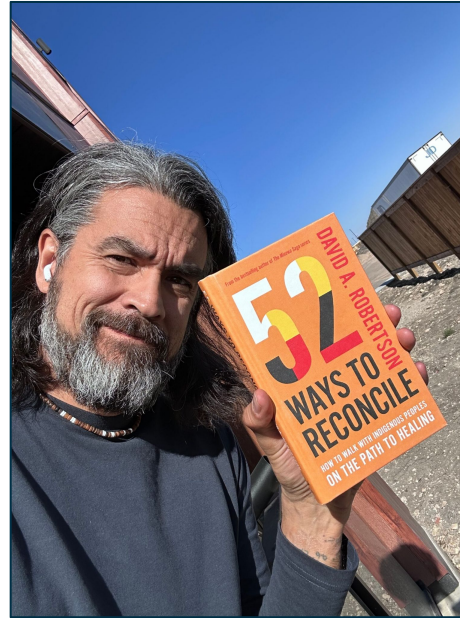


How we DO Social Studies

Grades 4–9
Final & Draft Curriculum

Facilitated by
Cheryl Babin & Rick Gilson,
APLC Designers of
Professional Learning





“Action is for every connection you make, every place you stand.”

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



RECONCILI-ACTION

In **52 WAYS TO RECONCILE**, David A. Robertson reframes reconciliation as “**building a strong and healthy relationship for the first time.**”

The book includes 52 accessible steps for walking this path, along with cultural stories and personal reflections.

When it comes to reconciliation, everyone has a role.

Action is for every connection you make, every place you stand.



#shareyouraction

Feel free to use these resources!



Type this link into your browser:

<https://bit.ly/DOsocial2learn>

Or grab the link from the chat.





Our Stance on Designing Learning

1. We design active learning through this **How we DO Social Studies** framework.
2. We believe learning experiences should **empower and engage**.
3. Learning happens when we are active, therefore we **DO Social Studies**.

Change the conversation for our youth....



What power do you
have today?

What made you FEEL
today?

What did you
CONTRIBUTE to
today?

How did you make a
difference today?



What did you LEARN today?

We take on ROLES



Teachers guide learners to take on roles to learn to consider varying viewpoints.

We take on ROLES



We become historians, geographers, economists, explorers, politicians, leaders, followers, storytellers, citizens, team members, family members, researchers, artists, debaters, peace-makers, thinkers, listeners and doers.



What's your perspective?



Historian

From my perspective, I notice...

I wonder...

I care about...



Geographer

From my perspective, I notice...

I wonder...

I care about...



Economist (Jobs for People)

From my perspective, I notice...

I wonder...

I care about...

Want to
try using
Roles or
“Lens”
Cards?

[Click here for a
Canva copy.](#)

[PDF version](#)

We take on ROLES

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



Example
from
Grade 7



Time and Place

GQ: How can defence of peace and security play a role in the development of a nation?

LO: Students relate the development of armed forces in Canada to sovereignty.

Consider asking students to take on the roles of **a volunteer turned away from combat service** in 1916, and a soldier serving in the segregated No. 2 Construction Battalion in France. Investigate the tension between wanting to serve and being denied the right to serve equally.

Other role ideas may include:

- **Rev. William White**, the battalion's chaplain, advocating to military officials on his men's behalf
- **A modern day human rights advocate** comparing how some people's WWI service was recognized, while others' wasn't.
Or jump forward: a community historian in 1985, asked by author Calvin Ruck (Canadian senator, social worker, human rights activist, author) why this story had never been told.
- **A veteran, decades later**, reflecting on service, discrimination, and a promised land grant never received



[source](#)

We share STORIES



Teachers guide the learning through narratives, histories, personal stories and authentic representations of experience.

We share STORIES



We learn to listen with our heads and hearts. We embrace multiple perspectives that help us develop empathy and understanding.

We share STORIES

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



Examples from
Grade 9



Time and Place

GQ: *How did Canada become a more independent nation and expand democratic rights?*

LO: Students explain how Canada gained independence and expanded democratic rights.

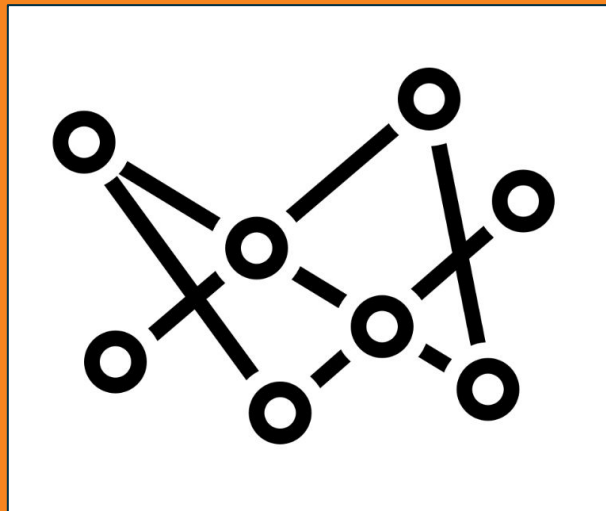
Engage in historical retelling of the ***Persons Case*** in context. What are the human stories that live in this legislation? Whose voices are missing?

- The Famous Five's own words
- What is the relationship between the 1929 Persons Case and the 1931 Statute of Westminster?
- Persons denied, whom the 1929 ruling didn't reach
- What was the courtroom narrative like?
- Uncover some present-day rights stories to examine how democratic rights have continued to expand since 1929.



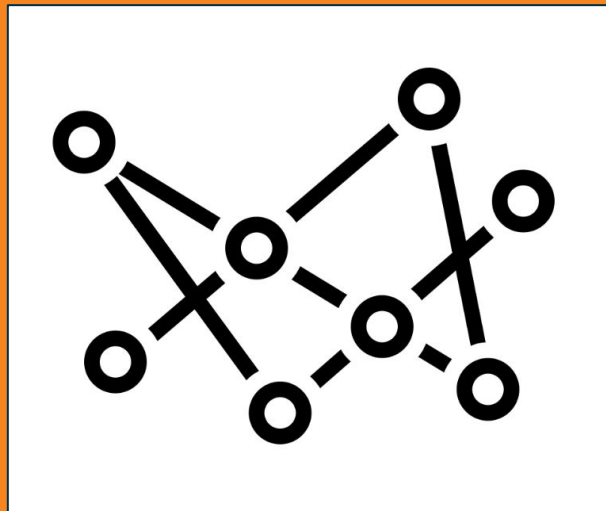
[source](#)

We CONNECT to STUDENTS' LIVES



Teachers guide students to connect to their personal experiences to support their understanding of their local context and the world around them.

We CONNECT to STUDENTS' LIVES

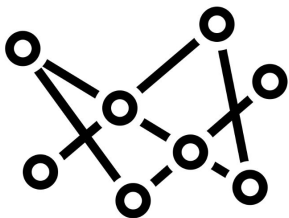


We use key concepts to support the transfer of knowledge to new challenges and opportunities.

We CONNECT to STUDENTS' LIVES



An Example from Grade 8



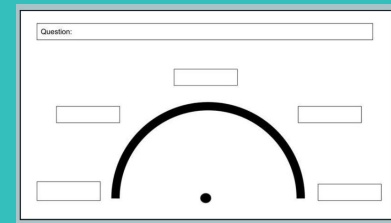
Time and Place

GQ: How have ideologies formed over time?

LO: Students examine the foundations and influences of ideologies.

Consider: Everyday classroom and family decisions already sit on the individualism–collectivism spectrum. Group work rules, family chore systems, and school decision-making all reflect a leaning one way or the other – before students ever meet the word "ideology."

- **Where do I sit on the spectrum?** Students locate a real classroom, sport/club/group or family decision on the individualism–collectivism spectrum and defend the placement
- **Should we be governed by a person, or by laws?**
The KUSPs require students to argue Plato's case for a wise ruler against Aristotle's case for the rule of law. Then apply the same question to a real-life classroom or society rule.



[\(Link to dashboard\)](#)

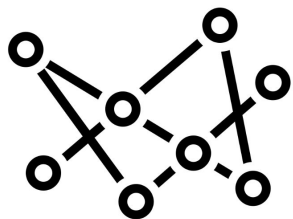
Try using a dashboard to make a judgment. Be sure to use criteria to provide a clear justification using evidence.

We CONNECT to STUDENTS' LIVES

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



Addressing the Holocaust with your students



Research suggests that **how** a difficult topic is taught is really important.

Students generally benefit when teachers:

- maintain a respectful classroom climate
- provide historical context before discussing atrocities
- include stories of courage and resilience
- allow opportunities for reflection
- avoid sensationalism
- encourage questions
- **connect learning to human rights and civic responsibility**

**Dignity in our language and thoughts allows us to disagree
but not dehumanize.**

We develop COMPETENCIES

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



Teachers guide students to become critical thinkers that ask and reflect on compelling questions, manage information, and recognize patterns.

We develop COMPETENCIES

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



We are effective multimodal communicators, who creatively and collaboratively solve problems. We are aware of our thinking and the changes that occur when we learn. We are learners.

We develop COMPETENCIES



An Example from Grade 4

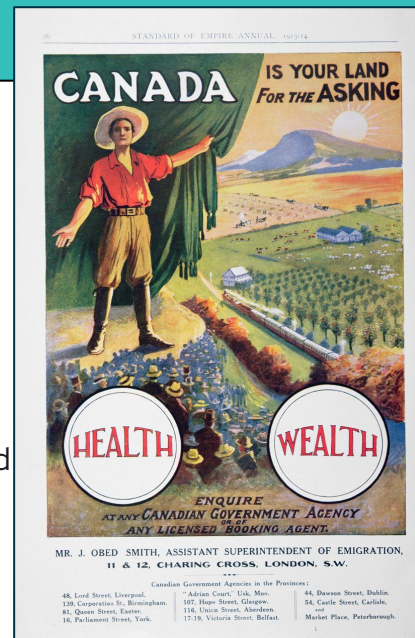


Time and Place

GQ: How did Canada become a country?

LO: Students investigate changes in Canada's political boundaries.

Give students five unlabelled outline maps of colonial North America at real turning points – 1713 (Treaty of Utrecht), 1763 (Treaty of Paris), 1791 (Constitution Act, Upper & Lower Canada), and 1837–38 (Act of Union) – and ask them to sequence the maps correctly using only the boundary shapes as evidence. Then ask: what pattern of migration or conflict likely caused each shift? The curriculum's own task – infer how migration influenced the balance of power – becomes a detective exercise, not a lecture.



[source](#)

We engage in the REAL WORLD with REAL PEOPLE using REAL ARTIFACTS

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



Teachers guide the learning
using primary sources.

We engage in the REAL WORLD with REAL PEOPLE using REAL ARTIFACTS

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



This may include humans in the community, touchable artifacts, images and sources made possible through advances in technology.

We engage in the REAL WORLD with REAL PEOPLE using REAL ARTIFACTS



An Example from Grade

5



Time and Place: In what ways might the ancient world have relevance today?

LO: Students examine ancient civilizations.

Primary Sources: Real artifacts or images of coins, pottery, and artwork from an ancient civilization. Connect with a local museum, or a virtual museum tour.

- **Primary vs. Secondary:** The curriculum's own task – distinguish between primary and secondary sources using the same artifacts. Try this observation guide – [Looking at Art, Looking at Objects](#)
- **Comparing the Social Scientists:** Compare how a historian, an archaeologist, an anthropologist, and a geographer would each read the same artifact differently



We take ACTION



Teachers make social studies active. We DO the things that help us grow.

We take ACTION



We use thinking routines, create representations, track changing perspectives, collaborate to activate our collective strengths and take actions as responsible citizens.

Action inspired by Harvard Dean [James Ryan](#)
5 Essential Questions



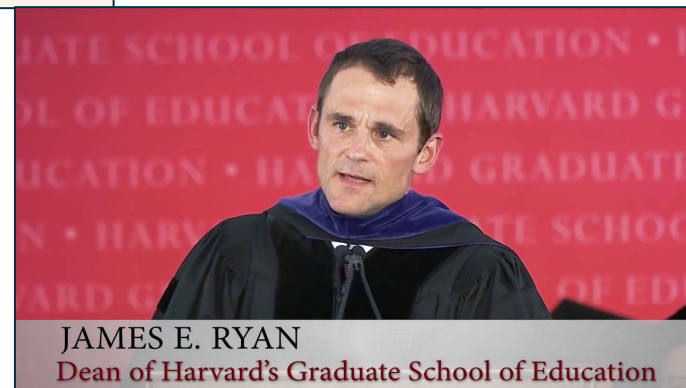
① “Wait, what?”

② “I wonder why...?” Or “I wonder if...?”

③ “Couldn’t we at least...?”

④ “How can I help?”

⑤ “What truly matters?”



Click this image to watch Dr. Ryan’s great speech! A book Summary is included in the session resources

We take ACTION



*An Example
from Grade 6*



Citizenship

GQ: *In what ways does civic participation support democratic societies?*

LO: **Students examine civic participation in Canada.**

Have students choose and take action on a real, local issue:

- identify the issue and purpose,
- research it,
- set a goal,
- weigh costs and resources,
- decide the steps,
- carry the plan out,
- then reflect on the outcome.

Directly from the outcome itself, this is a meaningful experience we can support, model and design **with** students.

Learning is best done through ACTIONS.

Here are some great Action Posters to use as reflections.

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



HAVING

Did you HAVE more of
something? More
knowledge? Respect? Care?
Determination?

SAYING

Have you SAID something?
Informed? Explained?
Told? Discussed? Debated?
Asked?

BEING

Have you BEEN a different
person? Changed behaviors?
Been more patient?
More respectful?

FEELING

Have you FELT differently?
Empathized? Felt inspired?
Worried? Admired?

DOING

Have you DONE
something? Picked up?
Turned off? Given?
Helped?

THINKING

Have you THOUGHT
differently?
Changed your mind?
Wondered? Inquired?

How we DO Social Studies

About HWDSS, Examples, Instructions to set up a Gem/GPT



How We Do Social Studies

Alberta K-9 · curriculum-grounded teaching framework

Localize to: Generic (no community) ▾

Welcome to **How We Do Social Studies** – a way of teaching Alberta's K-9 Social Studies, and the literacy woven through it, that puts learners in the middle of the action. Instead of only reading about the world, students **take on roles** to see other viewpoints, **share stories** that build empathy, **connect** the learning to their own lives, **develop the competencies** of critical thinkers and communicators, **engage the real world** with real people and real artifacts, and **take action** as citizens. Every card pairs one of these six strategies with the actual curriculum – Social Studies and ELAL outcomes, word for word – a Project Zero thinking routine, ways to localize the learning to your own community, an invitation for families to join in at home, and ideas for assessment. **Teachers, families, and students – explore, engage, and learn together. Grades 7-9 now reflect the 2026 Draft Social Studies curriculum (released June 2026); K-6 are the Final curriculum.**

Teacher view Family view Build your own Thinking routines Data health Try the demo Gem ↗

Grade
All grades ▾

Strategy
Take on Roles Share Stories Connect to Our Lives Develop Competencies
Engage the Real World, People & Facts Take Action

Select a strategy or lens to see what it is and how it applies.

Supporting your Journey (click on each to access)

Supporting every educator
in every classroom



Social Studies Knowledge Companion

A website to source vetted resources

ALBERTA SOCIAL STUDIES · KNOWLEDGE COMPANION

I Need to Know (and understand)

A knowledge-focused digital companion to the Alberta Social Studies curriculum.

Social Studies K-9 · active build-out across all grades

Organized exactly like the curriculum – Grade → Organizing Idea → Guiding Question → Learning Outcome → Knowledge – and stocked with free, vetted resources (articles, books, images, maps, and video) to inform teachers, support families at home, and guide students. All grades, K-9, are being built out.

Social Studies Verbs & Concepts

A site to explore the DOING Words of SS

 **The Consortium**
Alberta Professional Learning Consortium

Alberta Social Studies K-9 – Verbs & Concepts

Welcome! This site explores the *doing words* of Alberta's K-9 Social Studies curriculum – the verbs that tell students what to do, and the concepts those verbs work with. In **Teacher view**, pick a grade to see its verbs grouped by thinking-skill family, each with the real skills-and-procedures statements behind it. In the **Home / Student view** (Grades 4-9), students and families explore what a verb asks of them – with a real task from their grade and the big idea it builds toward. Everything here comes straight from the curriculum; labels show what is final and what is still draft. Grades 7-9 now reflect the 2026 Draft curriculum (released June 2026). Have a look around – and tell us what you think with the feedback button.

K - 9 SS Curriculum Planner

A GPT to “pin” and aid in your planning



Alberta K-9 Social Studies Curriculum Planner

By Rick Gilson

Builds Alberta K-9 year, unit, and lesson plans aligned with the new curriculum

SS Current Events Lens for Gr 6 - 9

A GPT to “pin” and connect current news



Social Studies Current Events Lens Alberta SS 6-9

By Rick Gilson

Connects current Canadian news to Alberta Social Studies (Grades 6-9) and builds full lessons: curriculum match, activities, assessment, verified sources. For best results, give your grade and a time window (e.g., "Grade 7, past month"). Curriculum quoted verbatim; news pulled live.





The Consortium

Alberta Professional Learning Consortium

APLC Post Session Survey

Thank you for attending this session. To help us enhance the delivery of future sessions, we ask that you please complete this short survey.

Your feedback is important and appreciated!

Note: Your survey will be submitted anonymously.

Click here to complete a short survey:

<https://aplc.ca/survey/?id=15805><https://aplc.ca/survey/?id=15805>



Thank you

Please visit our website for more information

Cheryl Babin
cheryl.babin@aplc.ca

aplc.ca

Rick Gilson
rick.gilson@aplc.ca

