

Balancing Human Needs and Environmental Stewardship

Social Studies (Revised 2013), Grade 4, Political and Physical Regions of Canada

Overview

Students are engaged in an inquiry during which they examine ways to balance human needs with the impact that the construction of a housing development can have on the environment. Students think about the interrelationship between humans and the environment, the significance of our decisions and actions, and the cause and consequence of changes made in the environment.

Connections to Financial Literacy

Students learn about costs and benefits of housing developments and consider their impacts from social, environmental, and economic perspectives.

Connections to Curriculum

These lessons focus on the interrelationships of humans and the environment (interdependence), the perspectives of different individuals, and the impacts on the environment.

Students focus on inquiry and consider information from secondary sources to draw conclusions (Inquiry/Concepts of Social Studies Thinking). They make connections to the implications of balancing human needs with environmental impacts as they consider different perspectives.

The curriculum expectations addressed in each lesson are identified within the lesson plan. The curriculum expectations, including examples and other supporting information, can be accessed through a hyperlink within the lesson.

Students will make connections to:

- environmental implications: balancing human needs with environmental impacts.
Concept of Social Studies Thinking (Perspective – Consider benefits and impacts from different perspectives.) Who else in the community might have an opinion about developing houses in your community? What are the reasons why a community member might support or object to a housing development?
- social and economic implications:
Concept of Social Studies Thinking (Perspective – Consider benefits and impacts from different perspectives.) Who might benefit financially from a new housing development?

Considerations for Planning

The inquiry process enables students to engage in their learning through self-directed explorations of significant challenges, topics, or issues. The goal of inquiry is for students to investigate various information sources and integrate that information with their own ideas in order to improve their understanding. The inquiry process referred to in these lessons relates to these four phases of inquiry: explore, investigate, process, and create.

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A Question of Balance Lesson 1

Students use information from secondary sources to think about how to balance human needs and environmental stewardship. They conduct an inquiry into the impacts of human interactions on the environment.

Students think about the interrelationship between humans and the environment, the significance of these actions, and the cause and consequence of changes in the environment. They focus on the human needs related to constructing a new housing development (people's need for shelter), the economic effects (workers, building materials), and the impact on the environment.

Connections to Financial Literacy

Students examine the impacts of constructing housing developments.

Curriculum Expectations

[Click here](#) to access expectations in full, with examples.

Social Studies, Grade 4, Political and Physical Regions of Canada

B2. Inquiry: Balancing Human Needs and Environmental Stewardship - use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some issues and challenges associated with balancing human needs/wants and activities with environmental stewardship in one or more of the political and/or physical regions of Canada
(*FOCUS ON: Perspective*)

B2.2 gather and organize information and data from various sources to investigate issues and challenges associated with balancing human needs/wants and activities with environmental stewardship in one or more of the political and/or physical regions of Canada

B2.4 interpret and analyse information and data related to their investigations, using a variety of tools

B2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about issues and challenges associated with balancing human needs/wants and activities with environmental stewardship in Canada

Learning Goals

Students will:

- gather information regarding the construction of a housing development and the environmental changes that result
- analyse the cause and consequence of human activities on the environment

Sample Success Criteria

I can gather and organise relevant information to determine the impacts of constructing a housing development on the environment.

I can evaluate evidence about the impacts of a housing development on the environment in order to make an informed judgement.

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A Question of Balance Lesson 1

Considerations for Planning

Readiness

This lesson relates to students' prior knowledge about balancing human needs and environmental stewardship. Students will have some experience with using the inquiry process for learning and how to structure thinking using graphic organizers.

Review the meaning of terms used in the lesson (e.g., consequence, impact, economic) and post the words on a Word Wall with a simple definition as reference for the students during their inquiry.

Terminology

- Shelter
- Relationship
- Economic impact
- Environmental impact
- Environmental stewardship
- Consequence

Materials

- Reading material/websites related to housing developments (or the creation of houses) and the environmental impacts of housing developments such as **Suburbia by David Shankbone**
- organizers: T-chart organizer

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A Question of Balance Lesson 1	
Minds On	Connections
<p>Whole Class → Setting a Context for the Inquiry</p> <p>Select visuals of at least three different types of housing developments (e.g., apartments, detached houses, row houses). Consider those in a rural setting, in an urban setting, or in a suburb.</p> <p>With the class, examine the images and initiate students' thinking with the question: What makes up a housing development? (<i>buildings, roads, driveways, sewers, ...</i>)</p> <p>Record students' ideas.</p>	<p>Tips</p> <p>Images may be available from sources in the community such as developers, builders, or local newspapers.</p> <p>Where appropriate, focus on housing developments within the school community.</p>
Action!	Connections
<p>Whole Class/ Small Groups → Determining Environmental Impacts</p> <p>With the class, identify questions for their inquiry as they examine the impacts for people, the economy, and the environment such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is housing important to people? (<i>e.g., place to live</i>) • Who is involved in building the housing? (<i>e.g., carpenters, machine operators, construction crew</i>) • Who else would benefit from the housing development? (<i>e.g., lumber stores, building materials suppliers, workers</i>) • Which of these people might benefit financially from a new housing development? • How might building homes change the environment? (<i>e.g., land covered with buildings, new parks and ponds, possible pollution, disturbing ecosystems, new nature trails, water table decreasing due to increased use, run-off from driveways and roads</i>) <p>For their inquiry, students work in small groups to identify impacts on people, the economy, and the environment. They record each impact on a sticky note.</p> <p>Each group organizes its responses on a T-chart.</p> <p>Working in small groups, students think more deeply about the construction of housing and the environment.</p> <p>In a gallery walk, students share their charts with the class. In a follow-up class discussion, they consider whether the benefits of building the housing development outweigh the impact on the environment.</p> <p>Groups revisit their own charts and make appropriate additions.</p>	<p>A for L Circulate and scan students' responses on the graphic organizers and give verbal feedback.</p>

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A Question of Balance Lesson 1	
Consolidation	Connections
<p>Whole Class/Individual → Drawing a Conclusion</p> <p>In a class discussion, decide whether the positive impacts of building a housing community outweigh the negative impacts. Students give reasons for their answers supported by the information they gathered during their inquiry.</p> <p>Students look at their organizers and make their own judgement. They form an opinion line and share their ideas in a U-shaped discussion.</p> <p>Exit Card</p> <p>Pose a final question for students to reflect on that they will revisit in Lesson 2: What can be done so that the building of housing does the least harm to the environment?</p>	<p>Tips</p> <p>As an alternative, students can complete a place mat, where they write their individual thoughts in one of four sections on the place mat, and then list all the common items in the middle of the place mat.</p> <p>If appropriate, students could discuss what the criteria for their decision were – magnitude of environmental impact (e.g., adding a garden at the new home), length of impact over time, number of people effected (e.g., children, extended family).</p>

How to Balance Human Needs and the Environment

Social Studies (Revised 2013), Grade 4, Political and Physical Regions of Canada

<p>Whose Perspective? Lesson 2</p> <p>Taking the perspective of a stakeholder, students use information from the previous lesson to make informed critical judgments about different perspectives regarding balancing human needs, economic effects, and environmental stewardship.</p>		
<p>Connections to Financial Literacy</p> <p>Students learn about different perspectives around housing developments by considering the different stakeholders.</p>		
<p>Curriculum Expectations</p> <p>Click here to access expectations in full, with examples.</p> <p>Social Studies, Grade 4, Political and Physical Regions of Canada</p> <p>B2. Inquiry: Balancing Human Needs and Environmental Stewardship - use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some issues and challenges associated with balancing human needs/wants and activities with environmental stewardship in one or more of the political and/or physical regions of Canada (<i>FOCUS ON: Perspective</i>)</p> <p>B2.4 interpret and analyse information and data related to their investigations, using a variety of tools</p> <p>B2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about issues and challenges associated with balancing human needs/wants and activities with environmental stewardship in Canada</p>		<p>Learning Goals</p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use inquiry skills to examine the cause and consequence of human activities on the environment • chart the different perspectives of individuals/groups <p>Sample Success Criterion I can analyse information to make an informed judgement whether the need to build human shelters balances with the environmental impact.</p>
<p>Planning Considerations</p>		
<p>Readiness Understanding of concepts from Lesson 1.</p>	<p>Terminology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspective • Opinion 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout: Balance Organizer

How to Balance Human Needs and the Environment

Social Studies (Revised 2013), Grade 4, Political and Physical Regions of Canada

Whose Perspective? Lesson 2	
Minds On	Connections
<p>Whole Class → Identifying Different Perspectives</p> <p>Briefly review the students' findings from their inquiry in Lesson 1, focusing on the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is involved in building the housing? • Who else would benefit from a housing development? <p>Pose further questions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who else in the community might have an opinion about developing housing in your community? (<i>a developer, a farmer, a local business owner, a homeowner</i>). • Would all of these people share the same perspective? Why or why not? <p>Explain to the students that they will use the information and their thinking from the previous inquiry to work in small groups as they consider one of the "perspectives."</p>	<p>A for L Note students' responses to the questions to determine their understanding and readiness to investigate further concepts.</p>
Action!	Connections
<p>Small Groups → Thinking from Different Perspectives</p> <p>Assign each group a stakeholder e.g., construction worker, developer, environmentalists, parents who want less traffic in the community.</p> <p>In small groups, students consider the social, economic, and environmental impacts of a housing development from one "perspective" in more depth.</p> <p>Questions to guide the groups' thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are reasons why this community member might support the housing development? • What are reasons why this community member might object to this housing development? • What common or shared ideas do these community members share? <p>In their groups, they consider their thoughts about the impacts from this person's point of view and decide whether they support or oppose the development from that perspective. They list their reasons on each side of the Balance Organizer.</p> <p>Students prepare reasons for their position and decide how they will present this perspective to the class.</p> <p>Groups share their position (e.g., in an oral presentation, using visuals/ photos), giving reasons for their decision. The class identifies common or shared ideas that these different community members share.</p>	

How to Balance Human Needs and the Environment

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Whose Perspective? Lesson 2	
Consolidation	Connections
<p>Whole Class/Individual → Sharing Perspectives</p> <p>In a class discussion, students revisit the question: What can be done so that the construction of housing does the least harm to the environment?</p> <p>Record and post their suggestions.</p> <p>Individually, students return to their Exit Card from Lesson 1 and add to or remove some of their original ideas.</p>	<p>AOL Use students' Exit Cards to assess their understanding of how to balance human needs with environmental stewardship.</p>

HANDOUT

Balance Organizer

We considered the ideas from the perspective of _____.

A balance scale diagram with two pans. The left pan is labeled "Supporting Points" and the right pan is labeled "Opposing Points". The scale is currently balanced. Each pan has six horizontal lines for writing.

Our Balance Organizer shows that we **support /oppose** the development.

(Circle support or oppose.)

A Question of Balance Lesson 1

Curriculum Expectations

Social Studies, Grade 4 (Revised 2013)	
Political and Physical Regions of Canada	
Overall Expectations	Specific Expectations
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Whose Perspective Lesson 2

Curriculum Expectations

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