



Socially-based Curriculum Unit: Poverty & Social Inequality

Unit Title: Poverty & Social Inequality

Time Frame: 5 periods of 75 minutes

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Developed for Course Name and Course Code: Individuals and Families in a Diverse Society (HHS4M)

Strand(s) and Curriculum Learning Expectations Addressed:

Social Challenges and Social Structures Strand

SCV.01 · analyse current issues and trends relevant to individual development, and speculate on future directions

SC1.01 – describe current perceptions, opinions, and demographic trends relating to the life patterns of individuals (e.g., life expectancy, educational attainment, labour-force participation, income), and speculate on the significance of these trends for individual development

SC1.02 – explain the impact on individual development and decision making of social changes and challenges (e.g., AIDS, emerging communication technologies, the increase in non-family households, cultural diversity) and life events (e.g., illness, infertility, disability, unemployment, death, divorce)

SC1.03 – demonstrate an understanding of the effect of various aspects of social systems on individual development (e.g., legal requirements, such as age restrictions; economic factors; educational opportunities; employment trends; availability of social support)

SCV.02 · analyse current issues and trends affecting the dynamics of intimate relationships, and speculate on future directions for individuals and families

SC2.01 – describe current perceptions, opinions, and demographic trends relating to intimate relationships, and speculate on the significance of these trends for individual and family development;

SC2.03 – identify the role of various social institutions (e.g., family, law, religion, economy, government) with respect to intimate relationships (e.g., definition of spouse, rights and obligations of spouses, social support)

SC3.01 – describe current perceptions, opinions, and demographic trends relating to childbearing and childrearing (e.g., birth rate, age at childbearing, number of children, age at leaving home), and speculate on the significance of these trends for parent–child relationships

SC3.02 – explain the impact that current issues relating to parents and children (e.g., adoption, educational concerns, foster care, genetic testing and selection, infertility and fertility treatment, teen parents) have on the bearing and rearing of children;

SC3.04 – identify the role that different types of social institutions and systems (e.g., school, media, peer group, medicine, religion) have in the rearing and socialization of children

SC3.07 – summarize the impact of economic and political instability (including war) and migration on child development and socialization.



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Desired Results

Unit Description:

The unit will be approached from a multi-disciplinary perspective including cultural, sociological, anthropological and psychological. It will deal with such pertinent issues as the working poor, financial poverty vs poverty of opportunity, the politics of poverty and the overall impact of poverty on the individual and society as a whole. A wide variety of teaching strategies will be used with a focus on differentiated instruction. These teaching strategies may include:

- i. statistical analysis by accessing current data bases (ie/ Stats. Can.)
- ii. role playing
- iii. visual impact webs (ie/ Fishbone)
- iv. political representation/expression through music and the music industry (lyric analysis)
- v. creation and/or analysis of a case study (ie/ analysis of privatization of the health care system)

The unit will end with a summative assessment that will be presented in the form of a "Choice Board."

Enduring Understandings / Learning:

By the end of this unit, students will have a better understanding of poverty and social inequalities. In addition, they will have further developed their critical analysis and research skills.

Assessment Tasks

Performance Tasks and Other Evidence That Will Demonstrate the Knowledge and Skills Acquired:

The unit will end with a summative assessment that will be presented in the form of a "Choice Board": students will be able to choose the way they wish to present the knowledge acquired in this unit. Options include:

- i. writing a poem or song
- ii. creating a poster or chart
- iii. write a newspaper article
- iv. create a short play
- v. create a TV or radio public service announcement
- vi. create a piece of art accompanied by a brief explanation
- vii. complete a short essay

Assessment Criteria:

- Formative (teamwork, initiative)
- Summative (unit assignment & rubric)



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Unit Planning Notes

Prior Learning Necessary:

Prior to this unit:

1. Students will have been taught critical assessment skills. They will be aware of how to detect biases in secondary source information.
2. Students should be aware of the *Systems Theory* and the aspect of circular causality at the micro and macro levels.

Preparation Notes:

Teachers will need to:

1. Become familiar with (and adapt, if desired) the “Titanic Game” (see Appendix A-1 for the reference to this resource) and prepare handouts or question sheets for this group activity.
2. Become familiar with the definitions of poverty (see links in Appendix B-1 for links to background information).
3. Prepare a large scale version of Appendix B-2 for posting in a bulletin board in the classroom for Lesson 2.
4. Book the computer lab for the research assignment in Lesson 2.
5. Find 4-5 recent articles about poverty and duplicate them such that there are sets of the separate articles for the group activity in Lesson 3. (If the class is divided into groups of 4 students, the teacher needs to find 4 articles; if there are groups of 5 students, the teacher will need to find 5 articles. In each group, each student will select one article to read; in other words each student in the group will have a different article.)
6. Choose a song to play as students enter the class for Lesson 4. Prepare an overhead of the lyrics for discussion. Some suggestions:
 - a. *Coat of Many Colours* –Dolly Parton:
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1zJzr-kWsI> or http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ODTN5Ttpjg
 - http://www.lyricsfreak.com/d/dolly+parton/coat+of+many+colors_20041950.html
 - b. *In the Ghetto* – Elvis Presley:
 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Bc8QYUJSfI&feature=related
 - http://www.absolutelyrics.com/lyrics/view/elvis_presley/in_the_ghetto/
 - c. *Fast Car*- Tracy Chapman:
 - http://www.metacafe.com/watch/yt-Orv_F2HV4gk/fast_car_tracy_chapman/
 - <http://www.afn.org/~afn30091/songs/c/chapman-fast.htm>



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Learning Plan

Lesson 1: Poverty and Social Inequality (75 minute period)

Lesson Objective: The goal of this lesson is to introduce students to the issues that surround social inequalities and poverty.

Resources Required:

- Overhead projector & transparency
- **Appendix A:**
 1. Social Stratification Role Play
 2. Poverty & Social Inequality: Key Terminology
 3. Poverty & Social Inequality: True/False? (Quiz)

Introductory Activity: (30 minutes)

This lesson will begin by engaging students in an experiential role-play to introduce students to the topic of social inequality (social stratification) in society.

- Divide students into groups of 6, ensuring important member roles are assigned (leader, time-keeper, recorder, reporter).
- *Social Stratification Role Play* (Appendix A-1). Allow time for students to complete exercise expectations, and answer corresponding questions.

Development Strategies: (35 minutes)

- Reassemble the class to debrief exercise through class discussion
- Introduce and define key terminology (Appendix A-2) associated with poverty and social inequality, for example, absolute poverty, intra-generational mobility, etc. (overhead).

Concluding Activity: (10 minutes)

- Distribute true/false quiz (diagnostic), (Appendix A-3), to illustrate and examine stereotypical attitudes towards poverty and socio-economic status
- Discuss answers

Method of Evaluation:

- Formative assessment of student learning skills (teamwork)



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Lesson 2: Poverty and Social Inequality Internet Scavenger Hunt (150 minutes, two 75 minute periods)

Lesson Objective: Using the internet, students will acquire fundamental knowledge of the issues that relate to, or are induced by, poverty. This lesson will provide insight so that each student will be able to discuss, with some confidence, background knowledge and information about poverty.

Resources Required:

- Computer lab, internet access
- Classroom bulletin board, poster paper/cue cards, markers
- **Appendix B:**
 1. Teacher Reference Information: Defining Poverty
 2. Bulletin Board Template
 3. Guided Student Internet Scavenger Hunt
 - a. Scavenger Hunt Websites
 - b. Scavenger Hunt Questions

Introductory Activity: (20 minutes)

This lesson will begin by a teacher-lead class discussion/brainstorm regarding the definition of poverty.

- Prior to class, teacher will post a web outline on a class bulletin board (Appendix B-2).
- Teacher will direct students' attention to the definitions bubble on the web.
- Three proposed definitions (LICOs, LIM, MBM) are presented by the teacher (see Appendix B-1).
- Teacher will also facilitate a discussion about which organization (e.g. government) subscribe to each definition, and why.

Development Strategies: (55 minutes)

- Divide class into groups of 4 or 5. Assign each group a topic to research in the computer lab. Topics include:
 1. Prevalence of poverty in Canada
 2. Impact of poverty on children
 3. Impact of poverty on gender
 4. Impact of poverty on elderly
 5. Homelessness
- Distribute handout (Appendix B-3) which will provide guidelines and search expectations

Note: students will find a *variety* of information on the internet. The bulletin board web should reflect *their* results.

Concluding Activity:

- Each group is responsible for bringing search results to class the following day.

Method of Evaluation:

- Formative assessment of research and inquiry skills



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Lesson 3: Learning about Poverty Through the Media (75 minute period)

Lesson Objective: The goal of this lesson is to develop students' knowledge of the issues that have an influence on the cycle of poverty and those that are affected by it. Students will be developing this knowledge through readings – newspaper and magazine articles - and an application activity.

Resources Required:

- The Poverty Cycle diagram by Christine Preston (http://scansw.com.au/pages/equality/preston_equal.html)
- 4-5 media articles on poverty related to course topics (i.e. homelessness, child-poverty, welfare system, aboriginal poverty, etc.)

Introductory Activity: (5 minutes)

This lesson will begin by dividing students into learning groups of four or five members. Each student is given a set of four brief news articles and the cycle of poverty diagram.

Development Strategies: (55 minutes)

- As a small group, students are asked to examine and discuss the “Poverty Cycle” diagram proposed by Christine Preston (1996).
- Each individual student is asked to choose one article from their package to read, highlight and make margin notes. Every student must have a different article.
- Once all students have finished reading their articles, each student is asked to present and discuss the information provided in their article. The discussion should focus on the following:
 1. How does the article's information apply to the “Poverty Cycle”? (Students can expand the diagram by adding *new* point form information).
 2. How can the article's information be used to suggest possible points of intervention to the “Poverty Cycle”? (Students can use different symbols to illustrate possible points of intervention).
 3. How can the article's information be used to assess personal (individual) and societal responsibilities in the face of poverty?

Concluding Activity: (15 minutes)

- Each individual is responsible for recording and adding to the “Poverty Cycle” diagram and being aware of the information included in all four articles.
- Depending on time, teacher may facilitate full discussion of issues raised by students.
- **HOMEWORK:** For the following day, each student is responsible for bringing in lyrics to a song specifically dealing with an issue(s) discussed in class (e.g. poverty, classism, social inequality, etc.) If possible, students are encouraged to bring in a copy of the actual song.

Method of Evaluation:

Formative assessment of student learning skills (teamwork)



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Lesson 4: Awareness of Poverty Issues Through Music (75 minute period)

Lesson Objective: The goal of this lesson is to critically examine music and lyrics that illustrate issues of social inequality and poverty. Students will be able to understand the use of musical lyrics, as used by artists, to create awareness about social issues.

Resources Required:

- CD Player
- **Appendix C:**
 1. Music Lyrics Question Sheet
 2. Unit Summative Assignment & Rubric
 3. Assignment Choice Board

Introductory Activity: (5 minutes)

Teacher plays a song as students enter the class. The chosen song will be about an issue related to unit content (e.g. *Coat of Many Colours* –Dolly Parton, *In the Ghetto* – Elvis Presley, *Fast Car*- Tracy Chapman).

Development Strategies: (50 minutes)

1. Teacher discusses the specific song lyrics in relation to the topics outlined on the web (from Lesson 2)
2. Each student will be given time to read over song lyrics and analyse them according to the following questions in Appendix C-1.
3. Teacher then encourages students to partner and discuss findings
4. Teacher asks individual students to share their lyrics and findings with the class as a whole
5. Teacher guides further discussion of lyrics in reference to the web (created during lesson two) and news articles (studied in lesson three)

Concluding Activity: (20 minutes)

- Teacher distributes a copy of the unit's summative evaluation (Appendix C-2 Unit Summative Rubric and Appendix C-3 Assignment Choice Board)
- Teacher discusses assignment objectives and expectations
- Students are given the option of working individually or in pairs
- Students will use the remainder of the period to do a preliminary brainstorm for the assignment.

Method of Evaluation:

Formative evaluation of initiative learning skill (homework completion).

Follow-Up Ideas:

The following lesson will give students the opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding of social inequality and poverty issues in a summative evaluation. Students will be required to create a *case-study* profile that details a particular individual or family living in poverty.



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Lesson 5: Poverty and Social Inequality Case Study Analysis (75 minute period)

Lesson Objective: The goal of this lesson is to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the many issues that surround poverty and social inequality.

Introductory Activity: (10 minutes)

Brainstorm approaches to creating a final product that incorporates various poverty terms and concepts.

Development Strategies: (64 minutes)

Students will be given the remainder of the period to work on assignment and consult with teacher.

Method of Evaluation:

Summative evaluation based on rubric provided.

Appendices

- Appendix A-1: Social Stratification Role Play
- Appendix A-2: Poverty & Social Inequality: Key Terminology
- Appendix A-3: Poverty & Social Inequality: True/False? (Quiz)
- Appendix B-1: Teacher Reference Information: Defining Poverty
- Appendix B-2: Bulletin Board Template
- Appendix B-3: Guided Student Internet Scavenger Hunt
- Appendix C-1: Music Lyrics Question Sheet
- Appendix C-2: Unit Summative Assignment & rubric
- Appendix C-3: Assignment Choice Board

Other Possible Course Applications

- HSP 3C ~ Introduction to Psychology, Sociology & Anthropology
- HSB 4M ~ Challenge and Change in Society
- HHS 4M ~ Individuals and Families in a Diverse Society
- HPW 3C ~ Living and Working with Children
- HIR 3C ~ Managing Personal and Family Resources
- HPC 3O ~ Parenting
- CHY 4U ~ World History: The West and the World
- CGW 4U ~ Canadian World Issues: A Geographic Analysis
- CIC 3E ~ Making Economic Choices
- CIA 4U ~ Analysing Economic Choices
- CIE 3M ~ The Individual and The Economy