

CONNECTING YPI TO THE ONTARIO CIVICS CURRICULUM

In Ontario, YPI is a project most frequently framed within the Grade 10 Civics curriculum. YPI fits well within this structure, directly addressing the third strand (of three strands), Civic Engagement and Action:

In this strand, students will explore ways in which people in different communities express their beliefs and values, voice their positions on issues of civic importance, and contribute to the common good. In addition, students will assess whether the perspectives and contributions of different people are equally valued. Students will also explore the civic contributions of various non-governmental organizations and other groups. In this strand, students will have opportunities to express their own ideas and perspectives and to make informed judgements by planning a course of action relating to a civic issue, event, or development of personal interest.

The overall expectations of the Civic Engagement and Action strand are as follows:

- C1. Civic Contributions:
 - analyse a variety of civic contributions, and ways in which people can contribute to the common good
 - (FOCUS ON: Political Significance; Stability and Change)
- C2. Inclusion and Participation:
 - assess ways in which people express their perspectives on issues of civic importance and how various perspectives, beliefs, and values are recognized and represented in communities in Canada
 - (FOCUS ON: Political Significance; Political Perspective)
- C3. Personal Action on Civic Issues:
 - analyse a civic issue of personal interest and develop a plan of action to address it
 - (FOCUS ON: Political Significance; Objectives and Results)

The following table outlines connections between relevant elements of the Ontario Civics Curriculum and YPI. Content contained in the left column of this table is taken verbatim from the Ontario Civics Curriculum¹.

C1. Civic Contributions – By the end of this course, students will:	Connection to YPI
<p>C1.1 assess the significance, both in Canada and internationally, of the civic contributions of some individuals (e.g., Sean Atleo, Maude Barlow, Mohandas K. Gandhi, Elijah Harper, Craig Kielburger, Martin Luther King, Jr., Cardinal Paul Émile Léger, Stephen Lewis, Nelson Mandela, Aung San Suu Kyi, David Suzuki) and organizations, including NGOs and social enterprises (e.g., Amnesty International, L’Arche Canada, Democracy Watch, Free the Children, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Métis Nation of Ontario, Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, Samara Canada, Spread the Net, SoChange, World Wildlife Federation, Youth in Philanthropy Canada)</p>	<p>Beginning in Part 4 of the YPI curriculum, students begin to look at organizations in their community that deal with the social issues they explored in Parts 2 & 3. Following this introduction, students select a charity to research, and visit, eventually delivering a presentation to their peers about this charity, advocating for why they deserve a grant from YPI.</p>
<p>C1.2 describe a variety of ways in which they could make a civic contribution at the local, national, and/or global level (e.g., by serving on student council or on an organization offering support to students who are being bullied; by reducing the amount of solid waste they generate and by properly disposing of hazardous waste; by volunteering at a food bank, retirement home, hospital, humane society, or recreational facility in the local community; by donating blood; by participating in community clean-up or tree-planting days; by raising funds for a charity or a development NGO; by writing to or speaking with their city or band councillor, MPP, or MP to request action on an issue) Sample questions: “When you brainstormed with other students, what are some ways you identified for making a contribution in the community?”</p>	<p>Students participating in YPI make the civic contribution of educating their peers about a social issue and local social service charity through their presentations. A key element of their presentation is to explain how students used or will use their skills and/or time to do something helpful for the charity. Students are also exposed to variety of organizations and people making civic contributions, modeling examples for students.</p>

¹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/canworld910curr2013.pdf>

<p>Which of these appeal to you? Why?” “Are there food banks and/or community gardens in your community? What are some ways in which you could get involved with them?”</p>	
<p>C1.3 explain how various actions can contribute to the common good at the local, national, and/ or global level (e.g., engaging in a non-violent protest can heighten awareness of an issue and pressure for change; buying fair trade products helps ensure that producers are fairly compensated for the products they produce; the organized boycotting of products can pressure corporations to change irresponsible practices; donating to a development NGO can help improve the lives of people affected by a natural disaster or enhance health care in developing countries; canvassing or fundraising for an organization that works for social justice can raise people’s awareness of issues related to inequity or human rights abuses)</p> <p>Sample questions: “In what ways does using public transit, biking, or carpooling contribute to the common good?” “What are some significant changes in your local community that have been brought about as a result of citizen action?” “What impact can consumers’ choices have on the natural environment?”</p>	<p>Starting in Part 1 of the YPI curriculum, students examine their values, their community’s needs, what contributions they have to offer, and what impact these contributions can have. These ideas are brought to life when students visit charities and meet people whose daily lives are built around contributing to the common good of their communities. The charity visit is often described as a turning point for many students, who become inspired to be advocates for a particular social issue, or to volunteer at the charity they’ve selected, or start a new initiative to tackle a local problem.</p>
<p>C2. Inclusion and Participation – By the end of this course, students will:</p>	<p>Connection to YPI</p>
<p>C2.1 analyse ways in which various beliefs, values, and perspectives are represented in their communities (e.g., with reference to different racial, ethnic, and/or religious groups; people with various political beliefs and/or social values; people from different age groups; men and women; First Nations, Inuit, or Métis people; people in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender [LGBT] communities; environmentalists; people with disabilities; people from different professions and/or economic circumstances; recent immigrants and new Canadians; business people), and assess whether all perspectives are represented or are valued equally</p>	<p>In Part 2 of the YPI curriculum, students begin to explore social issues in their local communities, and groups who are marginalized. In the activity, “The Social Safety Net”, students are asked describe marginalized populations and to identify organizations in their community that exist to serve these people. Gaps and challenges are also explored.</p>

<p>Sample questions: “What are some ways in which various student perspectives are represented in our school? Do you feel like your voice is heard?” “What cultural festivals are celebrated in your community? Whose beliefs and values do they reflect?” “What religious structures are in your community? What do they tell you about respect for diversity in the community?” “Why might some people’s perspectives be valued more than those of others? What are some ways to address this inequity? What action could be taken to ensure that marginalized voices are heard?”</p>	
<p>C2.3 describe various ways in which people can access information about civic matters (e.g., websites of governments, political parties, NGOs, or other groups and/or institutions; social media; meetings organized by elected representatives; newspapers or newscasts), and assess the effectiveness of ways in which individuals can voice their opinions on these matters (e.g., by contacting their elected representatives, being part of a delegation to speak on an issue under consideration by city council, organizing a petition, voting, making a presentation to a commission of inquiry, participating in a political party or interest group; by expressing their views through the media, including social media, or at a town-hall meeting; through court challenges; through art, drama, or music) Sample questions: “What are some ways in which a person can communicate his or her position on an environmental issue?” “What do you think is the most effective way for you to get your ideas heard in our school?” “What criteria might you use to determine the most effective way to voice your position on a social justice issue?”</p>	<p>YPI provides students with an opportunity to investigate a social issue of their choosing through online and active experiential research. Through their presentations, students use YPI as a platform to voice their opinions on the importance of these social issues and they should be tackled in their community.</p>
<p>C3. Personal Action on Civic Issues – By the end of this course, students will:</p>	<p>Connection to YPI</p>
<p>C3.1 analyse a civic issue of personal interest, including how it is viewed by different groups</p>	<p>Beginning in Part 2 of the YPI curriculum, students begin to explore civic issues, and they choose one to</p>

<p>Sample questions: “What current civic issue is important to you? Who are the people and/or organizations involved in this issue? What views do they have on it? Do you think there might be other perspectives on this issue that are not commonly heard? Which level or levels of government would be responsible for addressing this issue?”</p>	<p>focus on for the duration of their YPI project. They choose an organization with whose approach to the issue they identify, for whom to advocate. During presentations, students learn about different approaches to the same issues through exposure to a variety of organizations.</p>
<p>C3.2 propose different courses of action that could be used to address a specific civic issue (e.g., a public awareness campaign, a plan for local action, a campaign to pressure for political action), and assess their merits Sample questions: “When you consider the various courses of action proposed to address this issue, how would you rank them from easiest to most difficult to carry out?” “Which option do you think would have the greatest impact?” “Would you be able to carry out, or participate in, any of these courses of action?”</p>	<p>Through YPI, students are required to investigate and report on the different programs at their chosen organization, and how they each address their social issue of focus. They look at the resources required for each program, and the impact the programs have on their community.</p>
<p>C3.3 develop a plan of action to implement positive change with respect to a specific civic issue, and predict the results of their plan Sample questions: “What is the main goal of your plan? How do you intend to accomplish that goal? What changes do you anticipate will result from specific strategies in your plan?” “Which people, organizations, and/or governments would be most likely to embrace your plan? How might you engage them?”</p>	<p>During YPI presentations, students are required to describe and assess their chosen organization’s plans, programs, strategies, goals, and impacts.</p>
<p>C3.4 develop criteria that could be used to assess the effectiveness of their plan of action if it were implemented Sample questions: “How would you know if your plan were achieving its objectives?” “How would you determine if your plan were making a positive difference?” “How might you respond if things did not go as planned?”</p>	<p>During YPI presentations, students are required to describe the short and long-term impact of their chosen organization’s work in the community. Part 5 of the YPI curriculum is dedicated to investigating the impact and effectiveness of organizations.</p>