ecological
LITERACY | GUIDE

Climate Change in
Grade 9 Geography
(Applied)

Focus Questions

This resource supplies Focus Questions (and answers) as a tool for teachers in helping students understand the many facets of climate change from a geographic perspective. Suggestions follow for teachers who may not be familiar with this pedagogical approach.

Tips on using Focus Questions

Teachers who prefer teacher-centred planning should plan lessons based on their interpretation of the Focus Questions. They will pre-plan their regular daily geography lessons with an eye first and foremost on the Ontario Geography document. However, when they need an example for in-class practice and assignments to illustrate a concept, they can use climate change examples. (Students interpret graphs to predict how climate change will have an impact on temperatures.) Teachers can leave specific climate change applications off their formal tests, or they can include the key ideas, which are included in the Common Understandings within a Climate Change Context *of each course section in this document.*

Teachers who prefer students to work more independently will likely introduce the Focus Question as a brainstorming activity and follow it up with a list of secondary questions. These secondary questions will be assigned either as classwork that everyone works on together, or as individual questions assigned as independent study and presentation (e.g., student posters, written assignments, oral presentations). Teachers can generate open-ended questions for formal assessment, or they can pool the collective research and have it form a required body of knowledge for formal tests. A good review of those ideas is found in the Common Understandings within the Climate Change Context *sections.*

These questions and the ideas they encompass provide a way to re-frame existing course curriculum through the lens of ecological sustainability. Changing the perspective on the content and skills of these selected courses makes a difference to the way students understand concepts and interpret information. Within a section of a unit, an entire unit, or the entire course, these questions can, literally, re-focus *students' understanding as they grapple with content and learn skills. These Focus Questions enhance the meaning of the expectations and support the development of the students' critical thinking skills.*

From *Ontario EcoSchools: Climate Change in Grade 11 and 12 Science*
See back cover for ordering this resource and others in the EcoSchools series.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN GRADE 9 GEOGRAPHY

Climate change is a serious problem that knows no boundaries; it is best understood through thinking in terms of large interacting systems. The long-term unpredictable impacts of climate change on ecozones and the people who are part of them is a cause for global concern; it requires a global commitment to policies that manage human systems so as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This resource offers students a task through which they can identify ways to lessen the impact on climate by redesigning Canadian communities.

Resource Overview

This *Climate Change in Grade 9 Geography (Applied)* resource document includes:

I. Climate Change Connections

These sections address the systems dimension of Geography 9 (Applied), closely corresponding to the first three Geography strands.

S	S
Natural Systems	Geographic Foundations: Space & Systems
Human Systems	Human-Environment Interactions
Human-Environment Interactions	Human-Environment Interactions
Global Interactions	Global Connections

Each section includes:

- A about climate change that integrates expectations across the strands.
- that explore climate change in terms of systems. These questions may serve as a checklist for the teacher to help students develop their understanding about climate change and inform their town planning in the culminating task.
- x that are addressed by the Big Idea/Focus Questions. These expectations are also cross-referenced to the culminating task.

Should the teacher choose to integrate climate change as a topic throughout ( ), these charts may provide a framework for planning.

II. Culminating Task: Town Planning to Address Climate Change

This culminating task includes:

- a series of activities with student readings and worksheets;
- an annotated bibliography of websites and links to current textbooks;
- an evaluation rubric based on the Ministry of Education Achievement Chart.