When we seek to infuse global citizenship into our teaching we invariably encounter rich opportunities to explore issues of social (in)justice in both local and global contexts. Indeed, when students are provided with the tools to analyze the social impacts of globalization—including, for example, the intensification of economic interconnectedness, the increased migration of peoples, and the revolution in the use of information technology—they often discover that both the human relationships upon which these changes are dependent and the patterns they reinforce are highly unequal (Klein, 2000). Yet many teachers remain hesitant to teach students how to challenge inequities because they lack either knowledge or confidence about “what to do next” once such problematic conclusions are articulated.

When asked to identify barriers they face integrating equity and human rights issues into their daily curriculum, teachers frequently cite a lack of confidence and support (Bell, et al, 1997; Evans, 2003:36). They fear they will be criticized by school and school board authorities for lacking balance if they encourage students to acknowledge that significant degrees of social, economic, and political inequality actually do exist both in their own communities and internationally. For a variety of reasons, beginning and newer teachers, in particular, often identify uncertainty about how to defend as responsible the posing of controversial issues from social justice perspectives. For example, adding to an already well-documented body of research on the fear and resistance of many teachers to equity education, Wane (2003) notes that student teachers often “perceive anti-racist approaches as risky, as something volatile, to be avoided all together.” In our experience as equity-minded educators, an important strategy for surmounting these barriers is the thoughtful combination of human rights-focused teaching with an explicit emphasis on the development of critical inquiry skills. (See also Clark, 1997, p. 272.)

Both new and more experienced educators with whom we have worked have found a relatively formal human rights-focused framework to be very useful for focusing and deepening classroom discussions of social justice themes and helping students to think critically and creatively about a fair and just world (see also Pike & Selby, 1988, pp. 49-50). Such a framework has usually included a careful examination of key international and national human rights documents, which provide vital historical and comparative contexts (Fountain, 1995, p. 149; Misgeld, 1996, p. 17). The inquiry works best, however, when teachers begin by helping students first to understand and explore the concept of human rights (different rights, what are they, what do they mean), and subsequently encourage them to apply these concepts to compelling local and global issues.
Since human rights have not been enforced “equally” or “justly” around the world, students also need to be given clear information on the necessity “for a determined and energetic pursuit of the implementation of human rights” (Misgeld, 1996, p. 17) if they are to become a reality for all human beings. Teachers should draw connections from the international to the school community through stories focused on young people and their own experiences (Fountain, 1995, p. 149). Equity and human rights issues presented through inquiry are also a natural outgrowth and complement to the creation of an inclusive classroom environment (Adams, 1997, pp. 42-43).

A caveat. When human rights challenges are presented as a focus and concern primarily in other parts of the world but not Canada, the United States, or Western Europe, problematic stereotypes about “the West and the rest,” “enlightened versus backward,” “free versus oppressed,” and so on (O’Sullivan, 1999, pp. 152-153), are easily reinforced. That assumption is challenged explicitly in this chapter by the incorporation of stories about young people from North America and Western Europe confronting social injustice with the existing stories about human rights violations in the global south. It is further challenged in this chapter through the critical examination of Canada’s immigration and refugee policy in the post-September 11th world, one in which human rights and social justice have taken a back seat to issues of “national security” and the “war on terrorism.”

Strategy 1: Children’s Rights as Human Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Reflections on the Strategy Applied

This strategy was applied in two fairly different academically focused high schools: a small, private/independent all-girls school, with a relatively ethnically and socio-economically homogeneous student body; and a large urban “collegiate” with a socio-economically diverse, multi-racial, multi-cultural student population.

Both teachers who participated in the field application sought to integrate this strategy into programs and courses that emphasized literacy and language development.

The teacher in the smaller school was attracted to this focus and strategy for a number of reasons. She believed that (1) literacy skills can be developed using a wide variety of resources; (2) the lesson plans allow students to develop computer literacy; (3) the strategy encourages critical thinking; and (4) the strategy fit very well with our theme of study this term: politics, media, and society.

The teacher in the larger school developed the activities. She was interested in using them with her English as a Second Language (ESL) students because of the opportunity it gave her class to integrate a more formal study of human rights with a reading of Michele Marineau’s *The Road to Chlifa*. The novel study encouraged students to examine the role
of memories in the acculturation process of new Canadians. Exploring the themes of the novel supported the human rights enquiry because the book helps students to understand the global reality that very young people often are drawn into conflict. Students learn that young people [in this case in the middle East] experience daily threats to their basic needs, shelter, security, freedom to associate, esteem, and the right to make decisions for themselves and their loved ones. In short, the book asks students to empathize with children who are victims of war.

Fairly basic and somewhat predictable technical challenges arose for both teachers during the implementation of this strategy. In the larger school, for example, it was difficult to schedule a computer lab for the class to use at a convenient time. And at the smaller school, one of the web sites selected for study was unavailable when the students were attempting to visit it. However, there were also some other significant and unanticipated technical difficulties, such as the following:

[The] fact that [many] schools disable the sound capability of most computers means that [in the activity that includes audio] when students are supposed to listen to stories, students lose the writer's intended impact of immediately hearing children tell their own stories in their own languages. This consequence for the ESL classroom also means that the intended objective of students having their home languages validated and promoted was somewhat dampened. In such cases, students could always be instructed to re-view the web sites on their home computers; however, 'the teachable moment' should be with the classroom teacher. (ESL teacher at the larger school)

For the teacher at the smaller school, a central feature of the strategy was seen as both positive and demanding:

An interesting aspect of these lesson plans is that they are very open-ended. It seems that this is both the strength and, at times, the challenge of facilitating these strategies. There was no set goal or concrete series of concepts to “arrive at.” As a class, we all continued to pose questions and wonder about issues relating to human rights. We did not experience a full sense of closure with the activities, or a sense of “arriving” at a point of full comprehension of the dimensions of the issue. It felt more like a true beginning; the sense of being a novice fumbling with the ideas confronted by the students.

Both teachers reported that the activities of the strategy outlined met all learning expectations extremely well. For the teacher in the smaller school, the sense of success was experienced through the questions posed and the comments made by her students.

Their engagement with the issues was clear. Many did not realize that there are universal human rights that apply directly to them. More shocking was their realization that many children in the world do not experience the same level of
protection that they experience in regard to their rights. I knew that the lessons were successful when their geography teacher told me about an encounter she shared in her class with these same students while they were watching a film about political protest. She informed me that the students were making clear connections between what they were seeing on film and their understanding of human rights. They were able to name human rights violations with precision and clarity following these lessons.

In the larger school, the success of the activities spurred a number of further development activities/extensions that also served to enrich broader school life. For example, students were asked to study the posters that the UDHR (illustrated version) posted in order to understand the relationship between the metaphorical/symbolic graphic illustration with the human right being depicted. Students were instructed to evaluate the graphics provided on the UN web site with only one criterion—how comprehensible are the symbols/metaphors to an international community of web users? Students then chose one right from the UDHR to illustrate themselves with graphic representations that they thought would be universally recognized. Their finished posters were displayed in a prominent spot for the school community.

While the field applications of the strategy were successful overall, it’s not yet clear whether the sequencing of the activities is ideal. In particular, although the strategy includes a “Taking the Human Rights Temperature of Our School” activity, students seem to need more support than is offered to draw parallels and see relationships. The students’ ability to transfer the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention of Children’s Rights and make links with their own immediate school environment would likely benefit from reworking and re-emphasis. Perhaps it would be better to rearrange activity phases to start with the immediate community.

Both teachers were very thoughtful about what might make this strategy work even better and offered some theoretical and practical cautions/suggestions for others who would choose to use this or a similar strategy:

1. [Next time], I would try to really set the context for discussing and exploring human rights in a powerful way. Perhaps this could be achieved by showing a film that explores situations where human rights are not being protected, or by focusing more on their lived experience and sense of personal empowerment and connecting this to the issue of rights. I like how the activity at the end (“Taking the Human Rights Temperature of Your School”) explored this dimension; perhaps a modified version of this could be used at the beginning to help set the context more clearly for students.

2. Students comprehend and internalize more of the objective concepts if they are actively asked to create a product that shows their understanding. Their UDHR posters, the graphic charts they generated after completing the Taking the Human Rights Temperature of Your School survey, the provided organizers for recording
information from the web sites, all were necessary for students to keep track of a deluge of new materials and ideas.

3. It would be helpful if students had more background knowledge of the countries examined in “The Whole Picture: What’s Missing?” The students had many questions about human rights in the countries used in the exercises that went beyond what the web site could provide. It would be worthwhile to come to class with more information on these countries so students could explore their interest more fully.

4. Teachers need to check to make sure the computer labs in their schools allow students to download the browsers or players necessary to view cartoons and otherwise make full use of the activities—and/or be prepared with other “back-up” strategies. It might be helpful also to have some specific alternative web sites that students could visit in the event of suggested sites not being available.

**Learning Expectations**


- Analyze ways in which human rights have been upheld and/or restricted in Canadian society (e.g., homelessness, environment) and in different parts of the world.

- Describe ways citizens are involved in responding to issues in which contrasting value systems, multiple perspectives, and differing civic purposes co-exist, and determine their own sense of responsibility in relation to these opportunities for involvement.

- Use computer-based systems effectively to organize information for research and report preparation.

**You Will Need**

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Cue cards each individually listing push factors for population movement

**Access to the following support resources:**

⇒ [www.unicef.org/voy/learning/whole/wh1a.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/learning/whole/wh1a.html)

⇒ “Voices of Youth: The Whole Picture” – Interactive Web site- Children’s Rights


⇒ “Voices of Youth: Identity Puzzle” – Interactive Web site- Children’s Rights

⇒ [www.unicef.org/crcartoons/](http://www.unicef.org/crcartoons/)

⇒ “Cartoons for Children’s Rights”

United Nations Special Session on Children Home Page: A World Fit For us
⇒ http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/childrensrights/worldnewsround/index.shtml
“Children” Report on Children”
⇒ http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/cur.html
United Nations Cyber School Bus: Curriculum
⇒ http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/index.asp
⇒ Human Rights in Action: Interactive Version of the UNDHR
⇒ http://cbc.ca/news/indepth/targetterrorism/people/
⇒ “Around the World: How Life Has Changed”
⇒ http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plain.asp
⇒ Plain language version of the UDHR
⇒ http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/child.asp
⇒ Declaration of the Rights of the Child
⇒ http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plainchild.asp
⇒ Plain Language Declaration of the Rights of the Child

Steps at a Glance
Part A: What Makes Up Human Rights?
Step 1
- Model a chart for students regarding what they think Canada’s attitudes are on human rights.
- Guide students with basic 5W questions.

Step 2
- Begin and record a discussion on the relationship between quality of life and human rights.

Step 3
- Explain the term “human rights” by using the Information Sheet, reproduced below.

Human Rights
(Information Sheet)

Q. What are human rights?
A. Human rights are the rights a person has simply because he or she is a human being.
- All persons hold human rights equally, universally, and forever.
- Human rights are inalienable: you cannot lose those rights any more than you can stop being human.
- Human rights are indivisible: you cannot be denied a right because it is “less important” or “non-essential”.

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Human rights are interdependent: all human rights are part of a complementary framework. For example, your ability to participate in your government is directly affected by your right to express yourself, to get an education, and even obtain the necessities of life.

Another definition for human rights is: **those basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity. To violate someone’s human rights is to treat that person as though she or he were not a human being. To advocate human rights is to demand that the human dignity of all people be respected.**

In claiming these human rights, everyone also accepts the responsibility not to infringe on the rights of others and to support those whose rights are abused or denied.

**Human Rights as Inspiration and Empowerment**

Human rights are both inspirational and practical. Human rights principles hold up the vision of a free, just, and peaceful world, and set minimum standards for how individuals and institutions everywhere should treat people. Human rights also empower people with a framework for action when those minimum standards are not met, for people still have human rights even if the laws or those in power do not recognize or protect them.

We experience our human rights everyday in Canada when we worship according to our beliefs, or choose not to worship at all; when we debate and criticize government policies; when we join a trade union; when we travel to other parts of the country or overseas. Although we usually take these actions for granted, people both here and in other countries do not enjoy all these liberties equally. Human rights violations occur everyday in this country when a parent abuses a child, when a family is homeless, when a person steals from another.

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

Rights for all members of the human family were first articulated in the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Following the horrific experiences of the Holocaust and World War II, and amid the grinding poverty of much of the world’s population, many people sought to create a document that would capture the hopes, aspirations, and protections to which every persons in the world was entitled, and ensure that the future of humankind would be different.

The 30 articles of the Declaration together form a comprehensive statement covering economic, social, cultural, political, and civil rights. The document is both universal (it applies to people everywhere) and indivisible (all rights are equally important to the full realization of one’s humanity). A declaration, however, is not a treaty and lacks any enforcement provisions. Rather it is a statement of intent, a set of principles to which the United Nations member states commit themselves in an effort to provide all people a life of human dignity.

Over the past 50 years, the UDHR has acquired the status of customary international law because most states treat it as though it were law. However, governments have not
applied this customary law equally. Socialist and communist countries of Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia have emphasized social welfare rights, such as education, jobs, and health care, but have often limited the political rights of their citizens.

In many countries of North America and Western Europe, governments have focused on political and civil rights and have advocated strongly against regimes or governments in other countries that torture, deny religious freedom, or persecute minorities. On the other hand, human rights issues such as unequal access to health care or legal assistance, homelessness, environmental pollution, child poverty, racism, barriers to workplaces, lack of affordable housing, hunger (food banks), and social and economic concerns that affect groups in our society such as some of Canada’s First Nations remain ineffectively addressed problems. At times, it must seem that some governments care more for the state of human rights in other countries than their own.

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**Step 4**
- Ask students to identify from the Human Rights Information Sheet the terms they think describe general categories of human rights: economic, social, cultural, political, civil, social welfare, etc.

**Step 5**
- Assist students in creating an organizer of these general categories of rights so that it resembles a BINGO card in which they will classify each article from the UDHR as read aloud.

**Step 6**

**Step 7**
- Ask students in groups/teams of nine to take turns reading aloud the Articles of the UDHR for their fellow group members to enter under a heading.

**Step 8**
- Prompt students to consider needs that are often not guaranteed in our society, thereby creating basic inequality as identified in the Information Sheet: homelessness, poverty, unequal opportunity, pollution, etc.
- Instruct students to complete the definition on “What Are Human Rights?” (Activity Sheet), reproduced on the next page.
What Are Human Rights?
(Activity Sheet)

Make up questions using the information provided in class.
Ask a partner for his or her answers.

- What________________________________________________________?
- Who________________________________________________________?
- Where_______________________________________________________?
- When_______________________________________________________?
- How________________________________________________________?

With your class and teacher, complete the organizer below: WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?
Part B: What Do Children Want and Need in Their Lives?

Step 1:

- In the computer lab, distribute “What Do Children Want and Need in Their Lives?” (Activity Sheet).

- Instruct students to go to [www.unicef.org/voy/learning/whole/wh1a.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/learning/whole/wh1a.html) to complete the activity “The Whole Picture: What’s Missing?”

- After they complete this chart, ask if they can see any aspects of human rights that they forgot to include in their definition of human rights (Part A). What is missing? Invite them to add these aspects to their organizer “What Are Human Rights.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In what country was this photo taken?</th>
<th>What are the children doing? Write a short description.</th>
<th>“What Is Missing?”- What aspect of human rights seems to be missing in these children’s lives?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Thailand</td>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>Vaccinations-shots against sickness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>*A young _____ with a baby smiles because ____________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bosnia</td>
<td>*A little girl stands beside a soldier’s rifle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Do Children Want and Need in their Lives?
(Activity Sheet)

To complete the organizer below, you will need to go to the web site “The Whole Picture: What’s Missing”: [www.unicef.org/voy/learning/whole/wh1a.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/learning/whole/wh1a.html).
**Step 2**
- Ask them to verify the definition that they have completed for human rights (Part A) for any element that they overlooked. These may include vaccinations, landmine education, access to energy, nutrition, peace, gender equity.

**Step 3**
- Guide students to focus on the issues presented in the pictures of the web site as specific examples of human rights that all people should have: health, safety, education, etc.

**Part C: What Rights Should Children Have?**

**Step 1**
- Group students into nine groups to correspond to the number of pages of cartoons listed at the web site. Direct students to web site: http://www.unicef.org/crcartoons/ and have students click on “Cartoons List,” a button in the left margin.

**Step 2**
- Focus student groups on the question: What rights should children have?

**Step 3**
- Instruct the groups to compile and record the children’s rights illustrated while they view the site, noting in particular the relevance of the illustrations/animation images to their understanding of the Children’s Rights article, their own experiences, and to the lives of children from other local, national, and international communities.

**Part D: What Kind of World Is Fit for Us?**

**Step 1**
- Direct students to the website or distribute copies of “A World Fit for Us” (from the web site): http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/documentation/childrens-statement.htm

**Step 2:**
- Instruct students to complete “My Community Needs” (Activity Sheet), reproduced on the following page.
My Community Needs
(Activity Sheet)

Work in groups and record your answers to the following questions:

1. What human rights issues/ problems do the children in your country of origin face?

2. What human rights issues/ problems do the children in your community in Canada face?

3. What do you and your peers need for all human/ children’s rights to be satisfactorily met?

4. What does your community need to immediately solve local human/ children’s rights issues for you and your peers?
Step 3
- Refer students to the following web sites:
  - www.unicef.org/voy/misc/chforum.html;
  - www.unicef.org/voy/en/meeting/gir/girhome.html;
  - www.unicef.org/idpuzzle/index.html;

Step 4
- Lead students to speculate on the Canadian government’s reaction to human rights abuses in the international community. Use the same chart format as in the initial brainstorming session.

Step 5
- Either redirect students to http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/index.asp to view an Interactive Version of the UDHR, or to the plain language version available at http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plain.asp.

Step 6
- In pairs, ask students to compare the articles included in the UDHR and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child using Venn diagrams. (The latter is available at http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/child.asp. A plain language version is available at http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plainchild.asp.

Part E: What Does the World of Children Look Like?
Step 1

Step 2
- Ask students to compare their own experiences with regard to this/these specific right(s) to those of the child of the different country; and write journal responses about their feelings and the actions they think should be taken.

Part F: What Is the Human Rights Temperature at Our School?
Step 1
- Refocus students on their own local situation.
- Distribute “Taking the Human Rights Temperature of Your School” (Activity Sheet) and support students in completing it. It is reproduced below.
Taking the Human Rights Temperature of Your School
(Activity Sheet)

1. **Is your current school environment periodically assessed with the help of staff, students, parents, and community members?**

   Are people knowledgeable about equity (fair treatment) and human rights issues?

   Does the curriculum recognize and affirm the life experience of all students, regardless of gender, place of origin, religion, ethnicity and race, cultural and linguistic background, social and economic status, sexual orientation, age and ability/disability?

   Is there graffiti in your school that puts people down—e.g., that is sexist, racist, religiously intolerant, homophobic?

   Do students get harassed at your school?

   Are there places where people feel unwelcome—e.g., parts of the school where females feel unsafe or where students of colour feel uncomfortable?

2. **Is information on human rights readily available?**

   Are students and staff trained on your school board’s equity and human rights policies?

   Is the staff encouraged to attend equity and human rights workshops and share with the rest of the school?

   Are copies of your school board’s equity policy and human rights policy available in your school?

   Is information available regarding equity and human rights issues through teaching and learning resources such as posters, brochures, books, and videos?

3. **Is your school culture welcoming and supportive of diversity?**

   Is the school accessible to people with disabilities?

   Do all students enjoy the equal right to participate in all curricular and extra-curricular activities, regardless of their socio-economic status?

   Is participation encouraged in events such as African Heritage Month, Asian Heritage Month, International Women’s Day, Mayworks, and Pride Week?

   Do equity and human rights issues play a role in school assemblies and meetings?

   Are all members of the school community treated with respect and dignity?
4. Are human rights complaints taken seriously and given quick response?

| Is the staff knowledgeable about human rights complaints procedures? |
| For assistance and support do people in your school consult staff in your school board and/or experts in the community who work on equity and human rights issues? |

*Step 2*
- Debrief the activity’s objectives with an ask-answer role-play interview or meeting between a Canadian student and their counterpart from one of the web site’s stories.

*Step 3*
- Such an interview is demonstrated by the model as found in [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/childrensrights/worldnewsround/inclusion.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/childrensrights/worldnewsround/inclusion.shtml)

**Strategy 2: Analyzing Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)**

*Reflections on the Strategy Applied*

Three teachers (including the author of the activities) in three grade 9 (Academic) Canadian Geography classes in a mid-size urban school applied the strategy. The Human Systems unit within which the strategy was situated focuses on issues related to human populations: growth, distribution, density, immigration, and refugees. Students in this multi-ethnic school are drawn from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and approximately half of the students in the classes that participated in the field application were from recent newcomer families to Canada.

The relevance of the material to students' lived experiences and that of their families was key for us in choosing this focus. The teachers’ ongoing interest in immigration and social justice issues also served as a strong motivation. Thus, the impact of fundamental changes made to Canada's Immigration and Refugee Policy by the Canadian Government since September 11th 2001 emerged as a shared interest of the teachers, the teacher educator, and the students. Indeed, one teacher reported that her students found the material “very compelling” and “had burning issues around Canada's … treatment of refugees post 9/11.”

While all three teachers expected the inquiry to be engaging, they were equally eager to have students go beyond their own stories and to consider various perspectives on government policies. One teacher reported that she was intrigued by “the challenge of engaging grade 9 students in critical analysis. …I also wanted to move beyond the dry textbook coverage of immigration and treat it as a political issue.” Another reported,
“This material helped me bring to light some of the discrepancies in Canada's policies and gave the students an opportunity to express concerns, often relating to their own experiences.” Furthermore, the focus on teaching citizenship skills, such as writing a letter to a government official, is important in preparing students for life as responsible and active citizens.

Overall, there were a number of related challenges faced in the design and implementation of the strategy, most notably the issue of the accessibility of the language in the International Convention and Protocol on Refugees. Some students needed extra support in understanding the articles, but these difficulties proved to be surmountable with teacher explanation. The largest challenge came as a result of the intended jigsaw in the activity during the analysis of the points system, the immigrant placement proposal, and the "safe third country" agreement. Due to the conceptual nature of the material, some students struggled with the readings and questions, and were not able to cope without the significant support of their teacher. [The teachers] also faced the challenge of ensuring that students had access to a range of perspectives in the resources.

Overall, the strategy supported students quite well in meeting the learning expectations for the grade 9 Canadian Geography course. (Both the compulsory Ontario Ministry of Education policy document and the suggested Course Profile include an analysis of Canada’s immigration policies.) The learning expectations from the Guiding Dimensions Framework were also met through the strategy. Teachers commented: the strategy “provided students [with] the opportunity to think critically and form important attitudes and perspectives on Canada's immigration and refugee policy.” “It was particularly effective in addressing the issue of bias—most importantly it encouraged students to detect bias themselves.” “The strategy dealt with the learning expectations very well, and then some.” “I would highly recommend using this lesson—it is really amazing to see grade nine students become policy analysts when given the appropriate resources.”

The strategy was redesigned as a result of the feedback given during implementation. Initially, this strategy was designed to include a co-operative jigsaw activity during the analysis of the points system, the immigrant placement proposal, and the “safe third country” agreement. However, as stated above, it was found that this proved to be quite difficult for some students. As such, the jigsaw activity was broken down into three separate sections that incorporated necessary checks for understanding at each step of the process. Further background information and explanation on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the International Convention and Protocol on Refugees would also help to ensure student understanding. As well, a structured outline for writing the letter to the Minister proved to be useful for the final part of the strategy and was therefore incorporated in the final draft.

While implementation of the strategy is reported to be fairly straightforward and highly rewarding at this point, three suggestions for improvement have been offered:
1. “Some added lessons on how to write a good letter, and how to participate in a
debate might be in order, but in general this teaching strategy can be added and
tailored to the particular class involved.”

2. “Perhaps there could be some way to involve the community in some of the
lessons?”

3. “My only advice is not to rush through this lesson—it may take longer than what is
typically allotted to in the course profiles but it is definitely worthwhile.”

**Key Learning Expectations**

- Research recently passed federal legislation about Canada’s Immigration and
  Refugee Protection Act.

- Demonstrate an understanding of its content and the challenges of governing
  societies in which diverse perspectives coexist.

- Rank order objectives of IRPA to understand varied points of views and how
  these perspectives might guide citizen’s actions.

- Assess the potential fairness of the application of these objectives to both
  immigrants and refugees.

- Prepare a letter to the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship which outlines
  your personal position and evidence to support this position.

**You Will Need**

- Colour markers
- Chart paper

**Support Resources**

Black Line Masters (reproduced at the end of this chapter)
BLM 1: Bill C-11 and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)
BLM 2: Writing a Letter
BLM 3: Tips for Writing a Letter
BLM 4: Outline for Writing a Letter

**Articles and On-line Resources/Documents:**

A wide variety of articles and on-line resources should be used in this strategy that reflect
varying perspectives. A few sources of information are identified below.

**Citizenship and Immigration Canada:**

Bill C-11:

Business Immigrants Fact Sheet:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms:
Clark, Campbell. “Ministers back immigrant placement.” The Globe and Mail,
Thursday, October 7, 2002. All.
Integrating Immigrants into the Canadian Workforce, Canadian Labour and Business Centre: http://www.clbc.ca/Fitting_In/
http://www.web.net/~ccr/sept11.htm

Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA):
http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/irpa

International Convention and Protocol on Refugees:
http://www.unhcr.ch/cgiin/texis/vtx/home/+LwwBmeJAlSwwww3wwwwwwxFqzvqXsK69s6mFqa72Zr0gRfZNhFqa72ZR0gRtZQ7ntFqrpGdbnqBzFqmRbZAFqa72ZR0gRfZNDzmxwwwwww1FqhuNlg2/opendoc.pdf

Skilled Workers Fact Sheet:
http://www.ci.gc.ca/english/irpa/fs-skilled.html

Steps at a Glance
Part A: Why Does Canada Have an Immigration and Refugee Policy?
Step 1
• Brainstorm activity with students focusing on the question, “Why does Canada have an immigration and refugee policy?” Inform students that they should think of as many possible ideas as they can and that no judgments will be made. Create a brainstorm web on board or overhead with student responses.

Step 2
• Introductory mini-lecture on board or overhead using note based on BLM 1 Bill C-11 and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) to provide students with context and background.

Step 3
• Introduce diamond-ranking activity to students on board or overhead.
Students will negotiate a diamond-shaped arrangement with the most important statement at the top. Two statements of equal but lesser importance are placed below. On the third level are three statements of moderate importance, followed by two statements of relatively little importance. On the bottom level or lowest level of the diamond is the statement that has the least importance.

**Step 4**
- Students form home groups of three students each.
- Distribute copies of the objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration (*Bill C-11*, see Support Resources). Read through the ten objectives with students and check for understanding, vocabulary, etc.
- Students discuss and rank the ten objectives using the diamond-ranking framework introduced in Step 3 above in order to highlight the most important objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration. Students record their ranking of the objectives (by letter) on chart paper using colour markers and in their own notes.
- Each group provides a rationale (three reasons) for their number one choice and record it on chart paper and in their notebooks.

**Step 5**
- Each group presents their diamond ranking and rationale, and then as a class create a list of the three most important objectives of the IRPA.
- Students record in their notebooks.

**Step 6**
- Distribute copies of the objectives of the IRPA with respect to refugees (*Bill C-11*, see Support Resources). Read through the eight objectives with students and check for understanding, vocabulary, etc.
- Students discuss and rank the eight objectives using the diamond-ranking framework introduced in Step 3 above in order to highlight the most important objectives of the IRPA with respect to refugees.
- Students record their ranking of the objectives (by letter) on chart paper using colour markers and in their own notes.
- Each group provides a rationale (three reasons) for their number one choice and records it on chart paper and in their notebooks.
Step 7
- Each group presents their diamond ranking and rationale, and then as a class create a list of the three most important objectives of the IRPA with respect to refugees.

- Students record in their notebooks.

Part B: Business Immigrants Versus Skilled Workers?
Step 1
- Distribute copies of the Business Immigrants and Skilled Workers Fact Sheets (see Support Resources above).

Step 2
- Working in groups of four, students read the materials and create a chart with three columns that compares business immigrants to skilled workers. Use the following criteria: minimum number of points to be considered as an immigrant; different types of immigrants within each category; socio-economic class (poor, working-class, etc.); and geographic origin/location (developed countries, developing countries, etc.).

Step 3
- Debrief the chart on board or overhead and check for understanding.

Step 4
- Review the three most important objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration from Part A with students.

Step 5
- Ask students to answer the following question in their notes: “Based on the objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration, is it fair that business immigrants require fewer points than skilled workers? Why or why not? Provide three reasons.”

Step 6
- Debrief student responses by asking students to line up along a continuum from left to right, where left is completely fair and right is completely unfair.

- Call on individual students along the continuum to give reasons for their positioning.

- Wrap up class discussion and check for understanding.
**Part C: Immigrant Placement**

**Step 1:**
- Distribute articles with varying perspectives towards the immigrant placement (e.g., *The Globe and Mail* article “Ministers back immigrant placement” [See Support Resources]).

**Step 2**
- Working in groups of four, students read newspaper articles and analyze them using the 5 Ws + H (Who, What, Where, Why, When, and How).

**Step 3**
- Debrief the 5Ws + H and the varying perspectives on board or overhead and check for understanding.

**Step 4**
- Students read the articles and create a T-Chart that compares views that support the immigrant placement proposal (name, title, reasons) views that do not support the immigrant placement proposal (name, title, reasons).

**Step 5:**
- Debrief T-Chart on board or overhead and check for understanding.

**Step 6**
- Review the three most important objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration from Part A with students.

**Step 7**
- Ask students to answer the following question in their notes: “Based on the objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration, to what extent do you believe the immigrant placement proposal is fair? Why or why not? Provide three reasons.”

**Step 8**
- Debrief student responses.
- Call on individual students along the continuum to give reasons for their positioning.
- Discuss the challenges of governing societies in which diverse perspectives co-exist.
- Wrap up class discussion and check for understanding.
Part D: The Refugee Experience

Step 1
- Distribute articles with varying perspectives towards the current refugee experience (e.g., The Canadian Council for Refugees Press Release. *Since September 11 A bad year for refugees in Canada* (see Support Resources).

Step 2:
- Working individually, students read newspaper articles that express varying views towards the Refugee experience. Some of the questions considered include:
  ⇒ What are some of the opportunities/challenges for refugees?
  ⇒ What is the Refugee Appeal Division?
  ⇒ What is the "safe third country" agreement?

Step 3
- Debrief student answers on board or overhead.

Step 4
- Review the three most important objectives of the IRPA with respect to refugees from Part A with students.

Step 5
- Ask students to answer the following question in their notes: “Based on the objectives of the IRPA with respect to refugees, do you think the ‘safe third country’ agreement with the United States fair? Why or why not? Provide three reasons.”

Step 6
- Debrief student responses. Call on individual students along the continuum to give reasons for their positioning. Wrap up class discussion and check for understanding.

Step 7
- Conclude this section of the strategy by a teacher-led class discussion that focuses on the extent to which Canada’s immigration and refugee policy lives up to the core objectives within the IRPA.

- Discuss the challenges of governing societies in which diverse perspectives coexist. Ensure students examine this question based on the points system, the immigrant placement proposal, and the “safe third country” agreement.

Part E: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Step 1
- Distribute copies of Article 15, Part 1 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (see Support Resources).
• Students use this article pertaining to the Equality Rights guaranteed to Canadians under the Charter to compare and contrast both the skilled worker and business immigrant point system.

**Step 2**
• Working in groups of four, students consider the skilled worker and business immigrant point system in the context of Article 15, Part 1 of the Charter.

**Step 3**
• Distribute Article 6, Parts 1 and 2 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (see Support Resources).

• Students use this article pertaining to the Mobility Rights guaranteed to Canadians under the Charter to analyze the immigrant placement proposal.

**Step 4**
• Working in groups of four, students consider the immigrant placement proposal in the context of Article 6, Parts 1 and 2 of the Charter.

**Step 5**
• Distribute copies of Articles 3, 31, 32, and 33 from the *International Convention and Protocol on Refugees* (see Support Resources).

• Review vocabulary with students.

• Students use these articles to consider the “safe third country” agreement in the context of these articles.

**Step 6:**
• Teacher-led four corners activity based on the question, “To what extent does Canada’s new immigration and refugee policy align with Canada’s human rights commitments both here at home and internationally?”

• Students move into four corners based on whether they strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, or disagree.

• Debriefing takes place in which students consider the challenges of governing societies in which diverse perspectives co-exist.

**Part F: Applying What They Have Learned**
**Step 1**
• Students apply what they have learned in an imagined letter their MP or to the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship assignment.
• Distribute BLM 2 to students and read through the task, the criteria of the assignment, and the length of the assignment.

**Step 2**

• Distribute BLM 3 and read through the tips on how to write a letter.

• Ensure student understanding by next distributing a sample letter such as that provided on the Amnesty International web site (see Support Resources).

**Step 3**

• Distribute BLM 4 to students and read through to ensure student understanding of how to construct the letter.

**Step 4**

• Students use class time to work on the first draft of the letter using the Letter Outline.

• Remind students to compose the letter based on the criteria and length introduced in Step 1 above.

**Part G: Extension Activity**

• Have students visit CIDA Youth Zone ([www.cida.gc.ca/youthzone](http://www.cida.gc.ca/youthzone)) to find out more about Child Refugees in different parts of the world. A variety of case studies are provided for students to get a sense of various circumstance child refugees face around the world. International laws to protect refugee children. (e.g., the [United Nations Convention on Refugees](http://www.unhcr.org/unhcr/4521f61a5.html) and the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](http://www.unhcr.org/4422ced71.html)) and other forms of support are described.
Support Resources

Bill C-11 and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)
(Black Line Master 1)

In December 2001, the Government of Canada changed its immigration and refugee policy when it passed Bill C-11 in the House of Commons. The government argued this change was necessary because of three specific reasons:

1. The former policy was outdated.
3. The need to promote immigration for families and skilled workers.

The new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) became law on June 28, 2002. This legislation replaced the former 25-year-old Immigration Act.

According to the Government of Canada, "it recognizes the many contributions that immigrants and refugees make to Canada; encourages workers with flexible skills to choose Canada; and helps families reunite more quickly." The government also claims that the IRPA will be "tough on those who pose a threat to Canadian security while continuing Canada's tradition of providing a safe haven to people who need protection."

Among other things, the IRPA states that it is to be construed and applied in a manner that:

1. Ensures that decisions taken under this Act are consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including its principles of equality and freedom from discrimination and of the equality of English and French as the official languages of Canada;
2. Complies with international human rights instruments to which Canada is signatory, such as the International Convention and Protocol on Refugees.

Writing a Letter
(Black Line Master 2)

Task
You are to write an imaginary letter to your MP or the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration for Canada stating your perspective on Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) in relation to its stated objectives, as well as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the International Convention and Protocol on Refugees.

The purpose of this assignment is to exercise your democratic rights as a citizen in order to offer your opinion (point of view) regarding this important issue.

Criteria
Specifically, the assignment will allow you to reflect upon the learning throughout the activity and in particular require you to reflect upon the key questions facing immigration and refugee policy in Canada today in relation to the stated objectives of this policy and Canada's human rights commitments.

- Does the new points system for Business Immigrants and Skilled Workers in the IRPA live up to the stated objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

- Does Citizenship and Immigration Canada's new policy of requiring new skilled worker immigrants to settle outside of Canada's three major cities live up to the stated objectives of the IRPA with respect to immigration and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

- Does Canada's new policy on refugees live up to the stated objectives enshrined within the IRPA with respect to refugees and Canada's international obligations under the International Convention and Protocol on Refugees?

Length
The length of the letter should be approximately 200-300 words, typed or word-processed and double-spaced (ensure that you save your letter to disk or your hard-drive).
Tips for Writing an Effective Letter  
(Black Line Master 3)

Letter writing can effectively influence politicians to act; they know that if one person takes the time to write a letter, probably at least 100 other people hold the same opinion. The most effective letters are written in your own words. Experience has shown, however, that some techniques tend to be influential in conveying your point of view. Here are a few tips:

1. **Address your letter to your MP or Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.**
2. **Be respectful.** Politicians are more likely to listen to your point if it is not accompanied by abuse.
3. **Tell them something about yourself.** A simple phrase such as “I am a Grade 9 student in Toronto studying Canada's immigration and refugee policy” creates a mental image which brings you and your point alive and off the paper.
4. **Be concise.** Write on only one issue at a time, and clearly state your point early on in the letter. Try to keep the letter to one page.
5. **Request that a particular action be taken.** A request as to what the Canadian government should do about immigration and refugee policy has much more authority and is a better guide to action than a statement that does not ask the government to act.
6. **Aim for the public interest.** Explain why you think your request will benefit the Canadian public as a whole, not simply you and your friends or family.
7. **Get the facts right.** You do not have to have all the facts (much less recite them all), but the ones you put in your letter must be correct. Do not let the fact that you are not an expert prevent you from voicing your opinion, however.
8. **Relax and express yourself naturally.** Remember that this is you expressing what’s on your mind.
9. **Ask for a reply.** The best closing sentence is: “I look forward to receiving your response.”
10. **Sign your letter.** Include your name, address, and phone number.

The common theme here seems to be that the more effort that went into producing the letter, the more respect it will be accorded by the recipient.

**Now get writing!** Remember, after all those pointers, the biggest single impact from a letter is that you have taken the time to send it. The fact that one citizen has put pen (or printer) to paper on a given issue creates a great impression!
Outline for Writing a Letter to your MP or the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
(Black Line Master 4)

Complete the following outline in the space provided.

1. **Introductory Paragraph:** Tell the MP or Minister something about yourself and why you are writing your letter.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. **Introduce your support and/or concern:** In this paragraph you should introduce each one of the points you will be making in the letter. In other words, the issues of the points system, the immigrant placement proposal, and the refugee policies with respect to human rights.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. **The Points System:** Let the Minister know how you feel about the point system that assesses business immigrants and skilled workers.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
4. **The immigrant placement proposal:** In this paragraph you should state your opinion about this proposal.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

5. **Canada's policy on refugees:** Does the "safe third country" agreement live up to the objectives stated within the IRPA and Canada's international human rights obligations under the International conventional and Protocol on Refugees?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

6. **Concluding paragraph:** Thank the MP or Minister for reading your letter. Summarize your support and/or concerns. Ensure that you let the person know you are expecting a response.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Notes

1 More specifically, an adolescent male from Lebanon, Karim, newly reunited with his parents in Montreal, must process his memories of war and personal loss in order to start the acculturation process in his new school, city, and country.

References