



Culture, Crisis and Population Explosion: A Deweyan Approach in the Classroom

Guide for Curriculum Unit 98.07.08
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How can our species of approaching 10 billion humans find a new balance with the environment with minimal suffering and maximum pleasure? The following teaching unit consists of a four step approach to answer this critically important question in which students provide the class with:

1. motivational presentations to introduce issues,
2. analogical experimentation to suggest answers,
3. strategizing exercises to apply general ideas to specific problems,
4. debate (or similar activities) to propose cultural changes needed in the new era of overpopulation.

The four lessons are spaced out in the academic year so that the application of the concept of population explosion is appropriately grounded in the scientific understanding of ecology, environment, evolution, genetics, biodiversity and reproduction.

Students work in groups that focus on particular areas in biology and aspects of population - sexuality, health, botany, zoology, local environment, Gaia ecology, anthropology and religion, microscopy, computer, visual arts, and independent studies (as in exploring historical precedents).

Selected readings from books, journals, a textbook and activities are provided for each group. They give an interdisciplinary perspective to the population explosion.

The methodology and philosophical framework of the teaching unit is that of John Dewey. The unit is the fourth of a series that develops and applies Deweyan ideas to the practical challenges of an inner city high school classroom.

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