

LESSON 9

ACTIVE AND ENGAGED CITIZENSHIP

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What issues matter most to me? How can I get involved?

SUMMARY

Active citizenship involves working for the common good in local, national and global communities, including voicing informed opinions on matters relevant to your community, investigating controversial issues, demonstrating collaborative and innovative problem solving, building relationships with diverse individuals and groups, adopting leadership roles and participating in your community.

In this lesson, students review the concept of *objectives and results* and hear stories from other Ontario youth that have taken actions on issues that matter to them. Afterwards, they examine an issue of importance to them and establish an action plan to achieve specific objectives.

LEARNING GOALS

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use the concept of *political significance* to identify issues of personal importance;
- Use the concept of *objective and results* to recognize that government policies and responses to civic issues can have a range of effects on various groups of people;
- Use the concept of *stability and change* to determine when change is necessary and how they themselves can contribute to change or help ensure stability through civic action;
- Demonstrate collaborative, innovative problem solving while working with their peers to design an action plan for a civic issue (Citizenship Framework – Active Participation).

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- I can evaluate an issue that concerns me at the provincial level;
- I can explain how responses and actions to civic issues can lead to results and consequences;
- I can analyze how I can contribute to change or help ensure stability through civic action;
- I can work in a collaborative and critically thoughtful manner.

CURRICULUM LINKS

CHV20 – Overall Expectations

A1. Political Inquiry: use the political inquiry process and the concepts of political thinking when investigating issues, events, and developments of civic importance

A2. Developing Transferable Skills: apply in everyday contexts skills developed through investigations related to civics and citizenship education, and identify some careers in which civics and citizenship education might be an asset

B2. Governance in Canada: explain, with reference to a range of issues of civic importance, the roles and responsibilities of various institutions, structures, and figures in Canadian governance

C1. Civic Contributions: analyze a variety of civic contributions, and ways in which people can contribute to the common good

C2. Inclusion and Participation: assess ways in which people express their perspectives on issues of civic importance and how various perspectives, beliefs, and values are recognized and represented in communities in Canada

C3. Personal Action on Civic Issues: analyse a civic issue of personal interest and develop a plan of action to address it

CHV20 – Specific Expectations

A1.1 formulate different types of questions to guide investigations into issues of political importance in various communities and ways to address them

A1.5 use the concepts of political thinking when analysing and evaluating evidence, data, and information and formulating conclusions and/or judgements about issues of political importance in various communities and ways to address them

A2.1 describe some ways in which political inquiry can help them develop skills, including the essential skills in the Ontario Skills Passport, and those related to the citizenship education framework, that can be transferred to postsecondary opportunities, the world of work, and everyday life

A2.2 demonstrate in everyday contexts attributes, skills, and work habits developed through investigations into issues of political importance

Sample question: “What are some ways in which you might demonstrate effective listening skills when people are voicing their position on an issue?”

A2.3 apply the concepts of political thinking when analysing current events relating to issues of political importance at the local, national, and/or global level, in order to enhance their understanding of these issues and their role as informed citizens

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B2.2 explain, with reference to issues of civic importance, the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government in Canada and of key figures at each level

B2.4 explain, with reference to issues of civic importance, how various groups and institutions (e.g., lobby groups, unions, the media, NGOs, international organizations) can influence government policy

C1.2 describe a variety of ways in which they could make a civic contribution at the local, national, and/or global level

C1.3 explain how various actions can contribute to the common good at the local, national and/or global level

C2.3 describe various ways in which people can access information about civic matters, and assess the effectiveness of ways in which individuals can voice their opinions on these matters

C3.1 analyse a civic issue of personal interest, including how it is viewed by different groups

C3.2 propose different courses of action that could be used to address a specific civic issue (e.g., a public awareness campaign, a plan for local action, a campaign to pressure for political action), and assess their merits

MINDS ON

1. Review the concept of *objectives and results* (Slide Deck 9). It is a political thinking concept that focuses on factors leading to events, decisions, and/or plans of action and their intended and unintended consequences. There are four key steps:

- Conditions: What issues need to be addressed?
- Objectives: How can we make things better?
- Action: How can we best get things done?
- Results: Did we meet our objectives?

2. Watch one or more of the following videos about youth who have taken action on an issue of importance to them:

- Noah Irvine:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDrEpcvCUEE
- Alex Deans:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=BY-FpX4bZSs
- Levi Marshall:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7zfStwmMMg
- Arezoo Najibzadeh:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jlc-3g0XiXk
- Denise Lee:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=FT36epLUGDc

Alternative Sources:

[“Guelph teen receives standing ovation at Queen’s Park for his efforts to improve care for people with mental health challenges”](#) (*Guelph Today*, September 13, 2017)

3. As a class or in groups, analyze the conditions, objectives, action and results of the students featured in the videos. Which actions led to the intended outcomes? Were there any unintended outcomes?

ACTION

1. Invite students to share what they see as the top challenges facing Ontario today. You can create the list as a class or ask each student to share one or two issues. As a class, review the challenges listed and come to a consensus around the most important issues.

Teacher Note: Co-create criteria with your students to assess what makes an issue important (e.g., the number of people or groups affected, impact across the province, how long people have been waiting for a solution, whether the issue involves basic human needs, whether human rights are being violated, the social, economic, and/or environmental impact of an issue).

2. Divide students into groups and ask them to pick an issue and determine how they would solve their challenge as active citizens. Guiding questions:

- What are the underlying conditions to the issue? Who is being affected and how? Why is it happening?
- How can I make things better?
- What role should individuals, groups and the government play? What can they do?
- How can we assess our progress?

3. Have each group share their ideas with the class.

4. In a culminating activity, have students advocate for government action through a method of their own choosing. This could include writing a letter to the minister(s) in charge of their related issue, producing a rant, pitch presentation using slides or multi-media artwork.

Rant Exemplars:

- Rick’s Rant – [Fake News](#)
- Rick’s Rant – [Data Mining](#)
- Rick’s Rant – [Minimum Wage](#)

CONSOLIDATION

Have a closing discussion about issues and active citizenship. Guiding questions:

- Why is it important to understand who is being affected by an issue?
- Why is it necessary to track and measure the actual consequences of our actions and the actions of our government?
- Why is it important to be an active and engaged citizen?

ASSESSMENT IDEAS

Students can be assessed on the product created in the culminating activity in 'Action'.