

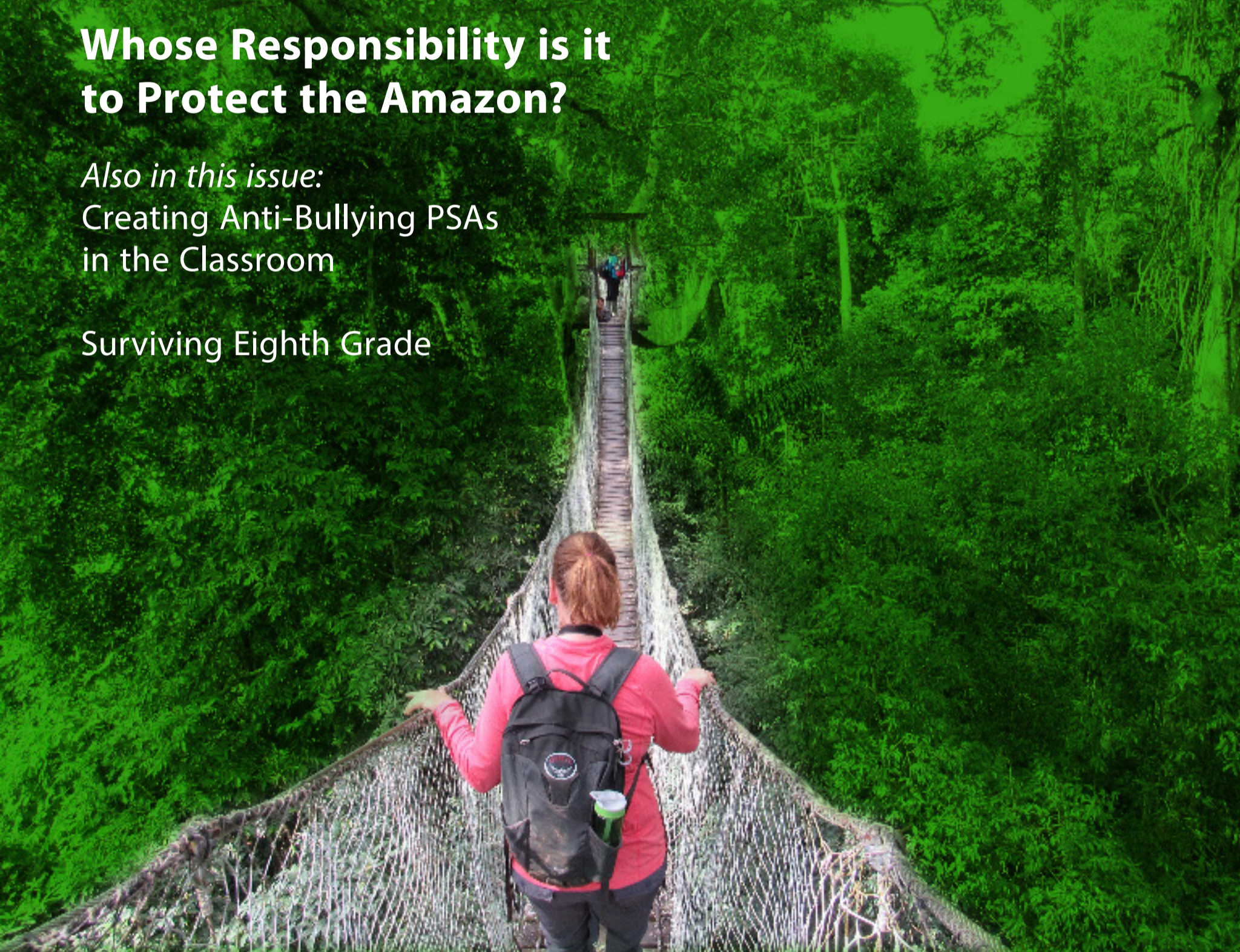


## Whose Responsibility is it to Protect the Amazon?

*Also in this issue:*

Creating Anti-Bullying PSAs  
in the Classroom

Surviving Eighth Grade



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# Whose Responsibility is it to Protect the Amazon Rainforest?

## Using the C3 Framework to Explore Complex Issues

Misty Galloway Tucker

The Amazon Rainforest, often called the “lungs” of our planet, is a wondrous place. It contains a diversity of awe-inspiring plants and animals that is not yet fully understood. The sights and sounds of the rainforest offer an allure of mystery and adventure. But this ecosystem is not just a place of beauty, it has global significance, and with it, a complex set of environmental and human issues.

In the summer of 2017, I visited the Amazon Rainforest in Peru through an Earth Expeditions course run out of Ohio’s Miami University. During the course, I learned firsthand about the complexity of the issues this vital ecosystem is facing. I saw evidence of the devastation caused by illegal gold-mining along the rivers. I walked across black, charred land still smoldering from slash-and-burn techniques, where the canopy of the rainforest had stood tall only days before. But I also worked alongside inspirational local and international teachers to educate students about the value of the land, and the hope of a better day. As educators, we can enlighten and inspire positive change.

Our students are growing up in a world with increasingly complicated challenges. Today’s environmental concerns are not merely scientific; they merge with economics, politics, human rights, and sustainability. As educators, we must prepare our students to be global citizens capable of making informed decisions that not only consider the needs of human beings but also examine environmental impact. We should inspire a generation who can—and will—take part in the creation and application of innovative solutions.

Exploring global environmental concerns, such as threats to the Amazon Rainforest, provides an opportunity for students to make local and global connections, examine critical issues and perspectives of the many stakeholders, and begin to understand the economic and environmental impacts of decisions, both large and small. Designing inquiry units around significant and complex environmental problems helps transform passive class-



Author and teacher Misty Galloway Tucker works with a student who is learning about the value of the local ecosystem in Puerto Moldonado, Peru.

rooms into spaces where students think critically and consider possible outcomes that propel them to take informed action.

I’ve designed this unit that incorporates my experiences in the rainforest for use in classrooms to provide teachers with a structure that engages students as global citizens. This article discusses how and why a teacher might use the C3 Framework to incorporate a meaningful Amazon Rainforest unit into social

**ON THE COVER:** Photos of the Amazon Rainforest in Peru, 2018.  
(Courtesy of Misty Galloway Tucker, pictured at center)

studies. Overall, it touches on the value of inquiry, the importance of using an interdisciplinary approach to teaching global issues, and the power of inspiring agents of change in our classrooms.

## Why Focus on the Amazon Rainforest in Social Studies?

As far back as the 1970s, UNESCO—the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—called for environmental education curricula to contain goals in awareness and attitudes, and to “help learners discover the symptoms and real causes of environmental problems; emphasize the complexity of environmental problems and thus the need to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills....”<sup>1</sup> Forty years later, the problems of the environment have intensified, making the need for a curricular focus on these topics and skills ever more urgent.

The story of the Amazon Rainforest is complicated and compelling. Intact tropical forests can absorb and store large amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, providing an ecosystem service that is crucial to the fight against climate change. With the Amazon being the largest rainforest tract in the world, its billions of trees account for a quarter of the total carbon removed by forests. However, the Amazon’s ability to absorb carbon dioxide has decreased dramatically as its trees have died off at an alarming rate.<sup>2</sup> Climate change is one part of the problem. Other threats to the physical environment include deforestation, road expansion, ranching and agriculture, and illegal gold mining with the use of mercury. Additional factors are government policies, economic growth, and the rights of indigenous people to their natural environment.

The social studies classroom is a place for students to explore the deep interconnectedness of human problems and environmental issues. Teaching about the Amazon rainforest with compelling questions that stimulate students’ critical thinking encourages the development of strategies for change, all while meeting learning standards and inquiry skill outcomes.

## Teaching with the C3 Framework

“Why do we need to know this?” This is a common query often heard echoing through school halls and across disciplines; and while it may sometimes make teachers cringe, we understand its validity and strive to make our lessons meaningful and relevant. Nevertheless, students often remain uncertain of how lessons apply to their lives.

Using questions and curiosity to drive engagement and understanding through the real-life application of content and skills makes learning more relevant to students.<sup>3</sup> While history, civics, geography, and economics are paramount to guiding the learning of social studies, they become more impactful when applied to investigate a complex issue and develop a possible solution. The C3 Framework’s Inquiry Arc offers a structure for teaching students to grapple with meaningful problems, consider possible solutions and perspectives, develop and communicate evidence-based claims, and take action.<sup>4</sup> Building on these skills and tools will help them succeed in our changing world.

## The “Hook”

Grabbing the interest of adolescent learners is key to any successful inquiry. A “hook” (sometimes referred to as an anticipatory set or motivator) should be both captivating and dynamic in order to engage students.<sup>5</sup> For this inquiry, the hook may be as simple as a picture of deforestation or of the devastation caused by illegal mining. It could be an article or a video clip. Spoken word artist Prince Ea’s video clip about climate change and protecting forests, “Dear Future Generations: Sorry,” was a great hook for engaging my eighth-grade students.<sup>6</sup>

Once students are hooked, give them a role-play task, such as being “hired” by an excursion company to design and promote a tour entitled “The Importance of the Amazon Rainforest.” This task should take place even before the introduction of the compelling question. An introductory activity such as this requires students to research information about the rainforest and determine what aspects of the Amazon they deem significant. Students can create a short commercial to promote the tour by using presentation or video software or they can choose to do a live performance. Given their newly acquired background knowledge, have students brainstorm a list of attributes that make the Amazon Rainforest important. The list will likely include general ideas like beauty, plants, and animals, but may also dive deeper into the value of trees and biodiversity. This list is used to lead the class towards a compelling question.

## Dimension 1: The Compelling and Supporting Questions

The development of compelling and supporting questions is the crucial first step. Questions can be developed by the teacher, by students, or a combination of the two. However, students may need a significant amount of support to create strong inquiry

questions. One strategy I've used successfully is the Question Formulation Technique.<sup>7</sup> This tool allows students to develop their questioning skills. Find more information about this strategy at <http://rightquestion.org>.<sup>8</sup> Regardless of who creates it, the compelling question gives structure to the unit. It should be meaningful to students and debatable.<sup>9</sup> Some potential compelling questions about the Amazon Rainforest include:

- Whose responsibility is it to protect the rainforest (local, regional, national, global)?
- Who owns the Amazon Rainforest? Who decides how the land is used?
- Is globalization good for the Amazon Rainforest?
- Should isolated indigenous groups of the Amazon be brought into the mainstream?
- What is the value of the Amazon Rainforest?

Once the compelling question is chosen, the next step is to make specific decisions about the content which will guide your supporting questions. Supporting questions are more concrete. Some supporting questions might be:

- How do our decisions in the United States impact the Amazon Rainforest?
- How does the Amazon Rainforest affect students in the United States?

For this step, I have found using the disciplinary lenses of the C3 Framework (economics, civics, geography, and history) to be a helpful tool for developing questions.<sup>10</sup> My unit focuses on the compelling and supporting questions seen in Table 1.

## Dimension 2: Content through Supporting Questions

Dimension 2 focuses on advancing the inquiry through the lenses of economics, civics, geography, and history. Not all lenses fit in every unit; you can include all of these or narrow the focus to fit the needs of the classroom. Supporting questions provide the scaffolding and help steer students in acquiring disciplinary concepts and skills.<sup>11</sup> I have found that displaying

a question board in the classroom is a useful tool. Having students write their questions and group them by categories such as stakeholders, economics, local or global effects, further allows them to build on their questioning skills. Revisiting the board or adding to it throughout the inquiry allows students to reflect on their learning.

### Grouping Students

As a general rule, when designing a lesson, I consider it vital to give forethought when grouping students. Think about your desired outcome and group students accordingly. One possibility is to create stakeholder groups: indigenous people, local residents, landowners, corporations, the government, U.S./global citizens, and conservationists. This allows each group to focus only on the readings or information that pertains to their group. Alternatively, one could assign students to investigate all perspectives, which would provide a greater challenge and give them a much broader understanding of the issue. Other options include forming groups based on student interest, or forming heterogeneous groups of mixed ability levels.

**Table 1.** Amazon Rainforest Inquiry:  
Compelling and Supporting Questions

Compelling Question	Supporting Questions
Whose responsibility is it to protect the Amazon Rainforest (local, regional, national, global)?	<p><b>Geography</b></p> <p>1. What are threats to the Amazon Rainforest? Why are they occurring?</p> <p><b>Civics</b></p> <p>2. What are the perspectives, powers, and responsibilities of the different stakeholders?</p> <p><b>Geography</b></p> <p>3. How are local people affected by their changing environment?</p> <p><b>Economics</b></p> <p>4. How do our cultural and economic decisions (supply and demand) influence environments and the daily lives of people in distant places?</p> <p><b>Civics</b></p> <p>5. What can we do?</p>

### Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources

While gathering relevant information, students need to develop the skills necessary to evaluate sources for credibility and possible bias.<sup>12</sup> As a part of its digital citizenship curriculum, Commonsense.org has resources to teach students how to navigate the Internet safely and productively. Their information literacy lesson on “Determining High-Quality Sites” for grades 6–8 has a useful checklist for students to help determine the trustworthiness of a website.<sup>13</sup>

For my example unit (Table 1), I have students revisit a single source often to answer several of the supporting questions and add to their understanding of the broader inquiry. This is the beauty of inquiry—it allows students to develop deep

reservoirs of knowledge.<sup>14</sup> The Amazon Rainforest is a rich topic that allows an investigation to go in many directions. The supporting questions drive the research and require students to gather evidence with the resulting purpose of being able to construct an educated answer to the compelling question.

### Dimension 4: Assessing Student Learning and Taking Informed Action

Assessing student learning is an essential part of the education process. However, traditional quizzes are not a natural fit for inquiry. There are many assessment methods that provide teachers with valuable feedback. Assessments are *for* learning, *as* learning, and *of* learning (see Table 2).<sup>15</sup> For being purpose-

## Some Resources for Students

### Scholastic - Rainforest at Risk

[www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3757112](http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3757112)

### Junior Scholastic - South America's Vanishing Rain Forest

[www.thefreelibrary.com/South+America%27s+vanishing+rain+forest%3a+the+Amazon+rain+forest+is...-a0144296832](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/South+America%27s+vanishing+rain+forest%3a+the+Amazon+rain+forest+is...-a0144296832)

### PBS- The Price of Gold: Illegal Gold Mining in the Amazon

[www.pbs.org/wnet/need-to-know/environment/video-the-price-of-gold-illegal-gold-mining-in-the-amazon/11114/](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/need-to-know/environment/video-the-price-of-gold-illegal-gold-mining-in-the-amazon/11114/)

### Amazon Conservation Association Gold Mining Fact Sheet

[www.amazonconservation.org/pdf/gold\\_mining\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.amazonconservation.org/pdf/gold_mining_fact_sheet.pdf)

### Indigenous Rights in the Amazon

[www.pachamama.org/indigenous-rights](http://www.pachamama.org/indigenous-rights)

### National Geographic: Amazon Deforestation and Climate Change

[www.nationalgeographic.org/media/amazon-deforestation-and-climate-change/](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/amazon-deforestation-and-climate-change/)

### The Many Uses of Gold

<https://geology.com/minerals/gold/uses-of-gold.shtml#substitutes>

## Resources for Teachers

### Local and Global Effects of Deforestation in the Amazon Rain Forest

[www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/local-and-global-effects-deforestation-amazon-rain-forest/](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/local-and-global-effects-deforestation-amazon-rain-forest/)

### Taking a Position on Human Activity in the Amazon Rain Forest

[www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/taking-position-human-activity-amazon-rain-forest/](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/taking-position-human-activity-amazon-rain-forest/)

### Exploring the Tradeoffs between Accessing Resources and Protecting the Amazon Rain Forest

[www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/exploring-tradeoffs-between-accessing-resources-and-protecting-amazon-rain-forest/](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/exploring-tradeoffs-between-accessing-resources-and-protecting-amazon-rain-forest/)

### Rainforest Alliance School Curricula

[www.rainforest-alliance.org/curricula](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/curricula)

**Table 2.** Purpose of Assessment

For Learning	As Learning	Of Learning
To help teachers adjust their methods to meet student needs.	To allow students to grapple with ideas or synthesize information.	To allow teachers to assess the results of the unit on student learning.

ful in assessment, I have found this description by Grant, Swan, and Lee to be a helpful reminder of something that we, as teachers, often consider on an intuitive level. Formative checks (*for learning* and *as learning*) allow teachers to assess not only knowledge gained but also if there is a need to address any gaps, skills, or misconceptions. These may be in written form, such as creating cause and effect charts or formatted as a discussion or a gallery walk.

The C3 Framework emphasizes the importance of giving students the opportunity to use effective communication skills to present conclusions (and solutions) and to take action. This opportunity also works well as a summative assessment; students prepare a claim to answer the compelling question based on evidence and reasoning. For example, my students receive an invitation from the teacher that reads:

The International Rainforest Council has invited you to present a report at the next meeting. The issue on the agenda for that meeting is: Whose responsibility is it to protect the rainforest? You will present your claim, supported strongly by specific evidence and reasoning developed throughout your investigation.

Hold the summative performance task in a classroom or try to arrange for a larger community venue. The possibilities are many.

After communicating their findings, the final step of the inquiry is to propel students into the world of becoming makers of change. Globally competent students do more than gain knowledge and understanding; they seek to make a difference in the present, and wait until they “grow up.”<sup>16</sup> Encourage students to choose an action plan during their research. Actions are most meaningful when driven by student choice, either as a class, groups, or individuals. It may be an action as simple as starting a family pledge to buy more sustainable products; educating the school and community on current issues; or digging deeper



Strangler fig on a host tree in the rainforest of the Peruvian Amazon in the Madre de Dios region.

into topics not covered in the unit, such as the issue of palm oil (the production of which plays a key role in deforestation). The more authentic and personal the action is to students, the higher the potential for impact.

## Conclusion

We must all understand that we are living on a planet defined by finite resources and that as global citizens, we must live within these set limits. We have crossed some thresholds already, including atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and the accelerated rate of species extinction. Our planet is approaching the tipping point for other limits, such as freshwater use, land use, and ocean acidification.<sup>17</sup> There is a direct interdependence between understanding these limits and creating a safe and just place for humanity. Humans are living beyond

Earth's capacity, and yet many people are critically deprived of their basic needs.<sup>18</sup>

Social studies is a set of disciplines where science and humanity cross. As social studies educators, it is important to be purposeful in how we teach this interconnectedness. Policies, economy, environmental stresses, and human rights all intertwine and collectively emphasize the need for sustainability.<sup>19</sup> Social studies units designed around topics such as the Amazon Rainforest make the awareness of human impact an interdisciplinary goal. No longer just a science topic, conservation should permeate our culture and become a foundation of how we live and make decisions. As social studies educators, we owe it to our students to help them become the global citizens and changemakers that our world, and their future, desperately needs.

I plan to revisit the Amazon Rainforest someday. I want to close my eyes and hear the symphony of bird calls, so numerous that they are impossible to distinguish. I hope to look at the trees that, at first glance appear still, but on closer inspection contain a diversity of life too abundant to count in one sitting. I have hopes of returning to the rainforest for celebration; a celebration of the positive contributions that current and future generations are making for our planet and humanity. 🌍

#### Notes

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A saddle-back tamarin watches from the trees along the shores of Lake Sandoval, Peru (Photo: Leonard Beck).

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7th Grade Anti-Bullying video Northview Middle School, Mrs. Gaffney's Nest, 2014, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPrJczFhipA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPrJczFhipA)

# Citizenship in Action: Students Create Anti-Bullying Public Service Announcements

Andrea Saltzman Martin, Valerie Ooka Pang, Eric J. Ginsberg, Jennifer M. Pang,  
Luke Duesbery, and Edward R. Dial

Bullying is widespread in our schools. Many students have been bullied either physically, verbally, socially, or online. We, as educators, believe it is important for students to know that they have the power to make a difference in their schools to stop bullying. We know of one teacher who tells students, "The world needs to hear what you have to say, but you must have the courage to say it."

Because students are extremely visual and use digital devices every day, the creation of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) works well for combating bullying and giving voice to student viewpoints. The unit we present in this article can be

used in social studies, civics, literacy, community building, or Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) classes for grades 6–12.

## **Bullying: Defined**

Bullying is one of the most pervasive issues in today's schools.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 25 to 33 percent of students report being bullied at school.<sup>2</sup> The majority of bullying at school occurs during the middle-school years but still more happens out of school. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Education developed a common definition which includes



“unwanted aggressive behavior; observed or perceived power imbalance; and repetition of behaviors or high likelihood of repetition.”<sup>3</sup> The CDC also notes that there are many different types of bullying, such as verbal bullying (teasing, calling someone a name, mocking), cyberbullying (threatening, or sending or posting false rumors using digital devices), social bullying (including disseminating rumors), and physical bullying (pushing, spitting, or taking property and breaking it).

## Why Students Bully and Consequences for Others

Students bully each other for many reasons.<sup>4</sup> Students may be seeking peer acceptance and believe that they look stronger in the eyes of their peers if they bully others whom their classmates have also bullied. In other words, sometimes they bully to be accepted—to belong to their peer group. Some students bully to feel superior. Another motive can be to mask shame or guilt.

Being bullied can leave students feeling inadequate, alone, helpless, and excluded. A study by Side and Johnson found that most teachers and school policies focused on bullying behaviors but did not attend to the subjective feelings that develop in students.<sup>5</sup> In fact, research has shown that over time some teachers become unresponsive to bullying.<sup>6</sup> Many students who are bullied develop a feeling of being different from their peers and may believe that they are somehow to blame for being bullied. Many are not aware that numerous other students are bullied as well. If they knew, they might be more willing to stand up to bullies. Teachers can be proactive by encouraging class dialogue and assisting students in developing various verbal and coalition skills, which lead to building communities based on equality and compassion.

## Social Studies, Citizenship Education, and Bullying

The educational foundation for anti-bullying activities in this article is rooted in the work of John Dewey, Nel Noddings, and Lev Vygotsky.<sup>7</sup> Philosopher and educator John Dewey emphasized the role of schools in the development of citizenship in a democracy. Dewey believed in embedding the teaching of ethical principles throughout all subject areas. Democratic values along with the principles of the Ethic of Care, as developed by Nel Noddings, stressed the importance of developing trusting relationships among citizens and the importance of

ethical behaviors.<sup>8</sup> Finally, Vygotsky believed in the importance of students constructing meaning through their own active-learning experiences and that teachers should integrate social interactions and the sociocultural background of their students into classroom instruction.<sup>9</sup>

We feel it is vital for our students to actively grapple with citizenship issues such as social oppression and identify ways for them to engage in the process of societal change.<sup>10</sup>

Since bullying is a power imbalance between the target and perpetrator, it is often repeated and stands in direct contradiction to good citizenship.<sup>11</sup> Bullying often has roots in racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ableism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and/or language differences.<sup>12</sup>

In the PSA unit that we describe, teachers ask students why bullying is pervasive in schools and society today and help build their capacity to stop the oppression. (See the sidebar on p. 15 for relevant standards that serve as the foundation for this unit.)

## Introduction of the PSA Unit

A Public Service Announcement is often a message that shares a belief, an attitude, or information about a social issue.<sup>13</sup> PSAs can be posters, audio messages, or videos. For this unit, we are presenting ideas about how teachers can guide students in creating an anti-bullying video.

The PSA unit takes between five and seven class sessions to complete. Teachers work collaboratively across various classes to have the students create PSAs, which are then shared among the classes. The handouts in this unit assist students in organizing their thoughts. Handout 1 includes questions that guide student discussions. We suggest groups be comprised of four students. Teachers can begin by sharing the definitions of key concepts such as citizenship and bullying. Then, share with students the purpose and definition of PSAs. One of the best ways to teach learners about the effectiveness of these videos is to show existing anti-bullying PSAs. There are numerous excellent video PSAs on the Internet such as the following:

1. 7th Grade Anti-Bullying Video, Northview Middle School (see photo on p.8), [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPrJczFhipA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPrJczFhipA)
2. Anti-Bullying PSA 1 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4fjIN8fABs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4fjIN8fABs)

*continued on page 11*

# Creating Your Anti-Bullying PSA, General Outline

Names of Group Members \_\_\_\_\_

PSA Elements	Descriptions
<p><b>Title</b> What is the title of your PSA? (Examples: Be a Friend; What is Love?; Silent No More)</p>	
<p><b>Purpose of the PSA</b> What type of bullying is your group addressing? What is the goal of the PSA?</p>	
<p><b>Civic Responsibilities</b> How can the PSA be considered participation in a democracy and the common good? What are the most important values that guide the development of your PSA?</p>	
<p><b>Target Audience</b> Who will watch your PSA?</p>	
<p><b>Questions</b> What questions will you be investigating in order to create the video?</p>	
<p><b>Key Message/Hook/Catch Phrase</b> What short phrase can be repeated throughout the PSA to reinforce your message? (I.e., “Words Hurt!”; “Teachers Care!”; or “Young People Are Inspirational!”)</p>	
<p><b>What is the story that the video tells?</b></p>	
<p><b>Tone/Disposition to be Created</b> How do you want to make your audience feel? (Happy, Sad, Curious, Demanding, etc.)</p>	
<p><b>Music or Song</b> Which song will be used in the background? What are the lyrics?</p>	
<p><b>Quotations</b> Are there any quotes from people you interviewed or documents you researched that you want to include?</p>	
<p><b>Sources</b> What sources are you using? How will you judge their credibility?</p>	
<p><b>Statistical Information</b> Do you want to include statistics? If so, where are you finding the data?</p>	
<p><b>List of Photos, Pictures or other Visuals</b> (only use photos of children if you get parental permission)</p>	

3. Words Hurt

Ad Council and Ohio Commission DCRM (Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=1j6YA03hm4k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1j6YA03hm4k)

4. Anti-Bullying and Being Friends

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdeuivQYnas](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdeuivQYnas)

After students have watched several anti-bullying videos, the teacher can ask critical questions so students can analyze the creative process:

- Can you tell us what the story in the video is about?
- What was the introduction?
- What were the main messages in the video?
- What was the catchy phrase or sentence that was repeated??
- If there was music, how did it make you feel? Did it add to the message?

Please note that in our experience, students enjoy finding the best song or music to include in their PSAs. This can be an important motivator. The music selection is often tied to

a song's lyrics, which can reinforce the overall PSA message.

### Building the PSA Message

After student groups have filled out Handout 1, teachers can use the following questions to help learners summarize their ideas:

1. What are the main ideas or concepts that you will be conveying in the PSA? Is the sequence logical?
2. What type of information is needed to persuade your audience of your message? It is important to build your message with details using statistical data, quotations, and/or examples. You want to make sure that the audience grasps your perspective on the issue.
3. What do you want your audience to do as a result of watching their video?

Handout 2 allows students to record their ideas and develop the most important statements they want to convey in their PSAs.

## Handout 2

# What Statements Can Be Used to Reinforce the Video Message?

List of statements identifying your message in order of presentation.

## Storyboard and Script

The PSA can be made up of either a streaming video or a collection of slides. Students need to come up with a logical sequence of ideas to tell their story—a sequence that forms a beginning, middle, and conclusion. We recommend that student videos be no longer than three minutes in length. The message needs to be concise or viewers can lose interest. Handout 3 can help students put the content and photos/visuals/graphs in order. The handout is divided into several columns. The first column is the slide or frame number. The next column is used to plan the key content for each slide. The third column includes phrases or statistics that will be placed on the slide. The last column includes the photos, pictures, illustrations or symbols that students might use on that slide.

The story board will help student groups check for logic, grammar, spelling, and effectiveness. Each slide/frame should include the correct image or picture, graph, map, portion of the song, and statement(s). Most groups use a slide show with music to create the PSA. This storyboarding process is important because groups can change the order of slides before the final product is saved.

The following resource is a video on story board development for a book; the ideas in the video can be used for student PSAs.

Outlining My Book Using a Storyboard

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3fpvIkWNjs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3fpvIkWNjs)

## Production Software

Teachers can make various digital tools available for student use. Presentation software like PowerPoint or Keynote are often readily available. Your school may have access to Powtoon for students to use to create animated videos. Other options are TechSmith Camtasia for Mac or Windows and iMovie, which is included on Apple computers. There is also Screencast-o-Matic, which is not hard to use, and a free version is available.<sup>13</sup>

## Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

Group collaboration can enhance the development of a PSA. Everyone should have carefully identified roles to ensure completion of the video. These roles tie in with the belief that students contribute to the common good through their civic responsibilities. Team members may have more than one role. Here are some suggested responsibilities:

- **Team Manager:** Ensures that everyone in the group knows

his or her responsibilities and sets deadlines for project components. This person also collects the products of each member and organizes the overall PSA.

- **Editor:** Reviews all contributions to the general outline and story board for accuracy in spelling and grammar.
- **Writer:** Understands the story that the video conveys and maintains the story board for the group. Prepares phrases and catch messages that are included in each slide or section of the PSA. Writes introduction, conclusion, and credits for the PSA.
- **Picture Consultant:** Brings in interesting graphics, pictures, photographs or other visuals. Works closely with digital consultant and writer to place all materials together in a logical format.
- **Digital Consultant:** Takes all of the materials and adds music to the PSA. Tweaks the draft of the video and uploads it on the appropriate platform.
- **Closed Caption Consultant:** Creates a transcript of the video for hearing-impaired students, including the lyrics of the song.

Before the team begins to put the PSA together, it is important that the group reviews the rubric that will be used to assess their work. (See Handout 4). Each individual's grade is calculated from the collaborative work of the group. Each team member should participate equally in the project. Teachers may want to go over the rubric so that students know what is expected and how their grade is dependent on their collaboration.

## Conclusion

Bullying is an extremely disturbing issue in most schools. Students can become active citizens and learn how to effectively work together to prevent and stop bullying. Creating PSAs as a strategy to combat bullying is well received in the schools we teach in, which have adopted the themes of social justice and compassionate communities. Students who participated in the PSA unit were actively engaged and appreciated the opportunity to speak with others about how to combat such a relevant social problem. Students focused greatly on the power

*continued on page 15*

# Storyboard Process

Slide or Frame	Content: Message To Be Conveyed (This could include narration.)	Words, Phrases, or Statistics on Slide	Photos, Pictures, Graphs, or Visuals
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

Narration: If you have a Narrator be sure to create narration for each slide.

# Group Project PSA Rubric

	<b>Poor–Maximum of 10 points</b>	<b>Okay–Maximum of 15 points</b>	<b>Good–Maximum of 20 points</b>	<b>Excellent–Maximum of 25 points</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Content of PSA</b>	The message is hard to follow. Lack of a logical sequence of ideas. Needs a stronger overall message.	Told a story but hard to identify beginning, middle, and end. Message is confusing. Message needs to be clearer and repeated throughout the PSA.	Told an effective story but hard to identify middle and end. Message is clear, but could be reinforced more throughout the PSA.	Told a powerful story. Had beginning, middle, and end. Message is clear and concise. The repeated statement was effective in conveying the message.	
<b>Technical Elements</b>	Includes at least 2 technical elements such as photos, graphics, statistics, and charts. The video was too short and less than 2 minutes.	Includes at least 3 technical elements such as photos, graphics, statistics, and charts. The video was too long, over 3 minutes.	Includes at least 4 technical elements such as photos, graphics, statistics, and charts. The video kept within the 2.5- 3-minute recommendation.	Includes at least 5 visuals such as photos, graphics, statistics, and charts. The video was 3 minutes.	
<b>Mechanics</b>	More than 5 spelling and grammatical errors. Two punctuation errors.	Less than 4 spelling and grammatical errors. One punctuation error.	Not more than 2 spelling and grammatical errors. One punctuation error.	No spelling or grammatical errors. Punctuation and capitalization are correct.	
<b>Group Work Skills</b>	Group members did not work together or follow through with their individual responsibilities. No clear group decision making.	Group members did not make decisions well together. Group members did not take care of their individual responsibilities	Group members contributed to the product equally for the most part. Decision making was mostly collaborative.	Group members worked well together and made decisions as a team. Helped each other and contributed equally to the group project.	
				<b>Total Points</b>	

Grade A (90 - 100 points); Grade B (80– 90 points); Grade C (70 – 80 points); Grade D (60 – 70 points)

of bystanders. Many students felt bystanders, along with perpetrators, were at fault because they do not do something to stop the bullying or exclusion. This unit provides students the opportunity to safely address acts of social oppression as they become responsible caring citizens. Moreover, through the use of rich technology-based social studies and community-building experiences, teachers and students act on their core values of social justice and compassion in classrooms and schools. 🌍

#### Notes

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5. Ibid.
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7. Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Relational Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press 2013).
8. Lev Vygotsky, *The Collected Works of Lev Vygotsky* (New York: Plenum Press, 1997).
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## Standards: Social Studies Themes



### 10 Civic Ideals and Practices

In schools, this theme typically appears in units or courses dealing with civics, history, political science, cultural anthropology, and fields such as global studies and law-related education, while also drawing upon content from the humanities. . . . By the middle grades, students expand their knowledge of democratic ideals and practices, along with their ability to analyze and evaluate the relationships between these ideals and practices. They are able to see themselves taking civic roles in their communities.

### 6 Power, Authority, and Governance

Through study of the dynamic relationships between individual rights and responsibilities, the needs of social groups, and concepts of a just society, learners become more effective problem-solvers and decision-makers when addressing the persistent issues and social problems encountered in public life. By applying concepts and methods of political science and law, students learn how people work to promote positive societal change.

### C3 Framework, Dimension 4 Communicating Conclusions

#### D4.1.6-8

Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple

sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.

### National Educational Technology Standards Critical Thinking

4. a. Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation
4. b. Plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project

### Digital Citizenship

5. a. Advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology
5. b. Exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning and productivity.

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13. Screencast-O-Matic. A free version can be accessed at <https://screencast-o-matic.com/lp/screen-recording-video-editing>.

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# Surviving Eighth Grade

Andrea S. Libresco

As another year of school progresses, I can't get Beau Burnham's *Eighth Grade* out of my mind. The film evoked my own painful memories from junior high. Although I completed eighth grade in 1972, the feelings of awkwardness, embarrassment, and humiliation came rushing back as I watched the movie.

For me, eighth grade included the day in history class, when I accidentally sat in the seat that the new girl wanted. Unfortunately for me, she had a Southern accent, make-up, a more womanly figure, and perfectly wavy hair that smelled of Breck shampoo. Clinging to the principle of fairness, I held out in the seat for a little while, but ultimately I moved under pressure.

Like Kayla, the protagonist in *Eighth Grade*, I hid out at my share of boy-girl parties, lurking on the outskirts of the action, counting the minutes until I could legitimately call for a ride home. When my mother came to pick me up, like Kayla, I did my best to dodge her concerned questions for the duration of the ride.

As I have thought more about the movie, I have come to see that the existence of social media is a key difference between my experience and that of the film's protagonist. Social media is all-encompassing—cannibalizing Kayla's time and screening off anything that's not present on it.

After my day at school, my social travails were pretty much completed. Not so for Kayla and her real-life counterparts today. She is never able to take a break from her toxic social media milieu. After Kayla's dad says good night and closes the door, she retrieves both her phone and laptop from under the covers, light beckoning from each screen. Today's eighth graders have the added burden of navigating, 24/7, the world of social media, where they have to constantly present themselves to their classmates.

Thinking back to my eighth grade year in 1972, I don't recall the claustrophobic feeling that the 2018 movie evokes. I didn't feel trapped in a tiny social cul-de-sac. I had more breathing space and more reminders that there was a whole world outside of school. In fact, some of my strongest memories are of larger political events in the world.

*There was the Vietnam War.* Every morning before school, as my mother made my breakfast, I heard the body count coming



Andrea S. Libresco, during her eighth grade year.

out of the kitchen radio. At night, I saw images of the "living room war" and wondered, when my brother was old enough, what his lottery number would be. Following revelations about the "secret" bombings in Cambodia, and emulating my older siblings at the high school, I participated in a walkout at my junior high.

*There was the women's movement.* Wonder Woman graced the cover of the first *Ms.* magazine, the Equal Rights Amendment passed the Senate, and one of the graduates of our high school starred in *To Find a Man*, an R-rated movie about trying to get an abortion that none of us was allowed to see. In our junior high, we girls had won the right to wear pants with rivets (aka jeans) to school, had carved out daily practice times for our sports teams (though the boys got the more desirable times), and could now take shop class (i.e., woodworking), if we wanted.

*There was the question of race.* By 1972, Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy had been gone for four years, cities had burned, and the Supreme Court had just upheld busing as a remedy for school desegregation. My school was practically all white, but I was starting to notice that fact.

The three school library books that my classmates and I passed around, reading and re-reading them, were novels

that addressed the seminal issues of our day: *The Man in the Box: A Story from Vietnam* by Mary Lois Dunn, *Too Bad About the Haines Girl* by Zoa Sherburne, and *The Soul Brothers and Sister Lou* by Kristin Hunter Lattany. Respectively, they covered the human cost of the war and, by extension, its validity; the challenges of teen pregnancy in a pre-*Roe v. Wade* world; and the challenges of growing up Black in America.

This larger world of important issues took me out of my eighth grade self; exposed me to the lives and views of people from different walks of life; and made me think about loss, sexism, and injustice. I sensed nothing about the larger world in the fictional *Eighth Grade* ... which may well have been the director's point.

But I have to believe that this myopia is not reflective of most eighth graders today and that social media does not have to be a place focused solely on looks and popularity. After all, students used social media to organize the March for Our Lives this past year, turning personal tragedy into political activism. They seem to be avoiding the claustrophobia of Kayla's *Eighth Grade* world in the best possible ways.

The college students whom I teach sometimes sound wistful that they missed the social and political activity of the 1960s and 70s, of my junior high years. I tell them that these times they are living through—times that require constant vigilance with respect to voting rights, treatment of non-whites, and the environment—are *their* 1960s and 70s. If they and their eighth grade counterparts, encouraged by their social studies teachers, choose to be wide awake in the world, their lives will be surely better for it ... and so will so many others. 🌍

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### CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

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