

USING DEBATE WITH THE NEW ALBERTA SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

Prepared for Bill McBride's Session

BACKGROUND

The high school social studies program is designed with an umbrella-like structure. The two main themes of the whole K-12 social studies program are citizenship and identity. The identity theme is an important element of the new program because it asks a student to connect everything they do back to themselves. The personalization of the educational experience fosters the development of a key facet of understanding (using Understanding by Design language), that of self-knowledge. Within the structure of the high school program there is a key issue which serves as the epicentre of the entire course. Beneath the key issue there are four related issues that are connected to four corresponding general learner outcomes. Embedded within the general outcomes are specific learner outcomes that serve to scaffold a student's understanding, while developing the essential knowledge and skills to engage the related issues and, ultimately, to construct an informed position on the overarching issue. The specific outcomes are separated into sections categorized as *values and attitudes*, and *knowledge and understanding*. Many of the skills students will be asked to develop are embedded within the specific learner outcomes, a sign of the importance placed on the skills piece of the new program.

The general layout of the new program looks very different from the current program. Most notably, the skills section of the curriculum has been moved from the back to the front of the document, highlighting the new emphasis on skills and outcomes rather than on content. The benchmark skills and processes have been divided into four main categories, each with sub-categories of more specific skill-sets. The new skills and processes are explained in the following chart (adapted from the Alberta Education High School Social Studies 10-1 Program):

Chart 1. *Alberta Education High School Social Studies Benchmark Skills and Processes*

- **Dimensions of Thinking**
 - critical and creative thinking
 - historical thinking
 - geographic thinking
 - decision making and problem solving
- **Social Participation as a Democratic Practice**
 - cooperation, conflict resolution, and consensus building
 - age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement
- **Research for Deliberative Inquiry**
 - research and information
- **Communication**
 - oral, written and visual literacy
 - media literacy

Another feature of the new program, similar to that of new programs of study coming online in other subject areas, is the infusion of (ICT) outcomes. The marriage between important skills related to technology and more traditional skill sets, is recognition of the influence technology (particularly internet technology) is having on our rapidly changing educational and mainstream cultures.

The following chart explains the most significant differences between our current program and the new program. The information has been adapted from notes taken at several professional development activities hosted by Warren Woytuk, a lead writer of the new program from Alberta Education.

Chart 2. *Significant differences between current and new high school social studies curricula*

<u>Current Program</u>	<u>New Program</u>
<i>Inquiry strategies</i>	<i>Issues focused and inquiry based</i>
<i>Focus on content</i>	<i>Outcomes and skills based</i>
<i>Responsible citizenship</i>	<i>Active and responsible citizenship</i>
<i>Eurocentric emphasis</i>	<i>Multiple perspectives approach</i>

One final area of note with respect to the significance of the curricular change is uncovered in the prescribed multiple perspectives approach to teaching and learning. Employing a multiple perspectives approach will encourage the acquisition of additional components of understanding (using UbD language). It seems to me that both perspective and empathy, as facets of understanding, are nurtured within the multiple perspective mandate of the new program. Students will be asked to view the world well beyond the Eurocentric lens our current program limits them with and, as a result, they will develop a much more complex picture of the issues they are asked to engage.

Teachers will be asked to use the program structure to lead students in building understanding, with the big questions providing meaning to the essential knowledge and applicable content. The so-called 'content', found within brackets linked to specific outcomes, is largely at the conceptual level, and therefore does not mandate the use of specific case studies, examples and narratives. Educators, those who know their students and their teaching and learning context best, are liberated by the new program to select the most meaningful 'content' to build understanding.

The new Alberta high school social studies program represents a significant curricular change. The extent to which the transition in program will impact classroom teachers has been debated, but the evidence is starting to become clear. The first of a three year implementation process is complete and it is now obvious that the program has forced educators to ask serious questions around matters of pedagogy and assessment. If there are teachers who would herald the argument that the new curriculum is simply a re-packaging of information, then they would be seriously mistaken. The new program is serving as an agent of change: empowering students as active and responsible citizens and championing the cause for teacher edification with that which research is calling for in terms authentic student assessment.

The outcomes based nature of the program facilitates a more amiable format for implementing what research is revealing about meaningful student assessment. The program moves away from a focus on delivering factual content, to a model that asks students to construct their own learning within the parameters of powerful issue questions. The new reality for social studies teachers will necessitate more formative assessment, as well as more skill and outcomes based performance measures in order to authentically assess and evaluate student learning. I believe that debate can serve as an important tool for teachers in providing students with authentic opportunities to reveal their understanding of key concepts and it can serve as a platform for students to practice and display their social studies skills.

The following skills are mandated by the new high school social studies program. The degree to which the skills would be addressed through debate activities would depend on the lessons designed by the teacher, but there is certainly an opportunity to meet all of these skill outcomes through lessons that ask students to prepare for and participate in a debate.

S.1 - develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:

- evaluate ideas and information from multiple sources
- determine relationships among multiple and varied sources of information
- assess the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability
- synthesize information from contemporary and historical issues to develop an informed position
- evaluate the logic of assumptions underlying a position

S.2 - develop skills of historical thinking:

- analyze similarities and differences among historical narratives
- evaluate the impact of significant historical periods and patterns of change on the contemporary world
- discern historical facts from historical interpretations through an examination of multiple sources
- identify reasons underlying similarities and differences among historical narratives

S.4 - demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:

- develop inquiry strategies to make decisions and solve problems
- generate and apply new ideas and strategies to contribute to decision making and problem solving

S.5 - demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:

- participate in persuading, compromising and negotiating to resolve conflicts and differences
- respect the points of view and perspectives of others

S.6 - develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community:

- acknowledge the importance of multiple perspectives in a variety of situations

S.7 - apply the research process:

- develop, express and defend an informed position on an issue
- reflect on changes of points of view or opinion based on information gathered and research conducted
- draw pertinent conclusions based on evidence derived from research
- demonstrate proficiency in the use of research tools and strategies to investigate issues
- consult a wide variety of sources, including oral histories, that reflect varied perspectives on particular issues
- integrate and synthesize argumentation and evidence to provide an informed opinion on a research question or an issue of inquiry
- develop, refine and apply questions to address an issue
- select and analyze relevant information when conducting research

S.8 - demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:

- communicate effectively to express a point of view in a variety of situations
- use skills of formal and informal discussion and/or debate to persuasively express informed viewpoints on an issue
- ask respectful and relevant questions of others to clarify viewpoints
- listen respectfully to others
- use a variety of oral, written and visual sources to present informed positions on issues

S.9 - develop skills of media literacy:

- assess the authority, reliability and validity of electronically accessed information

The beauty of the new high school program resides in the fact that it is issues-based and therefore questions for debate abound. * denotes my suggestions for topics of debate that would be connected to specific learning outcomes, not to mention many of the critical thinking and communication skills outlined in the program. (<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/socialstudies/programs.aspx>)

Note: all text in times new roman font represents material that comes directly from the curriculum document.

Social Studies 10-1: Perspectives on Globalization (SOCIAL 10-2 parallel)

Overview

Students will explore multiple perspectives on the origins of globalization and the local, national and international impacts of globalization on lands, cultures, economies, human rights and quality of life. Students will examine the relationships among globalization, citizenship and identity to enhance skills for citizenship in a globalizing world. The infusion of multiple perspectives will allow students to examine the effects of globalization on peoples in Canada and throughout the world, including the impact on Aboriginal and Francophone communities.

Rationale

Globalization, the process by which the world's citizens are becoming increasingly connected and interdependent, demands that students explore responsibilities associated with local and global citizenship and formulate individual responses to emergent issues related to globalization. Recognizing and appreciating the influence of globalization will lead students to develop individual and collective responses to emergent issues.

Key Issue	Key Outcome
To what extent should we embrace globalization?	Students will understand, assess and respond to the complexities of globalization.
Related Issues	General Outcomes
<i>1. To what extent should globalization shape identity?</i>	Students will explore the impacts of globalization on their lives.
<i>2. To what extent should contemporary society respond to the legacies of historical globalization?</i>	Students will assess the impacts of historical globalization on Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
<i>3. To what extent does globalization contribute to sustainable prosperity for all people?</i>	Students will assess economic, environmental and other contemporary impacts of globalization.
<i>4. To what extent should I, as a citizen, respond to globalization?</i>	Students will assess their roles and responsibilities in a globalizing world.

Many of the specific learner outcomes (SLO) would lend themselves well for debate activities are in the social 10-1 and 10-2 are listed below:

10-1 1.6 - examine the impact of communications technology and media on diversity (universalization of pop culture, hybridization, diversification)

**issues and questions of debate can be built around the degree to which foreign influences are positive for Canada. Should we buy foreign products or products made in Canada? Should we allow for foreign ownership of businesses like the oil sands? To what extent are multinational corporations like Wal-Mart be beneficial for Canada?*

**you could create a debate around a very local issue. For example, should your town (or create a fictitious scenario of a town) allow Wal-Mart to open in the community?*

10-1 1.8 - analyze challenges presented by globalization to identities and cultures (assimilation, marginalization, accommodation, integration, homogenization)

**assimilation policies are a potent topic for debate, especially in the context of the Canadian government's recent decision to make a formal apology and pay settlements to the victims of residential schools.*

10-1 1.9 - evaluate efforts to promote languages and cultures in a globalizing world (language laws, linguistic rights, cultural content legislation, cultural revitalization, linguistic revitalization)

** To what extent foreign movies and popular culture hurting Canadian cultural industries? Should we have agencies like the CRTC to protect Canadian cultural industries? Should the federal government provide money towards the revitalization of culture and language groups in Canada? Should the federal government provide money to build and support cultural centers ie. German Canadian club?*

10-1 2.6 - examine impacts of cultural contact between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (exchange of goods and technologies, depopulation, influences on government and social institutions)

10-1 2.9 - examine multiple perspectives on the political, economic and social impacts of historical globalization and imperialism

**controversial topics that deal with cultural contact can be built around historical figures. You can debate whether or not historical figures should be viewed as a hero or a villain. Potential figures include people like Christopher Columbus, Hernan Cortez, Buffalo Bill Cody, Louis Riel*

10-1 2.11 - analyze contemporary global issues that have origins in policies and practices of post-colonial governments in Canada and other locations (consequences of residential schools, social impact on Indigenous peoples, loss of Indigenous languages, civil strife)

**residential schools policy can be framed as a historical debate. Funding for cultural and language revitalization funding can be debated.*

10-1 3.6 - analyze political and economic challenges and opportunities of globalization (trade liberalization, foreign investment, economic growth, privatization, outsourcing, knowledge economy)

**there are many issue that could frame a debate in this outcome. To what extent have Canada's free trade agreements (FTA, NAFTA) been beneficial for our country? You could set up a historical debate to replicate the debate over the actual FTA and NAFTA. You could set up debates around a foreign industry setting up shop in your city or in the country. You could positive and negative of outsourcing jobs to other countries – you could debate from the perspective of Canadians or from the perspective of*

the country where the jobs are going ie. India. You could debate whether we should continue importing goods from countries that have different safety standards that we do ie. China.

10-1 3.7 - explore multiple perspectives regarding the relationship among people, the land and globalization (spirituality, stewardship, sustainability, resource development)

10-1 3.8 - evaluate actions and policies associated with globalization that impact the environment (land and resource use, resource development agreements, environmental legislation)

10-1 3.9 - analyze multiple perspectives on sustainability and prosperity in a globalizing world

**You could debate whether a foreign company should be allowed to invest in and have access to our countries' resources (ie. water, oil sands, natural gas). You could debate the privatization of any public service or industry (ie. water, health care, electricity, welfare, infrastructure like roads etc.). You could set up a debate over the whether Canada should sign international environmental agreements like the Kyoto Accord, Landmines Agreement, International Water Agreements etc.)*

10-1 4.5 - analyze impacts of globalization on children and youth (awareness of global issues, employment issues, identity)

10-1 4.6 - analyze impacts of globalization on women (gender issues, labour issues, opportunities for entrepreneurship)

**you could debate whether the government of Canada should ban trade with countries that have different labour and trade standards ie. countries that allow child labour or that do not have the same equality rights and freedoms that we do. For example, should we import oil from countries like Saudi Arabia that don't recognize the equality of women.*

10-1 4.10 - evaluate means by which individuals, governments, organizations and businesses could address opportunities and challenges of globalization (pro-globalization activism, anti-globalization activism, legislation, agreements, consumer activism, corporate responsibility)

**you could debate the security expense that go along with hosting international trade meetings ie. G8 meeting held in Kananaskis in 2004. You could create a scenario where you debate whether or not your city should apply to host a one of these international meetings. You could also debate whether a country should be given the privilege of hosting the Olympics ie. China, India, Russia*

Social Studies 20-1: Perspectives on Nationalism (SOCIAL 20-2 parallel)

Overview

Students will explore the complexities of nationalism in Canadian and international contexts. They will study the origins of nationalism and the influence of nationalism on regional, international and global relations. The infusion of multiple perspectives will allow students to develop understandings of nationalism and how nationalism contributes to the citizenship and identities of peoples in Canada.

Rationale

While nationalism has historically examined the relationship of the citizen to the state, contemporary understandings of nationalism include evolving individual, collective, national and state realities. Exploring the complexities of nationalism will contribute to an understanding and appreciation of the interrelationships among nation, nationalism, internationalism, globalization, and citizenship and identity. Developing understandings of

the various points of view associated with nationalism as well as an appreciation for the perspectives of others will encourage students to develop personal and civic responses to emergent issues.

Key Issue	Key Outcome
To what extent should we embrace nationalism?	Students will understand, assess and respond to the complexities of nationalism.
Related Issues	General Outcomes
1. <i>To what extent should nation be the foundation of identity?</i>	Students will explore the relationships among identity, nation and nationalism.
2. <i>To what extent should national interest be pursued?</i>	Students will assess impacts of nationalism, ultra nationalism and the pursuit of national interest.
3. <i>To what extent should internationalism be pursued?</i>	Students will assess impacts of the pursuit of internationalism in contemporary global affairs.
4. <i>To what extent should individuals and groups in Canada embrace a national identity?</i>	Students will assess strategies for negotiating the complexities of nationalism within the Canadian context.

Many of the specific learner outcomes (SLO) would lend themselves well for debate activities are in the social 20-1 and 20-2 are listed below:

20-1 1.10 - evaluate the importance of reconciling contending nationalist loyalties (Canadian nationalism, First Nations and Métis nationalism, ethnic nationalism in Canada, civic nationalism in Canada, Québécois nationalism, Inuit perspectives on nationalism)

20-1 1.11 evaluate the importance of reconciling nationalism with contending non-nationalist loyalties (religion, region, culture, race, ideology, class, other contending loyalties)

20-1 2.9 - analyze impacts of the pursuit of national self-determination (successor states; decolonization; Québécois nationalism and sovereignty movement; First Nations, Métis and Inuit self-government; contemporary examples)

**you could debate the decision to grant self-government to Inuit people with the creation of the territory of Nunavut. Throughout the 20-1 program you could unpack the issue of Quebec independence. There are many land claims agreements that could be explored and debated, with possible case studies including James Bay, Nisga, Oka etc.*

20-1 3.4 - analyze the motives of nation and state involvement or noninvolvement in international affairs (economic stability, self-determination, peace, security, humanitarianism)

**you could debate the ability of a group of people's right to self-determination in a historical or contemporary context ie. interwar year Europe, aboriginal peoples in Canada and the United States,*

**Should Canada sign international agreements that might threaten elements of her sovereignty ie. security organizations like NATO and NORAD, economic agreements like FTA, NAFTA, a common currency for North America? Should Canada increase its budget allocation to foreign aid ie. Make Poverty History's push for 0.7 of GDP?*

20-1 3.6 - analyze how internationalism can be promoted through foreign policy (multilateralism, supranationalism, peacekeeping, foreign aid, international law and agreements)

**Debate could revolve around Canada's role in the international community. Should Canada send peacekeepers to regions of the world? Should Canada use its military for peacemaking operations*

(combat operations) as opposed to peacemaking ie. Canada's mission in Afghanistan? You could debate changes to the structure and function of the United Nations. For example, should the five permanent members of the security council remain so? Should India, Japan or Canada be added to the permanent membership of the UN?

20-1 3.7 - evaluate the extent to which selected organizations promote internationalism (United Nations, World Council of Indigenous Peoples, European Union, l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, Arctic Council, contemporary examples)

**you could debate Canada's role within some of the organizations in the brackets. You could use case studies like Canada's recent refusal to vote for the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples. You could debate the merit of a common currency in Europe – you could create a scenario where you were parliamentarians in Britain debating whether they should adopt the Euro as their currency. You could also pretend you were the European Union debating whether a country should be accepted into the organization. Again, you could debate the idea of implementing a common currency for North America. You could debate the prospect of expanding the free trade to all of the Americas.*

20-1 3.8 - analyze impacts of the pursuit of internationalism in addressing contemporary global issues (conflict, poverty, debt, disease, environment, human rights)

**you could debate Canada's commitment to any of the bracketed items. You could frame a debate around whether the Canadian government should fund organizations who address these issues.*

20-1 3.9 - evaluate the extent to which nationalism must be sacrificed in the interest of internationalism

**in addition to some of the ideas already mentioned, students could debate Canada's participation in global conflicts. You could frame historical debates in the context of the conscription crisis in either World War I or World War II. You could frame a debate around Canada's involvement in the war in Iraq – debating the decision not to join our American allies. Again, the Canadian role in Afghanistan could be a topic for debate.*

20-1 4.7 - evaluate the challenges and opportunities associated with the promotion of Canadian national unity (Québec sovereignty, federal-provincial-territorial relations, Aboriginal self-determination and land claims, bilingualism, multiculturalism)

**you could debate whether Canada should maintain its bilingualism and/or multiculturalism policies. You could debate federal-provincial issues like resource control ie. oil and gas in Alberta.*

20-1 4.8 - evaluate various perspectives of future visions of Canada (pluralism, multinational model, separatism, Aboriginal self-determination, global leadership, North American integration)

**many of the previous topics could be used in this outcome*

SOCIAL 30-1: Perspectives on Ideology (SOCIAL 30-2 parallel)

Overview

Students will explore the origins and complexities of ideologies and examine multiple perspectives regarding the principles of classical and modern liberalism. An analysis of various political and economic systems will allow students to assess the viability of the principles of liberalism. Developing understandings of the roles and responsibilities associated with citizenship will encourage students to respond to emergent global issues.

Rationale

The principles of liberalism have played a significant role in the development of modern democratic societies. Developing a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of modern liberal thought and the tenets of competing ideologies is important in the development of active, informed and responsible citizens. This understanding will enable students to effectively investigate, analyze and evaluate government policies and actions and develop individual and collective responses to contemporary local, national and global issues.

Key Issue	Key Outcome
<i>To what extent should we embrace an ideology?</i>	Students will understand, assess and respond to the complexities of ideologies.
Related Issues	General Outcomes
<i>1. To what extent should ideology be the foundation of identity?</i>	Students will explore the relationship between identity and ideology.
<i>2. To what extent is resistance to liberalism justified?</i>	Students will assess impacts of, and reactions to, principles of liberalism.
<i>3. To what extent are the principles of liberalism viable?</i>	Students will assess the extent to which the principles of liberalism are viable in a contemporary world.
<i>4. To what extent should my actions as a citizen be shaped by an ideology?</i>	Students will assess their rights, roles and responsibilities as citizens.

Many of the specific learner outcomes (SLO) would lend themselves well for debate activities are in the social 30-1 and 30-2 are listed below:

30-1 1.7 analyze individualism as a foundation of ideology (principles of liberalism: individual rights and freedoms, self-interest, competition, economic freedom, rule of law, private property)

30-1 1.8 analyze collectivism as a foundation of ideology (principles of collectivism: collective responsibility, collective interest, cooperation, economic equality, adherence to collective norms, public property)

30-1 1.9 analyze the dynamic between individualism and common good in contemporary societies

**any topics that get at the societal balance between individual and collective good and/or the balance between individual and collective rights (ie. public vs. private healthcare, public vs. private education, public vs. private daycare, smoking, prohibition, extent of religious freedom, carbon tax etc.)*

30-1 2.13 evaluate the extent to which resistance to the principles of liberalism is justified

30-1 3.4 explore the extent to which governments should encourage economic equality

30-1 3.8 evaluate the extent to which governments should promote individual and collective rights (American Bill of Rights; Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms; First Nations, Métis and Inuit rights; language legislation; emergencies and security legislation)

*a goldmine in this outcome...

** Topics revolving around the question of whether there are any circumstances in which a state should suspend civil liberties – War Measures Act in Canada as a result of FLQ Crisis, the Patriot Act following 9/11, Guantanamo Bay prisoners, torture, treaty rights and land claims etc.)*

** What areas of the economy should controlled by government to insure equality amongst citizens? Equalization payments in Canada? Taxation issues - personal, business/corporate.*

** What areas of life should controlled by government to insure citizen safety? Drinking age? Driving age? Graduated licenses? Seat belt laws? Helmet laws? Decriminalization or legalization of marijuana?*

**there are a number of rich democratic rights issues. Should democracies have mandatory voting? Should the voting age be lowered? Should provinces have the power to unilaterally separate from the nation-state?*

30-1 3.9 evaluate the extent to which the principles of liberalism are viable in the context of contemporary issues (environment concerns, resource use and development, debt and poverty, racism, pandemics, terrorism, censorship, illiberalism)

**censorship is a great debate topic. Whose morality judges what should be censored? Should flag draped coffins be shown in the media? Use a controversial piece of art to debate over the definition of obscenity. Should government (public) funding support the arts? Lyric warnings on CD labels? Ratings systems for movies and video games? Choose a controversial video game – Grand Theft Auto – to debate age limits for gamers?*

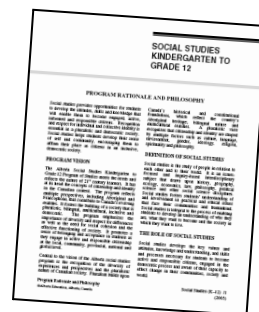
30-1 4.6 analyze perspectives on the rights, roles and responsibilities of the individual in a democratic society (respect for law and order, dissent, civility, political participation, citizen advocacy)

30-1 4.7 analyze perspectives on the rights, roles and responsibilities of the individual during times of conflict (humanitarian crises, civil rights movements, antiwar movements, McCarthyism, prodemocracy movements, contemporary examples)

**dissent within a democracy is a great topic. For example, a debate could be built around engaging questions like: should citizens be allowed to burn the flag of their country? What measures should police take in dealing with unrest? Is protesting your countries' involvement in a war unpatriotic?*

NEW DIPLOMA EXAMS

The second assignment of the new diploma examination design will continue to call on students to write a defense of position essay. Debate is a wonderful strategy to teach students how to formulate arguments and how to use evidence to support their arguments. The blueprint for the writing portion of the new diploma exam is listed below:



	Description of Skills	Description of Assignments	
Assignment I	Demonstrate the skills of interpretation, analysis, and synthesis through the application of knowledge and understandings* of social studies	Students will be presented with three sources. Sources provided may include cartoons, charts, graphs, quotes, photographs, paintings, and maps all of which are related to principles of liberalism. Students will interpret sources to identify and explain perspectives on principles of liberalism in paragraph form. Students will discuss one or more relationships that exist among the sources.	15% of Diploma Examination Mark Interpretation of Sources /7.5 Identification of Relationships /5 Quality of Communication /2.5
Assignment II	Demonstrate the skills of analysis, evaluation, and synthesis through the application of knowledge and understandings* of social studies	Students will analyze a source and demonstrate an understanding of the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source. Students will respond in essay form to a question regarding the ideological perspective(s) reflected in a source. Students will establish and argue a position. Students will provide supporting evidence. The evidence students use may have a theoretical, historical, contemporary, and /or current events focus.	35% of Diploma Examination Mark Analysis of Source /5 Quality of Arguments /10 Quality of Evidence /10 Quality of Presentation /5 Matters of Correctness /5

A sample of the essay question is provided on the next page, followed by the proposed rubric. As the blueprint and the rubric reveal, there are many skills students will need in order to compose an effective response.

Assignment II

Suggested time: 90 to 105 minutes

Value: 35% of total examination mark

Examine the following source and complete Assignment II.

Source

A brief exchange with the typical voter provides the most compelling argument against the democratic system.

Assignment II

To what extent should we embrace the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source?

Write an essay in which you:

- **analyze** the source and **demonstrate** an understanding of the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source
- **establish** and **argue** a position in response to the question under discussion
- **support** your position and arguments by using evidence from your knowledge and understandings of social studies

Reminders for Writing

- **Plan** your essay.
- **Organize** your essay in a manner that will best allow you to argue your position.
- **Proofread** and **edit** your writing.

**Social 30-1 Written Response Assignment II
Scoring Categories and Criteria**

	ANALYSIS OF SOURCE (5)	QUALITY OF ARGUMENTS (10)	QUALITY OF EVIDENCE (10)	QUALITY OF PRESENTATION (5)	MATTERS OF CORRECTNESS (5)
	When marking Analysis of Source, markers should consider how effectively the student - analyzes the source - demonstrates an understanding of the ideological perspective(s) reflected in the source Note: Students may discuss the ideological perspective(s) in one part of their essay, or their discussion of the ideological perspective(s) may be embedded throughout.	When marking Quality of Arguments, the markers should consider how effectively the student - establishes a position - develops one or more arguments based on logic and reason - establishes a relationship between position taken, argument(s), and the source. Note: The quality of evidence is to be assessed in the Quality of Evidence category. Evidence is to be considered in terms of its relationship to the position taken and argument(s) presented.	When marking Quality of Evidence, the markers should consider how effectively the student has used evidence that - is relevant and accurate - reflects depth and/or breadth Note: Evidence from social studies may include a theoretical, historical, contemporary, and/or current events discussion.	When marking Quality of Presentation, the markers should consider how effectively the student - organizes the essay - maintains a controlling idea Note: Consider the total impression created by the student.	When marking Matters of Correctness, the markers should consider the effectiveness of the student's - sentence structure - mechanics and grammar - use of vocabulary and social studies terminology Note: Consider the proportion of error in relation to the complexity and length of response.
Excellent E	The analysis of the source is insightful and sophisticated. The understanding of the source and its relationship to the ideological perspective(s) is comprehensively demonstrated.	Judiciously chosen and developed argument(s) convincingly support the position taken. The argument(s) are consistent and compelling, demonstrating an insightful understanding of the assignment.	Evidence is sophisticated and deliberately chosen. The relative absence of error is impressive. A thorough and comprehensive discussion of evidence reveals an insightful understanding of social studies and its application to the assignment.	The writing is fluent, skillfully structured, and judiciously ordered. A controlling idea is effectively sustained and integrated.	The writing demonstrates skillful control of sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics. The relative absence of error is impressive. Vocabulary is precise and deliberately chosen.
Proficient Pf	The analysis of the source is sound and adept. The understanding of the source and its relationship to the ideological perspective(s) is capably demonstrated.	Purposefully chosen and developed argument(s) persuasively support the position taken. The argument(s) are logical and capably developed, demonstrating a sound understanding of the assignment.	Evidence is specific and purposeful. Evidence may contain some minor errors. A capable and adept discussion of evidence reveals a solid understanding of social studies and its application to the assignment.	The writing is clear and purposefully ordered. A controlling idea is coherently sustained and presented.	The writing demonstrates capable control of sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics. Minor errors in language do not impede communication. Vocabulary is appropriate and specific.
Satisfactory S	The analysis of the source is straightforward and conventional. The understanding of the source and its relationship to the ideological perspective(s) is adequately demonstrated.	Appropriately chosen and developed argument(s) generally support the position taken. The argument(s) are straightforward and conventional, demonstrating an adequate understanding of the assignment.	Evidence is conventional and straightforward. The evidence may contain minor errors and/or a mixture of relevant and extraneous information. A generalized and basic discussion reveals an acceptable understanding of social studies and its application to the assignment.	The writing is straightforward and functionally ordered. A controlling idea is presented and maintained generally; however, coherence may falter.	The writing demonstrates basic control of sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics. There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains generally clear. Vocabulary is conventional and adequate.

Limited L	The analysis of the source is incomplete or lacks depth. The understanding of the source and its relationship to the ideological perspective(s) is superficial and lacks development.	The argument(s) presented are confusing and/or largely unrelated to the position taken. The argument(s) are repetitive, contradictory, simplistic, and/or based on uninformed belief.	Evidence is potentially relevant but is unfocused and/or incompletely developed. The evidence contains inaccuracies and/or extraneous detail. The discussion reveals a superficial and/or confused understanding of social studies and its application to the assignment.	The writing is awkward and lacks clarity. A controlling idea is inconsistently maintained.	The writing demonstrates faltering control of sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics. Errors obscure the clarity of communication. Vocabulary is imprecise, simplistic, and/or inappropriate.
Poor P	There is minimal analysis of the source. The understanding of the source and its relationship to the ideological perspective(s) is disjointed, inaccurate, or vague.	If arguments are presented, there is little or no relationship to the position taken. The argument(s) are irrelevant and/or illogical.	Evidence is either irrelevant and/or inaccurate. The evidence contains major and revealing errors. A minimal or scant discussion reveals a lack of understanding of social studies and its application to the assignment.	The writing is unclear and disorganized. A controlling idea is difficult to discern or is absent.	The writing demonstrates lack of control of sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics. Jarring errors impede communication. Vocabulary is overgeneralized and/or inaccurate.
INS INSUFFICIENT	Insufficient is a special category. It is not an indicator of quality. It should be assigned to essays that do not contain a discernible attempt to address the assignment or essays that are too brief to assess in one or more scoring categories.				

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR SCORING QUALITY OF PRESENTATION AND MATTERS OF CORRECTNESS

Vocabulary

- Word choice and usage (appropriate and accurate application of words according to the context and meaning, including social studies terminology)

Sentence Structure and Organization

- Syntax (the way in which words are combined to form phrases, clauses and sentences; completeness, consistency, and variety of sentence construction must be considered)
- Organization (coherence and focus)
- Controlling Idea (the direction and purpose of the essay; position; thesis)

Mechanics and Grammar

- Mechanics (punctuation, spelling, capitalization)
 - Grammar (subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, correctness of tense)
- August 27, 2008

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

There are a number of excellent resources Alberta teachers have free access to through the Learn Alberta website (<http://new.learnalberta.ca/>). In particular, the websites below offer a quick and easy way for students to gather information on a whole range of issues that could be at the centre of a debate.



TOPICS FROM THE CANADIAN POINTS OF VIEW REFERENCE CENTRE



Aboriginal Fishing in the Maritimes	Electronic Surveillance	Ontario (Dalton McGuinty, Premier)
Aboriginal People & Health Care	Emerging Markets	Plastic Surgery
Aboriginal People	Enemy Combatants	Political Leaders
Abortion	Energy	Politics & Ethics
Afghanistan	Environment	Politics & Government
Alberta (Ed Stelmach, Premier)	Equalization & the Atlantic Accord	Pollution & Coal
Alternative Energy Exploration	Euthanasia	Population Growth
Alternative Medicine	Evolution in the Classroom	Pornography
Amazon Deforestation	Exporting Oil	Prince Edward Island (Robert W. J. Ghiz, Premier)
Animal Rights	Family Issues	Prison Reform
Animal Welfare	Feminism	Prisoners of War
Arctic Drilling	Firearms	Prostitution
Arts Funding	Fishing Industry	Public vs. Private Health Care
Assisted Suicide	Food Contamination	Quebec (Jean Charest, Premier)
Atheism	Foreign Aid	Quebec Separatism
Atlantic Accord	Freedom of Speech	Racial Profiling
Atlantica Initiative	Fur Trade	Refugee Policy
Banned Books	Gangs	Religion
Beauty Standards & the Media	Gay Marriage	Renewable Energy
Bilingual Education	Genetic Fingerprinting	Same-Sex Marriage
Bilingualism	Genetically Modified Food	Saskatchewan (Brad Wall, Premier)
Bioethics	Global Economy	School Violence
Blogging	Global Issues	Schools & Education
Blood Diamonds	Global Warming	Secession & Quebec
Body Image & the Media	Globalization	Senate Reform
Body Image	God	Sentencing for Juvenile Offenders
Border Policy	Green Consumerism	Separation of Church & State
Bottled Water	Gun Control	Sex Education
British Columbia (Gordon Campbell, Premier)	Harvesting Fish	Sex Offender Laws
Canada (Stephen Harper, Prime Minister)	Health & Medicine	Sex Workers
Capital Punishment	Health Care & Aboriginal People	Smoking Bans
Cell Phones	Holistic Medicine	Social Issues

Censoring Student Newspapers	Homelessness	Social Networking Sites
Censorship	Human Rights	Social Services for Aboriginal People
Child Labour	Identity Theft	Stem Cell Research
Church-State Relations	Immigration	Student Newspaper Censorship
Cigarette Smoking Bans	Intelligent Design	Subsidizing HIV/AIDS Drugs
Circumcision	Iraq	Substance Abuse & Youth
Civil & Political Rights	Kyoto Accord	Tainted Food
Climate Change	Kyoto Protocol	Teaching Evolution
Cloning	Labour & Children	Technology
Coal-Burning Power Plants	Landmines	Terrorism
Complementary Medicine	Lumber Industry	Torture & Terrorism
Conflict Diamonds	Manitoba (Gary Doer, Premier)	Torture
Copyright Infringement	Marijuana as Medicine	Trapping Industry
Cosmetic Surgery	Media & Body Image	Unemployment
Creationism	Media Bias	United Nations
Crime & Punishment	Media Consolidation	Universal Day Care
Cultural Protectionism	Media	Violence & Gangs
Culture	Medical Marijuana	Violence in Schools
Day Care, Universal	Monarchy	Violence, Domestic
Death Penalty	Multiculturalism	War & Terrorism
Deforestation in the Amazon	NAFTA	War on Terror
Developing Markets	Needle Exchange Programs	Water Supply
Diamond Mining	New Brunswick (Shawn Graham, Premier)	Weight & Obesity
Discrimination Against Aboriginal People	Newfoundland & Labrador (Danny Williams, Premier)	Welfare
Distance Learning	Northwest Territories (Floyd Roland, Premier)	Wikipedia
DNA Profiling	Nova Scotia (Rodney MacDonald, Premier)	Wiretaps
Domestic Violence	Nuclear Power	Women's Issues
Drilling in the Arctic	Nunavut (Paul Okalik, Premier)	Women's Rights
Drug Policy	Obesity	Youth & Substance Abuse
Drugs	Oil Exports	Yukon (Dennis Fentie, Premier)
Economy	Online Degree Programs	

TOPICS FROM THE OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS REFERENCE CENTRE

GALE CENGAGE Learning

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Basic Search

Or select from the popular topics below: