day" (The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, OSSTF/FEESO, 2003, *Common Threads: Globalization, Sweatshops, and the Clothes We Wear*, p. 4, Toronto, Ontario). Finally, a key component of this resource is that it not only provides teachers with information to integrate a global perspective in their teaching, it also offers practical, effective opportunities for direct civic action by students to improve the lives of workers in other countries through a range of activities such as: creating a flyer or brochure for distribution to other students which outlines the issue of Guatemala's maquillas and offers a rationale for a specific action; writing a letter to their Member of Parliament or an apparel company executive advocating fair trade policies for Guatemala's maquila's workers; or performing a sweatshop fashion show for the school to reveal the wages and working conditions of the workers.

The third example of a free classroom-ready resource, appropriate for the elementary classroom, is *Kids Who Care: A Global Education Program on International Environmental Issues For Elementary Teachers*. This resource is produced by Foster Parents Plan in consultation with Canadian educators and is available on-line at:

www.fosterparentsplan.ca/workwithus/kwc/english/kwc1.htm. The resource includes a teacher's guide divided into five study units with ready-made activities designed for students in grades 4 to 6 but may be readily adaptable to other grades; a 23 minute video that profiles youth-led environmental projects in Senegal and Togo; a student action guide and an on-line newsletter. *Kids Who Care* blends specific curricular outcomes that address learner knowledge, skills and attitudes through the development of cross-cultural communication, friendship, citizenship and environmental sustainability themes. For example, in the water unit, the resource guide provides background information for teachers and detailed lesson plans including a time frame and a list of materials needed for hands-on learning activities such as making a water filter. Each unit offers opportunities for teachers to extend the unit,

establish links with international efforts to address common issues and suggests creative ways for students to engage in meaningful projects. The accompanying "Student Action Guide" presents students and teachers with the tools to form a global education club and instructions on organizing awareness events.

The strength of the resource are the positive links between the experiences of children in West Africa, the lessons learned in child-centered development projects, and the opportunities for Canadian students to explore issues of the environment and the needs and safety of people in other countries. As seen below, the activities in the community unit allow students an opportunity to develop a number of skills.

Skills developed include:

- a. *Appreciation and understanding of other cultures and diversity here and at home (Looking Out from the Inside, Whose News? Share My World)*
- b. *Public speaking/ language skills (Make Good News Happen, Create Your Own Media, Writing a Press Release)*
- c. *Analytical and problem-solving skills (Two to Tango, Whose News?)*
- d. *Creativity (Looking Out from the Inside, Making Good News Happen, Create Your Own Media)*
- e. *Ability to plan group projects and carry them through (Whose News? Extensions, Make Good News Happen, Create Your Own Media)*
- f. *Increase knowledge of the world around us and in our own backyard (Whose News? Make Good News Happen)*
- g. *Enhance self-esteem and ability to make choices among different courses of action (Looking Out from the Inside, Local Heroes extension, Share My World)*
- h. *Research skills (Whose News? Local Heroes)*

*(Foster Parents Plan (1998) Kids Who Care: Community Unit.
p.2. Toronto, Ontario)*

In summary, the materials presented above incorporate a variety of delivery methods, curriculum-related resources and knowledge-based materials for junior, intermediate and senior classrooms. This selection of teacher resources offered through various workshops at the Faculty of Education provide critical learning opportunities for preservice teachers to explore questions of basic needs of health and nutrition, HIV/AIDS, gender (in)equality in conflict and labour situations, human rights, democracy, governance, environmental protection, peacemaking and peaceful co-existence throughout the formative learning experience of teacher education. In so doing, the project, "Developing a Global Perspective for Educators/Développement d'une perspective globale pour enseignants et enseignantes," aims to expand the teacher candidates' understanding of global citizenship, to augment their pedagogical skills in pursuing these initiatives and to experience using ready-made sources for instruction in the classroom. The University of Ottawa programme has no direct connection to any of these websites or to the teaching materials offered on them. Our interest has been to publicize these "ready to use" resources amongst teacher candidates because of their high quality and easy accessibility. Our goal has been to offer one new teacher at a time

the opportunity as professionals to reflect on their role as teachers and to encourage their development and that of their future students as global citizens.

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