UNIT SYNOPSIS

ONTARIO SOCIAL STUDIES
GRADE 5 STRAND B

Good Government and Responsible Citizenship

Overarching inquiry question
What are the most effective ways citizens and governments can ensure that our community, province and country are good places to live?

Overarching critical challenge
Create an engaging and informative “call to action” aimed at convincing a selected audience to support your proposed plans for addressing a specific issue.

Big ideas
• Our governments perform challenging and complex work.
• Responsible citizens monitor and improve government decisions and actions.
• Governments and citizens have joint responsibilities to take care of our community, province and country.

LINE OF INQUIRY #1
Analyzing government actions

Inquiry question
What is government doing well and where is more work needed?

Critical challenge
Create a progress report that assesses actions taken by government on a pressing social or environmental problem. As part of the report, propose a Government Action Plan.

LINE OF INQUIRY #2
Exploring citizen responsibilities

Inquiry question
What is responsible citizenship and why is it important?

Critical challenge
Choose a set of effective citizen actions that address your social/environmental issue and use them to create a Citizen Action Plan.

UNIT LAUNCH

Lesson title and critical challenge
Unit launch: Daring to dream
Use words and/or pictures to imagine an ideal solution to your assigned pressing problem.

Summary and curriculum connections
This two-part lesson sets the stage for the entire unit. Students give a preliminary response to the Lesson challenge by “daring to dream” of a solution to the problem of homelessness. They analyze news items to identify those related to significant, pressing problems. Next, students clarify five pressing social and environmental problems. They record their initial ideas about each problem and develop questions for further inquiry. To conclude the first session, each student indicates three preferences for consideration by the teacher when assigning problems for ongoing individual inquiry. In the second session, students view an inspiring example of a “call to action” by 10-year-old Hannah Alper. They consider the Overarching inquiry question and Overarching critical challenge that will drive the entire unit. As a class, they identify features of an informative and engaging call to action, and consider possible formats for their own call to action. Students learn about their assigned problem, and add new ideas and questions based on further analysis. Finally, students “dare to dream” of a solution to their problem and set up pages for ongoing reflection and planning notes for their final presentation.

B1.1, B2.1, B2.6

*“Dawn at Ottawa’s Parliament Hill”, joiseyshowa/Flickr, CC-BY SA 2.0, cropped top half of picture
# LINE OF INQUIRY #1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson titles and critical challenges</th>
<th>Summaries and curriculum connections</th>
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| **Lesson 1.1: Drafting an initial report**  
Create an initial progress report about government actions on your assigned pressing problem. | In this two-part launch of the first line of inquiry, students make an initial attempt at the task that forms the final critical challenge for Line of inquiry #1. They use a familiar example involving soccer field repairs to develop criteria for effective government action. They practice applying the criteria to various hypothetical actions to address the soccer field problem. In the second session, students jointly complete a progress report on actual government actions related to unclean water and then repeat the process by offering a preliminary assessment of government actions related to their assigned pressing problem. Students record questions they have about their assigned problem and make plans for gathering information to help answer their questions as they refine their progress reports.  
*B1.1, B2.1, B2.4, B2.5* |
| **Lesson 1.2: Sharing responsibilities between citizens and governments**  
Sort responsibilities on a continuum from "a job for citizens" to "a job for government." | In this lesson, students continue to explore their pressing issues by considering the degree to which citizens and governments share responsibility for addressing these problems. Students begin by considering familiar tasks, such as feeding a family pet. They practice using a continuum to show a reasonable sharing of duties. Students develop criteria for "a job for citizens" and "a job for government" and use these to sort a provided set of responsibilities. Finally, students make and justify decisions about allocating responsibilities for their pressing issues and record their ideas in their Thoughtbooks.  
*B1.2, B1.3* |
| **Lesson 1.3: Identifying duties of levels of government**  
Which level of government is most responsible for your pressing problem? | In this two-part lesson, students link levels of government in Canada with different responsibilities and geographical locations. They begin by considering a hypothetical situation in which a citizen calls the Prime Minister’s office for help with his flooded street. Students are introduced to the Lesson Challenge and review the definition of government from the Unit Launch. They identify their country, province and community and attempt to draw each place on a blank outline map before checking actual boundaries and discussing related levels of government. In session two, students analyze a family’s "job list" to develop possible criteria for effective job sharing. They match government levels with particular responsibilities and decide if the existing distribution of responsibilities in Canada is effective. Students read a briefing sheet and work as a class to decide which level of government is most responsible for the problem *Unsafe drinking water on reserves*. Finally, they read a briefing sheet about their own issue and complete the lesson challenge.  
*B1.2, B1.3, B2.3, B3.2, B3.3* |
| **Lesson 1.4: Protecting our rights**  
Assess the links between pressing problems and basic rights. | In Lesson 1.4 students examine human rights documents to search for evidence of connections between pressing issues and human rights. They begin by sharing their existing knowledge of human rights and making an initial decision about whether or not rights being denied. Students then compare rights and non-rights to clarify the distinction and discuss a definition of human rights that includes the concept of living with dignity. As a class, they discuss two sample situations and decide if human rights claims are justified. Students then learn how to use the "highlighting" thinking strategy effectively before applying it to the summaries of five human rights documents. They record and analyze evidence from each document before rating the strength of links to the *Unsafe drinking water on reserves* issue and their own pressing problems. Finally, students consider whether human rights connections to their problem oblige governments to take action.  
*B2.4, B2.5, B3.1* |
**Lesson 1.5: Recognizing different perspectives**

In Inquiry - pacs 5B Unit synopsis

In the role of a stakeholder, participate in a group conversation that reveals different perspectives on your pressing problem.

In Lesson 1.5, students learn to identify various stakeholders and explore different perspectives on an issue. They learn that different points of view often lead to different conclusions about possible solutions to a particular problem. Students begin by looking at a rural scene through the eyes of various stakeholders. They extend their understanding by analyzing stakeholder roles in the hypothetical issue of a proposed skateboard park. Next, students assume the role of a stakeholder involved in their own pressing issue. After researching that stakeholder’s perspective, they participate in a group “fishbowl” conversation in that role. Finally, students analyze what it means to “receive widespread support” when various perspectives can lead to such opposing views on any issue.

**Lesson 1.6: Assessing and revising the report**

Revise your progress report to complete the Challenge for Line of Inquiry #1.

In Lesson 1.6, students use self-assessment and peer feedback to review their draft progress reports on government action before completing their final responses to the Line of Inquiry #1 Challenge. They begin by decoding the features of helpful feedback. Students then consider criteria for a thoughtful progress report and discuss the value of using clear and relevant criteria for any assessment or feedback. Students review their lesson materials, research findings and Thoughtbook entries and discuss ways their knowledge and understanding have grown since the beginning of the unit. They complete a self-assessment of their draft reports before giving and receiving peer feedback with a partner. Students complete their final progress report, including the Government Action Plan, in this lesson. They wrap up the line of inquiry by recording ideas and information on a planning sheet for their Call to Action.

**LINE OF INQUIRY #2**

**Lesson titles and critical challenges**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td><strong>Lesson 2.1: Promoting active citizenship</strong></td>
<td>In this launch of the second line of inquiry, students explore the duties of Canadian citizens and analyze the value of active, responsible citizenship. They view a citizenship ceremony, discuss their own rights and responsibilities at school, and use a “consider the opposite” strategy to frame positive statements about the importance of responsible citizenship. Finally, students use what they have learned about citizens’ duties to rework the Canadian Oath of Citizenship.</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson 2.2: Analyzing citizen actions</strong></td>
<td>In this two-part lesson, students analyze a specific example of citizen action and decide where it fits within four categories of citizen action. After examining other examples of each type of action, students decide which types of actions have been taken on their issues. Students then create “long lists” of ideas on possible citizen actions on their pressing issues.</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson 2.3: Boosting the power of voting</strong></td>
<td>In lesson 2.3, students explore ways to increase the effectiveness of voting as a citizen action. In session one, they consider the various approaches of fictional voters and decide which strategies are most effective. Students learn about the importance and value of voting by considering struggles for the right to vote and analyzing a bar graph showing voter turnout by age group for a federal election. In session two, they sequence steps to develop their understanding of the election process and analyze selected campaign materials. Finally, students choose “3 top tips for voters” from their own lists and provided suggestions.</td>
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### Lesson 2.4: Narrowing the options

Thoughtfully trim the long list of potentially effective citizen actions on your issue.

In this lesson, students practice the “process of elimination” thinking strategy with a hypothetical list of ideas for cheering up a friend in hospital. Students apply the strategy as a class to a shared issue and then individually to their own long lists of potential citizen actions. Students share their reasons for eliminating particular ideas with others who are investigating the same issue.

**B1.2, B1.3, B2.5, B3.4, B3.6, B3.7**

### Lesson 2.5: Ranking the short list

Rank the short list of effective actions for your issue

In this lesson, students rank the short list of citizen actions for their issue selected in Lesson 2.4. They return to the fictional “friend in hospital” example to practice rating options from most to least effective. Students use a four-star system to evaluate each potential action on each of the criteria for an effective action. They apply this thinking strategy to a shared issue and then to the short lists for their own issues.

**B1.2, B1.3, B2.5, B3.4, B3.6, B3.7**

### Lesson 2.6: Creating a Citizen Action Plan

Complete the Line of Inquiry #2 Challenge.

In wrapping up the second line of inquiry, students review the previous lessons and consider ways their thinking has changed since the beginning of the unit. They use provided criteria for a useful action plan to critique a plan for a hypothetical situation and then work together to create a Citizen Action Plan for a shared issue. Students then create, self-assess and revise their own action plans. They give each other peer feedback before making final revisions and submitting their plans to their teacher.

**B1.2, B1.3, B2.4, B2.5, B3.4, B3.6, B3.7**

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### UNIT FINALE

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<td><strong>Unit finale: Issuing the call to action</strong></td>
<td>In this three-part lesson, students wrap up the unit by addressing the Overarching Challenge. They select a suitable audience and choose a format (e.g., speech, blog post, video, letter, podcast.) Students re-watch Hannah’s talk, first seen in the Unit Launch, to develop key features of an engaging and informative call to action. Students complete their planning chart and submit it for teacher approval before proceeding with creating, sharing, polishing and presenting their calls to action. Students conclude the unit by incorporating their new understandings into a final response to the Overarching Inquiry Question.</td>
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<td><strong>B2.6, B3.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>B2.6, B3.7</strong></td>
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