EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH WE VILLAGES

LESSON PACKAGE FOR GRADES 7 TO 8

THEME: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT | SUBJECTS: SOCIAL STUDIES, LANGUAGE
WE Are Canada

EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH WE VILLAGES

WE LEARNING FRAMEWORK SKILLS LEGEND:

- ARGUMENT FORMATION
- INFORMATION LITERACY
- LEADERSHIP SKILLS
- ORGANIZATION
- ACTION PLANNING
- RESEARCH AND WRITING
- CRITICAL THINKING
- REFLECTION

THEME: Sustainable Development

SUBJECTS: Social Studies, Language

RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVEL: Grades 7 to 8

LESSON PACKAGE OVERVIEW:

In this package, students will learn the concept of sustainability locally then globally. They will read a story of a young person who has been helped by sustainable development through Free The Children’s WE Villages model. Students will research the WE Villages model and then write a success story for a fictional character in that community.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- How can the implementation of the WE Villages sustainable development model improve access to education for young people in developing countries?
- What role will you play (individually or as part of a group) in helping to reach the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:

Students will:

- Define and understand sustainability
- Find their role in helping to work toward sustainable development

WORD BANK

Barrier—a circumstance or obstacle that keeps people or things apart or prevents communication and progress.

Developing Countries—a poor agricultural country that is seeking to become more advanced economically and socially.

Sustainable—able to be maintained at a certain rate or level.

Sustainable Development—development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Chart paper and markers
- Computers with Internet access
- Projector
- Blackline Master 1: Exploring Sustainable Development Through WE Villages
- Blackline Master 2: Stories of Sustainable Development: Hillary’s Story
- Blackline Master 3: Stories of Sustainable Development: Jorje’s Story
- Blackline Master 4: Stories of Sustainable Development: Yuzhuo’s Story

Recommended Assessment for Learning:

You know your students best—their learning styles and preferences, skill levels, and knowledge. You are also best positioned to anticipate the habits of mind that will make this lesson package successful.

In this lesson package, teaching strategies include cataloguing, think-pair-share, independent reading and group work. Suggestions for demonstration of learning include justification of choice, exit tickets and creative writing. Please make any accommodations or modifications that serve your students.
LESSON 1:
THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABILITY

SUGGESTED TIME:
75 minutes

Investigate and Learn

1. Guide students to an understanding of sustainable development by beginning with an exercise that helps them catalogue actions and goods that have one-time benefits versus those that have benefits that endure or can be used over time (e.g., gasoline vs. solar power).

2. Distribute Blackline Master 1: Exploring Sustainable Development Through WE Villages. Ask students to list the items under the headings short term and long term. Have them compare their answers with a partner and discuss the rationale for their choices. Debrief the exercise with students. Ask them what the left column has in common. (E.g., disposable, short life span, costly over the long term, etc.) What do the right side items have in common? (E.g., reusable, longer lasting, investments, sustainable, etc.) Generate a class definition for the term “sustainable,” then ask: How does this change when we add the word “development?”

3. Now that students are thinking of sustainability, ask them to think about components of their local community that make it sustainable. Divide the class into groups of three to four students. Instruct students to complete the remainder of Blackline Master 1: Exploring Sustainable Development Through WE Villages.

4. RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: At the end of the class, issue exit tickets. Ask students to write down what they believe to be the top five components that make up a sustainable community and how they could help families and communities over time.
LESSON 2:
INTRODUCING WE VILLAGES

SUGGESTED TIME:
75 minutes

Investigate and Learn

1. Now that students understand what makes their communities sustainable, introduce the concept of sustainable development in a new context. Ask students to draw comparisons between the sustainability they have discussed and this definition with a partner:

   Sustainable development means creating ways for people to take care of themselves and meet basic needs, such as providing access to food, clean water and shelter—in ways that also protect the environment. This is why development projects that help people living in poverty can’t just be good for today. They have to be good for the future as well. Our world still has a long way to go toward meeting this goal. Our consumption of natural resources also has to be more equitable. Right now, about 20 percent of the world’s richest people use almost 80 percent of the world’s resources, such as crude oil, energy and clean water.

2. Show students a video about WE Villages to reiterate what they have learned about sustainable development so far, and help them see how WE Villages works [video player.vimeo.com/174570410?title=0&byline=0&portrait=0&autoplay=1](2:15).

3. Using think-pair-share, ask students to consider the examples in the video and ask them how these reflect sustainable development practices.

4. Distribute one of the four story examples to each student from Blackline Master 2: Stories of Sustainable Development. Instruct students to highlight, circle or underline examples of sustainable development or examples where the addition of sustainable development practices could help.

5. Tell students that they will be researching WE Villages in order to write a success story of a fictional character who has benefited from sustainable development. The story will examine how sustainable development helped break the cycle of poverty in a young person’s life.

6. Using information they have researched on WE Villages, instruct students to write an epilogue or postscript to the story they read. Students should imagine the story has jumped five, 10 or 20 years into the future. What does life look like for the character of their story? Direct students to WE.org/we-villages to conduct research.

REFLECTION:

7. Have students reflect in conversation with a partner. Ask students how the story they wrote is an example of sustainable development.

EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT: Have students add another Pillar of Impact to the story. For example, if they read Hillary’s story on health, add food. How has the addition of this pillar affected the life of Hillary and her family?

EDUCATOR’S NOTE: The video link below will introduce WE Villages, a sustainable development model that works in partnership with international donors, national and local governments, local community members and others to help create sustainable communities. Communities where families have the knowledge and skills to be self-reliant. WE Villages began as a school-building project to help young people attend school. It quickly evolved to help young people and their families overcome barriers related to education, water, health, food and opportunity, which allow them to break the cycle of poverty.

EDUCATOR’S NOTE: Review any classroom rules on respect before students begin their research. Remind students to be respectful of the cultural differences they may notice.
EXTENSION LESSON:
UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SUGGESTED TIME:
75 minutes

1. Introduce students to the global strategy of sustainable development with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG). Have students read and identify the who, what, when, where, why and how of the third page of the UNSDG from the PDF at undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/brochure/SDGs_Booklet_Web_En.pdf. Download or have students check it out online. Print off two copies of the package for the next step unless using tablets.

2. Review the answers and discuss remaining questions. (Note: remaining questions could create an opportunity for an enrichment inquiry project.)

3. Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group one of the following WE Villages Pillars of Impact:
   a. Education—WE.org/education
   b. Water—WE.org/water
   c. Health—WE.org/health
   d. Food—WE.org/food
   e. Opportunity—WE.org/opportunity

   Have students take out Blackline Master 1: Exploring Sustainable Development Through WE Villages. In their small groups, instruct students to answer the questions on the first half of the handout. Direct students to the relevant WE.org websites indicated in the list above.

4. While students research, set up a gallery walk. Split the classroom into two halves, disperse one set of the UNSDGs around one half of the classroom, allowing space for students to visit. Repeat this process with the other half of the classroom. For classes of 20 or fewer students, use one set.

5. Once students have answered the questions, divide each group into two halves. Assign each subgroup a side of the classroom to mirror the gallery walks that have been set up. Instruct students to move around the room with their small group, visiting and reading each of the 17 UNSDGs. At each goal station, instruct students to reflect on their WE Villages Pillar of Impact research to determine if the goal is related to the work achieved through the Pillar of Impact of WE Villages. Encourage groups to discuss at the stations. Some goals may be obviously connected, others will need further consideration. If they believe the goal and Pillar of Impact are connected, instruct students to circle or highlight that goal on the second half of the handout.

6. After students have completed the gallery walk, have them sit in their small groups. Create a master list on the board. Review each UNSDG. Ask groups to share if they circled it. If so, why? If one small group believed their Pillar of Impact applied while the other did not, have the class discuss the decisions.

7. Upon completion, ask: How is WE Villages contributing to the UNSDGs? How many UNSDGs are not connected to at least one of the Pillars of Impact?

8. RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: Give students exit cards. Ask them to answer the question, “What role could Canadians play—as individuals or as part of a group—to help fulfill the UNSDGs?”
LESSON 3:
GET INVOLVED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SUGGESTED TIME:
75 minutes

Action Plan and Take Action

1. In pairs, have students brainstorm ideas about how they can get involved in sustainable development efforts individually or as part of a group. Put forth to the class a few of the best ideas to take action on. Have students vote on one to use. For more information and activities on creating action plans, taking action and service-learning, check out the USB or WE.ca.

Alternatively, take action with a WE Schools campaign designed to raise awareness or funds for WE Villages. Check out one of the following campaigns to get involved. Each campaign comes with resources including a guide to help students action plan, raise awareness, take action and reflect.

WE Are Rafikis—Sell Handmade Rafiki Bracelets to help Kenyan artisans earn a living, and raise funds for community-led development projects through WE Villages.

WE Bake for Change—Come together for a bake sale to raise money for WE Villages.

WE Create Change—Collect coins to create change for developing communities through WE Villages.

WE Are Silent—Plan a day of silence to raise money and/or awareness for children whose voices go unheard.

WE Walk for Water—Raise money and/or awareness for communities who must travel to access safe, clean drinking water by arranging a walk of solidarity to fetch or carry water in your own community.

Reflect and Celebrate

2. Have students reflect on their learning and experiences. In a written, verbal or conversational reflection response, ask students to use specific examples to answer the essential questions: How can the implementation of the WE Villages sustainable development model improve access to education for young people in developing countries? What role will you play (individually or as part of a group) in helping to reach the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?

3. Encourage students to go deeper by using the following questions:
   a. As a Canadian and a global citizen, what have you learned about sustainable development?
   b. How can you continue to apply and share what you have learned about sustainable development?
   c. As a young member of society, what is your role locally, nationally and internationally to promote sustainable development programs like WE Villages?

4. Post stories and promote them through social media to share the impact students are having. Use #WEVillages to connect with the larger WE Movement. Find more information and resources at WE.org/we-villages. Collect completed media release forms from students when necessary. They can be found at WE.org/we-at-school/we-schools/educator-resources.
List the following items under the column you think it fits best under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short term</th>
<th>Long term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• $50 of take-out food</td>
<td>• Lunch box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transit pass</td>
<td>• Refillable water bottles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potted plants</td>
<td>• Taxi rides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bicycle</td>
<td>• Paper lunch bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disposable water bottle</td>
<td>• Plastic dishes and cutlery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• $50 of groceries</td>
<td>• Cut flowers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WE Villages

1. What is the Pillar of Impact being examined?

2. What is the issue/what are the barriers?

3. What is one fact you think is noteworthy? (Select from the “facts” section on the website)

4. How does WE Villages work in communities?

Sustainable Development Goals

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnerships to achieve the goals
“My name is Hillary, and I am 11 years old. I live in Enelerai, a small village in Kenya’s Maasai Mara. I have one sister named Yola and one brother named Nicholas. My favourite part of the day is when I read at home. I also like to study all subjects at school. My big goal is to go to high school.”

**Community profile**
- Community name: Enelerai, Kenya
- Population: 2,000, with 240 families
- Ethnicity: Kipsigis
- Languages: Kipsigis, Swahili, English
- Literacy: 10% to 20%, estimated
- Main sources of income: herding goats, cows and sheep; small-scale farming of beans, millet, sweet potatoes and maize
- Average income: $11 per household per month

**Hillary's health risks:**
- Dirty water from the Mara River
- Lack of hand-washing facilities
- No local medical clinic
- No money to pay for a doctor in far-away Mulat

**Hillary learns about getting sick**
My mom and dad say I am lucky because of my good health. I have never visited a doctor for a checkup or illness. I just hope I don’t get sick. The nearest clinic is a day’s walk away in Mulat and my family doesn’t have enough money to pay the fees.

In school this year I learned how people in my village get sick. One way is dirty water. Many cows and goats are herded to the Mara River to drink and cool off in the water. The animals don’t get out of the river when they go to the bathroom. This makes the muddy brown water dirty and dangerous for people to drink. This scares me because like most people in the village, my family fetches water from the river to drink and wash.

Another way people get sick is not washing their hands. At school we have pit latrines, or outhouses, where we go to the bathroom. I didn’t usually have a way to wash my hands after I went so I just wiped them on the grass if they got dirty.
Hillary learns how to stay healthy

One day in September I was in my Grade 6 class when our teacher started to talk about “basic sanitation and hygiene.” We learned what makes us sick—like the bacteria that live in dirty water—and how we can stay healthy with simple actions. Interested, I sat straight up and listened really well.

A great thing I learned is that by boiling water we make it safe to drink. Really hot water kills the bacteria in the water that make us sick. Another thing I learned is that hand-washing kills the diseases that get on my hands when I go to the latrine or play with our goats. Now after I use the latrine at school I go to the “leaky tin” to wash my hands. The leaky tin is a jug of water with a hole in it and a stick plugging the hole. After I use the latrine, I pull out the stick and the water rushes out. I wash my hands and scrub hard. Then I put the stick back in the hole. It’s fun!

After class I ran home to tell Mom and Dad everything I learned. They were interested, too. We started boiling all our drinking water and we even put a “leaky tin” behind our house.

Now that I know how to stay healthy, I’m more confident that I can achieve my goal of going to high school. After I finish high school, I want to be a police officer in Nairobi or a doctor or maybe even the leader of Kenya!
My name is Jorje, and I am 10 years old. I am in Grade 5 at Jatari Campesino Primary School in Ecuador. When I'm not in class, I like to spend time with my friends and play games. My favourite game is soccer. My favourite classes at school are writing and English. I want to learn English well so I can visit other countries like the United States.

Community profile
- Community name: Jatari Campesino, Ecuador
- Population: 320
- Ethnicity: Puruhá
- Languages: Kichwa, Spanish
- Literacy: 5.5%
- Main sources of income: agriculture, construction (men) and domestic work in nearby cities (women)
- Average income: monthly income in Jatari is, on average, $100 per family if they find work; subsistence farming is their only constant source of support

Jorje's Challenges
- Poverty in the community
- No high school near his home
- No money to attend high school in the city
- Farming sometimes makes him miss school
- Lack of good jobs in his community
- Migration, which means moving to the city to look for work

No high school in sight
When I grow up, I want to get a good job in Jatari Campesino so I can help my village. But to get a good job I need to go to high school, and there is no high school near my home. To go to high school I have to move away from my family to the city, Riobamba, 72 kilometres away. That costs a lot of money. I don't have money and I would miss my family. A lot of families don’t have money and many of the elders have never gone to school. This means our village has always been poor and we don’t always know how to help our village get the things we need to make it better so we can stay and work here.
Finding a good job

Another problem is there aren’t very many good jobs here in Jatari Campesino. Our village is very small with only 320 people. In our community we need more jobs and money. Everybody has to go to the city to work and they don’t stay here.

I miss my father a lot. He has to work in the city all the time to earn money and comes home on weekends only. I’m worried that to get a good job I will have to move to the city, too. If this happens, I will miss my family and friends a lot.

The future according to Jorje

I believe each person must work to make the world a better place. The first step to making it better is letting children from poor families go to school and get a good education. But it’s hard for many kids like me to spend time in school because they have to farm in the afternoons. Sometimes kids are absent for many days.

We have many challenges, but I want to tell all kids one thing: you must work in your community to help other children and be committed to completing your studies. This is the only way to make your life better, give back to your community and help the world.
My name is Yuzhuo Nan and I am 10 years old. I live in Nanjia, a small town in Gansu province, China. This is a story about how “sustainable development” changed my life.

Community profile
- Community name: Nanjia, China
- Population: 5,300, including 910 families
- Ethnicity: Han
- Language: Mandarin
- Literacy: 25%
- Main source of income: agriculture
- Average income: $12 per household per month

Yuzhuo’s unsustainable situation
- Both parents work in the fields, leaving Yuzhuo at home to take care of her brother and do chores
- Fetching clean water is a one-hour walk each way
- School is far away from home

My broken dream
My heroes are my teachers because they give us knowledge about China and the world. My biggest dream is to be a teacher so I can give knowledge too. But two years ago my dream started falling apart. My parents told me that I had to stay at home instead of going to school.

I was angry and sad. I didn’t understand. My father explained, “Yuzhuo, we are sorry. To eat we must work, but we cannot work and care for your brother also. School is far and there are many chores. Daughter, you must stay at home.” Back then my family was only earning $12 each month by farming. They needed me to watch over my little brother Jian while they worked in the fields. I wasn’t happy but I did as I was told.

Every morning I woke up at six o’clock. I walked one hour to the well to fetch water and one hour back. Then I helped my mother cook breakfast before she went back to the fields with Father. They put lunch in a bowl to bring with them. After I fed Jian, I washed clothing, cleaned pots and started making dinner. Some afternoons I helped my parents farm with Jian sitting on my back. Every day was hard work, and I felt worried. I knew I couldn’t be a teacher if I didn’t go to school.
Social and economic support to the rescue
A new school was built in my village not long ago. I suddenly felt hope. Now that my school was close, I thought maybe I could go to class again. I asked my parents, but they said they still needed me to work at home.

But soon after the school was ready, a clean water well was also built in our village. Now I only walk five minutes to fetch water, not one hour. Also, each family got piglets to make money. My family got three! I learned that these are a couple of ways to do “sustainable development.”

After the piglets started to grow, my father told me they could get by without me at home and that I should go back to school. My dream came alive again. It was one of the happiest days of my life. A couple days later I was sitting in class very happy. Looking around, I noticed many kids I didn’t recognize. I was confused at first, but then I realized: before now they must have been stuck working at home, too!

My future
Life is much better now. I still help my family but I spend more time playing Chinese badminton, talking with my best friend Jia and doing homework. My grandmother calls these things “being a kid.” But I like to study more than play games. Now that I am back in school learning, I know I will be a teacher.