

What Kind of World...?

Do you think your grade 4 to 9 students should know more about global issues?

Running in Edmonton until 2015, What Kind of World...? (WKOW) was an educational program designed to teach youth in elementary and junior high schools about the United Nations system and international issues from a Canadian perspective. It draws links between local and global issues, and highlights the role of Canada in the UN. WKOW has been developed and implemented by the United Nations Association in Canada (UNA-Canada) with the generous assistance of the [Canadian International Development Agency \(now Global Affairs Canada\)](#).

Program Goals and Objectives

The goal and objectives of the program are to use innovative educational activities to increase awareness of global issues and to cultivate critical and proactive approach among youth towards finding solutions; as well as to increase understanding of the UN and of Canada's role on the international arena.

Program Structure

The program consists of three main elements:

1. Three one-hour lessons for youth, each centered on a theme specific to the UN.
2. Sessions to train teachers and volunteers to facilitate these lessons.
3. A comprehensive Facilitator's Package for teachers and volunteers, consisting of lessons, background information, and curriculum connections.

Program Tools

The Facilitator's Package is a one-stop resource, developed by the United Nations Association in Canada, that enables educators and trained volunteers to deliver the WKOW Program.

The lessons could be delivered by an educator or through a trained volunteer. UNA-Canada has trained a group of local volunteers to help deliver the workshops in Edmonton-area schools. These enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers are able to visit the classroom upon request to deliver any or all of the lessons.

Program Curriculum Connections

Alberta Provincial Curriculum links to the What Kind of World...? Program

In Grade 5, the What Kind of World...? workshops contain relevant materials to meet several objectives under Topic A – “Canada: Its Geography and People,” and Topic C – “Canada's Links with Other Countries.” In Grade 6, the workshops assist in meeting several of the objectives of Topic A – “Local Government” and Topic C – “China: A Pacific Rim Nation.” In Grade 7, the workshops meet several of the objectives under Topic A – “Culture” and Topic B – “Cultural Transition.” In Grade 8, the workshops fit into all three topics under the “History and Geography of the Western Hemisphere” theme.

Specifically, the workshops meet the following knowledge, skill and attitude objectives (from the Alberta Social Studies Curriculum (1989)):

Grade 5

- understanding the differences among continents and countries
- demonstrating respect for the rights and opinions of others
- cooperating and compromising to solve group problems
- appreciating how the environment affects the way Canadians live and how an individual can affect the environment
- participating in a small group activity by following established rules
- appreciating the benefits derived from interactions with other countries

Grade 6

- understanding the differences between rights and responsibilities
- developing respect for the opinions and rights of others and responsibility for one's own actions
- developing objectivity by examining one's own ideas about what is a better way of meeting basic needs
- developing empathy for the problems faced in meeting one's needs

Grade 7

- learning how to communicate with others in a variety of settings
- demonstrating a respect for the rights, needs, opinions and concerns of self and others
- demonstrating an appreciation of the need for cooperation in group work and community life
- developing a willingness to consider opinions and interpretation different from one's own
- developing a sensitivity to the customs and beliefs of cultural groups other than one's own

Grade 8

- developing an appreciation for the consequences of people's interaction with their environment
- developing an appreciation of interdependence as a common feature of life
- demonstrating a willingness to cooperate and work with others
- developing a critical stance towards the decision-making process
- developing an appreciation for the way which knowledge of the past helps in understanding the present and the future
- developing an appreciation of the contributions of individuals, groups and events to the development of Canada
- accepting the responsibility of the individual in the global community
- developing a respect and tolerance for the rights, needs, opinions and concerns of others