GRADE 4-6: LANGUAGE

THE POWER OF YOUTH

Purpose: Students will gain an understanding of social issues affecting Aboriginal communities and the actions youth have taken to address these issues to promote social change.

Estimated time: 105 minutes

Resources required:
- Access to internet

Resources included:
- Blackline master

Activity:
1. To begin the class write on the board the following two Oxford Dictionary definitions. Tell students to read through the definitions and determine which one belongs to the words: “youth” and “activism.”
   - The policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change.
   - Young people considered as a group. The period between childhood and adult age.

2. Based on the definitions provided ask students to create their own definition for the term “youth activism.” Have students write their definitions in their notebooks.

3. Share with students that youth activism refers to the act of young people making a difference for themselves, their communities and society as a whole by addressing societal issues (i.e. human rights, environment, economic, etc.) while engaging in activities to provide equal opportunity.

4. Organize the class into groups of 2 to 3 students. Provide students with the questions below as social movements and activism conversation starters. Ask each group to choose a representative who will share their responses with the class.
   - What matters or social issues are you interested in? (E.g., the environment, human rights, animal rights, etc.)
   - When you think of a campaign for social change what comes to mind? Provide specific examples. (E.g., the ALS ice bucket challenge, Movember for men’s health, Run for the Cure for Breast Cancer, #BringBackOurGirls to raise awareness of abducted schoolgirls in Nigeria, etc.)
   - Have you ever been involved with or participated in a campaign?
   - What was the name of the campaign and what did it support?

5. Share with students that youth around the world have taken lead roles in public protests and advocacy to create change and provide equal opportunity, however, protests are not the only way to have their voices heard. In the current digital age, technology and social media can help youth participate in activism globally.

6. While in their same groups, have students list on chart paper their responses to the following:
   - What is social media? List the different forms of social media you are familiar with.
   - What might be the relationship between social media and activism? Have you seen a campaign for social change on the internet? Can you list these campaigns?
   - Have you heard of the term “hashtag activism”? What do you think this term refers to?

7. Tell students that hashtag activism is a term coined by media outlets which refers to the use of hashtags to raise awareness, fight for or support a cause that people are advocating for through social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.).

8. Share with students that Aboriginal people play a vital role in Canada’s formative history and cultural identity however there is no shortage of reports on the problems they face for equality. From land to water to education to healthcare, Aboriginal people face many critical issues that form barriers to gaining equality and respect.

9. Distribute the blackline master and organize the class into groups of 3 to 4 students. Each group will research a current issue facing Aboriginal people or a specific community and develop a social campaign with a unique hashtag to raise awareness.

10. Using the blackline master students will provide a summary of the current Aboriginal issue and generate a plan for their campaign. Remind students that by raising awareness they are inspiring change to bring about promote mutual understanding, respect and equality for all.

11. Have students share their campaign and social media components to the rest of the class.

Educator’s Note: For current Aboriginal news, provide students with the CBC link below for current Aboriginal news: www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

FREE THE CHILDREN

AN INITIATIVE OF

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PLUIE

IN INITIATIVE D’ÉDUCATION AUTOCHOTONEN
BLACKLINE MASTER
YOUTH SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Use the checklist below to create a powerful campaign to promote equality for Aboriginal people and communities.

Group members: ____________________________

**STEP 1:** Research and summarize the current issue facing Aboriginal peoples.

**Issue:** _______________________________________

**Summary:** _______________________________________

**STEP 2:** Plan your social media campaign.

How will you use your collective voice to amplify the message and bring attention to an important issue affecting Aboriginal communities?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Why does this issue matter to your group?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Do you have facts or statistics that discuss the same issue? Are there images that provide a visual to the issue?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
MESSAGE PLATFORM
Which social media platform(s) will you use to spread the word and inform others of this issue? Below are a few suggestions:

- Facebook page
- Blog
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- Other ____________________________

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A CAMPAIGN
What is your campaign #Hashtag?
Make sure your hashtag is clear, relevant to the issue and most importantly unique.

What is your campaign logo?
A logo is a unique symbol or design that represents your campaign.

What is your campaign slogan?
A slogan is a “catch phrase” or motto that should get the attention of your audience.

CHECKLIST
- Message platform (Facebook page, blog, Instagram, etc.)
- Campaign elements (hashtag, logo and slogan)
- Three to seven interesting facts or statistics that discuss the issue
- Contact information and/or place to learn more