

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO
FORCE
OF
NATURE
THE DAVID SUZUKI MOVIE

Internment,
Hiroshima,
Human Rights
and the Next
Generation



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Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to encourage teachers of grades 9–12 to incorporate the National Film Board documentary *Force of Nature* into their lesson plan by identifying where and how the film can support current curriculum expectations. In addition to connecting film content with subject outcomes, the guide offers a number of suggestions and activities to help teachers extend the discussion of a variety of themes, organized under the following headings:

Population, Consumption
and Sustainable
Development

Internment, Hiroshima,
Human Rights and the
Next Generation

Science and Technology
in Society

Towards a New
Perspective

These units can be explored selectively or collectively, depending on their relevance to the curriculum for which the teacher is responsible.

Each unit is accompanied by a table that identifies the activities therein, provides a description of each of these activities, and indicates the particular pedagogy employed. A second and third table provide direction as to where the activities may be incorporated into the curriculum by identifying the relevant general and specific curriculum links for each of the provinces and territories.

Force of Nature is a powerful ninety-minute documentary based on David Suzuki's Legacy Lecture. Dr. Suzuki described this address, presented in 2010 to a live audience at UBC's Chan Centre, as "his last chance to say what he wants." The film effectively punctuates the lecture with scenes from his personal life and news footage chronicling major political, scientific and social events of the past seventy years. The result is a highly relevant, thought-provoking and entertaining viewing experience that students will find both interesting and inspiring.

While the film explores a range of themes related to the questions of "who we are, why we are here and where we are headed as a species," Dr. Suzuki's core message is clear: humans have exhausted the limits of the biosphere and it is imperative that we rethink our relationship with the natural world. Though much of the narrative is devoted to articulating how our species has altered the physical, biological and chemical integrity of the planet, he does offer viewers a blueprint for survival and his assurance that the same qualities that have made humanity a force of nature will guide us on a new pathway to a future full of meaning and real wealth.

Force of Nature examines a number of key themes and concepts addressed in subject areas across the high school curriculum, including:

- Population, Consumption and the Global Economy
- Sustainable Development
- Science and Technology in Society
- Racism and Human Rights
- Aboriginal Perspectives and Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- Scientific Literacy and the Media

Selected excerpts from the documentary can be used to support the teaching of these topics individually or, when shown in its entirety, the film offers an extremely effective interdisciplinary examination of the ecological crisis at hand and the role of sustainable development.

In *Force of Nature*, Dr. David Suzuki describes his family’s experience in the Japanese-Canadian internment camps during the Second World War, his coming of age as a young Japanese boy in Leamington, Ontario, and his friendship with Ruby Wilkerson during his days as a research scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee.

Suzuki’s first encounter with discrimination was the bullying he received from other Japanese kids in the internment camp because he could not speak Japanese. Later, as a boy in the only ethnic family in Leamington, his reluctance to ask a white girl out brought him to the solace of a local swamp, and the sense of magic he found there would ultimately lead him to the world of science.

At the Oak Ridge Laboratory, racism and discrimination were overt and African Americans like his friend Ruby lived in a world of “whites only” signs. His resulting frustration and anger with the white establishment began to have a negative impact on him and he decided to leave Oak Ridge and, much to the chagrin of his father, take a job at UBC. He returned to the province and country that had “kicked his family out.”

Each of these experiences provides overt or subtle examples of prejudice, discrimination and/or racism at that time and stands in contrast with the values embodied by Canada’s current policy of multiculturalism.

The activities that follow encourage students to consider the elements of racism, historical examples of restrictions on human rights, the concept of intergenerational rights and strategies to uphold the rights of future generations.

The chart below provides a quick reference to the relevant curricula in each province and territory. A more detailed curriculum matrix is found in the Appendix.

Province/Territory	Curriculum Links, Grades 10–12
Alberta	History, Social Studies
British Columbia	History, Social Studies, Social Justice
Manitoba	History
New Brunswick	History, English Language Arts
Newfoundland and Labrador	Social Studies
Northwest Territories	History
Nova Scotia	History, English Language Arts
Nunavut	History
Ontario	History, Law, Politics
Prince Edward Island	Social Studies
Quebec	Social Sciences
Saskatchewan	History, Social Studies
Yukon	Social Studies, History, Social Justice

A Summary of Activities

UNIT SEGMENT	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PEDAGOGY
The Nature of Racism	1. Types of Racism	Students will explore the meaning of racism and its manifestations.	Co-operative learning using graphic organizers
	2. Freedom, Security and Human Rights	Students explore the dynamics between freedom and security and the implications for human rights.	Guided inquiry Critical thinking
The Historical Record	1. Historical Restrictions on Human Rights	Students examine selected examples of restrictions of human rights imposed by the Canadian government.	Research Case study approach Video analysis
	2. Internment of Japanese Canadians	Students explore: Conditions in the internment camps; The debate about compensation for Japanese Canadians; The terms of the compensation package.	Video analysis Simulation/ Role playing Values clarification
	3. Examining the Historical Record	Students analyze the power of selected photos dealing with the story of the internment of Japanese Canadians.	Experiential learning
Intergenerational Rights	1. Rights of Next Generation	Students explore the concept of intergenerational rights.	Collaborative learning Values clarification
Envisioning a New Paradigm	1. Possible and Probable Futures	Students explore the concept of possible and probable futures.	Concept mapping Values clarification
	2. Actions for Future Generations	Students identify specific actions that might guarantee a better future for the planet and its people.	Concept mapping Systems thinking

Selected General Learning Outcomes

The activities in this teaching guide address the following selected general learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and attitudes):

- Explain how recognition of rights, responsibilities, and freedoms has developed in Canada;
- Understand that human rights are universal and as such apply to all people regardless of nationality, race, religion, political beliefs, age, or gender;
- Assess the application of fundamental principles of democracy (including equality, freedom, selection of decision makers, rule of law, and balancing the common good with the rights of individuals) with respect to selected 20th- and 21st-century cases in Canada;
- Describe the climate of war typical of the years 1914-1945;
- Analyze the evolution of the struggle to obtain rights and freedoms;
- Select, read and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media and visual texts;
- Analyze conflicting historical interpretations;
- Analyze specific examples of injustice in Canada related to characteristics such as nationality or regionality, political affiliation, race and ethnicity;
- Analyze multiple historical and contemporary perspectives within and across cultures;
- Develop, express and defend an informed position on an issue;
- Evaluate the validity of various points of view presented in the media;
- Analyze similarities and differences among historical narratives.

1. The Nature of Racism

“And my wife said to me, ‘You’ve gotta get out of here... You’re getting too angry’ and in many ways I became a racist. I was so angry at white people...” –David Suzuki

Activity 1:

Types of Racism

Purpose: In order to explore these issues in some depth, it is first necessary to ensure an understanding of the language of racism and its manifestations.

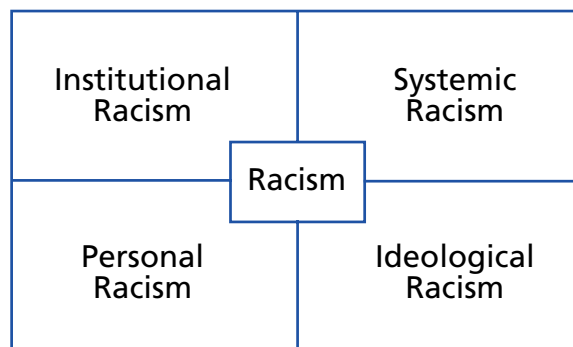
Background: The term racism was originally based on the assumption that humans could be classified into specific races and that certain races were superior to others. Today, the term is used more broadly to refer to divisions based on ethnicity, culture or nationality. Although the most virulent manifestation of racism is genocide, in daily life discrimination takes many forms.

The following activity is intended to examine the language around racism and its various expressions.

Procedure:

- Use the placemat organizer below to establish a working definition of racism and its attendant manifestations. Students can be divided into groups to research and report on a particular term from below.

Placemat Organizer



Resources:

The Canadian Encyclopedia:

thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0006636

Oxford Dictionary: oxforddictionaries.com/definition/racism

NFB Work for All: Films Against Racism in the Workplace: workforall.nfb.ca

NFB Anti-racist Films playlist: nfb.ca/playlist/anti-racism-films

Racism. Stop It! National Video Competition – Teachers’ Guide:

<http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/medias/download/documents/pdf/stop-racism/Video-Competition-teachers-guide.pdf>

Activity 2:

Freedom, Security and Human Rights

Purpose: To explore the dynamics between freedom and security and the implications for human rights.

Background: The Japanese-Canadian internment during WWII serves as an historical example of government policy restricting human rights in the face of a perceived threat to national security.

Procedure:

- Teachers can use the film and the following activity to engage students in a discussion of the freedom/security dialectic. Ask students to choose where they would place the following items on the freedom/security continuum, and to defend their decision.
- Laws governing operation of automobiles
- Military conscription
- Hate literature
- Language laws

Freedom

Security/Order



2. The Historical Record

“You’ve got no power and you do what they tell you. The Japanese have this expression, gambari, which means you just suck it in and... I guess it’s the equivalent of a stiff upper lip. But you just have to tough it out.” –David Suzuki

Activity 1:

Historical Restrictions on Human Rights

Purpose: To examine examples of restrictions of human rights imposed by the Canadian government.

Background: In order to have students view the Japanese-Canadian internment during the Second World War within a historical context, it is useful to investigate other instances when the rights of Canadians have been dramatically curtailed.

Procedure:

- Students may identify and discuss the following historical examples of the Canadian government severely limiting the rights of its citizens, and the rationale that the government of the day made in its defense:

GOVERNMENT ACTION	REASONS FOR	CRITICISMS OF
Winnipeg General Strike, 1919		
War Measures Act, 1970		
Canadian Anti-terrorism Act, 2001		

Resources:

Winnipeg General Strike

Historica: histori.ca/peace/page.do?pageID=347

The Canadian Encyclopedia:

thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?Params=A1ARTA0008649&PgNm=TCE

CBC Digital Archives: Remembering the Winnipeg General Strike:

archives.cbc.ca/economy_business/labour_unions/clips/4239/

NFB film *On Strike: The Winnipeg General Strike, 1919*:

www3.nfb.ca/objectifdocumentaire/index.php?mode=view&language=english&filmId=33

War Measures Act

The Canadian Encyclopedia:

thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0008439; thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0005880

CBC Digital Archives: The October Crisis: Civil Liberties Suspended:

archives.cbc.ca/war_conflict/civil_unrest/topics/101-618/

Douglas Coldwell Foundation: War Measures Act Debate: dcf.ca/en/events/war Measures Act Debates.htm

NFB film *Action: The October Crisis of 1970*:

nfb.ca/film/action_the_october_crisis_of_1970

Canadian Anti-terrorism Act 2001

The Canadian Encyclopedia:

thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0009718

CBC in-depth article on Canadian Security: cbc.ca/news/background/cdnsecurity

Maclean's magazine "Q&A with law professor David Paciocco, on the Anti-terrorism Act":

macleans.ca/canada/national/article.jsp?content=20060607_133143_5344

Activity 2:

Internment of Japanese Canadians

"The War Measures Act was applied in 1942, suspending all rights of citizenship. Property confiscated, bank accounts frozen. And my dad was shipped off to a road camp near Revelstoke.

"I was a freak among Japanese kids and they'd... Well, it's my first real encounter with discrimination [laughing]... it was from other Japanese kids." –David Suzuki

Purpose:

To explore:

- Conditions in the internment camps;
- The debate over compensation for Japanese Canadians;
- The terms of the compensation package.

Background: In 1988, the Mulroney government issued an apology and a compensation package to Japanese Canadians who had been interned during WWII. To understand the debate that accompanied this decision, students must examine the situation in Canada at the time, the reasons given for internment, the conditions in the camps, the seizure of Japanese property and the reasons given by the government for extending the apology and the compensation package.

Procedure:

- The CBC has made available, in radio and video format, archival material that represents its coverage of the Japanese internment story (archives.cbc.ca/war_conflict/second_world_war/topics/568). Accompanying the material are the following lesson plans:
 - An Internment Camp Journal
 - The Enemy That Never Was
 - Debating the Internment of Japanese Canadians
- Teachers may select those lessons that are relevant and make adjustments and additions to have students explore the topics.

Activity 3:

Examining the Historical Record – Analyzing a Photo

“And that is so reminiscent of, you know, being on a cattle car. I mean it could very well be a cattle car.”
 –David Suzuki

Purpose: To analyze the power of selected photos dealing with the story of the internment of Japanese Canadians.

Background: Photos can be powerful tools in shaping public opinion on a given issue. It is important then that we develop the skills required to analyze photos in terms of their effectiveness.

Procedure:

- Select five photographs from the images of the internment of Japanese Canadians found at Vanishing British Columbia <michaelkluckner.com/bciw4slocan.html> or other online sources and analyze the photos using the chart below.

Strategies for analyzing a photo

PHOTO	WHAT I SEE
Insert photo	Who are the people pictured?
	What are they doing?
	What emotions are captured in the picture?
	What is the “message” of the picture?
This is/is not an effective picture because...	

Activity 4:

Hiroshima and Human Rights

“The bomb killed over 100,000 people, just instantly annihilated them. But then there were tens of thousands of people that survived in horrific ways and they suffered.” –David Suzuki

Purpose: To explore the debate over the decision to use atomic weapons against Japan and the extent to which it can be examined within the context of human rights.

Background: The debate over the decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki continues to engage scholars. Defenders of the decision argue that it served to shorten the war and thereby reduced the ultimate number of casualties. Critics suggest that the decision was a crime against humanity, a case of state terrorism and should therefore be considered a human rights issue.

Procedure:

- Have students identify relevant clauses in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and discuss to what extent the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is in keeping with the principles outlined in those clauses.

Resources

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights: un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml

Newsweek, “The Innocents of WWII?”: newsweek.com/1994/12/11/the-innocents-of-wwii.html

University of Houston’s Digital History: digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=541



3. Intergenerational Rights

Activity:

Rights of Next Generation

“I believe that today’s children will look back on what’s happening here and say, ‘That was criminal. What you did is an intergenerational crime,’ that we took part in the liquidation of the species that should have been the right of our children and grandchildren and all future generations to know and enjoy and use. But we’re doing it right now. If that isn’t a crime, I don’t know what it is.” –David Suzuki

Purpose: To explore the concept of intergenerational rights.

Background: Within the larger framework of human rights Dr. Suzuki hints at the concept of intergenerational rights as a key to sustainable development. This represents a broadening of the traditional concept of human rights and is based on the assumption that sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of today’s generation without jeopardizing the ability of future generations meet their needs.” According to this reasoning, unsustainable exploitation of the earth’s resources violates the human rights of future generations.

Procedure:

- In order to examine this concept, students can work in pairs to develop a new clause that might be inserted in the Declaration of Human Rights. The following chart may serve to organize and record students’ thoughts on the issue.

INTERGENERATION RIGHTS CLAUSE:	
Environment	Indicators
Air	
Water	
Soil	

4. Envisioning a New Paradigm

Activity 1:

Possible and Probable Futures

“I will die before my grandchildren become mature adults and have their own children, but I am filled with hope and I imagine their future rich in opportunity, beauty, wonder and companionship with the rest of creation.

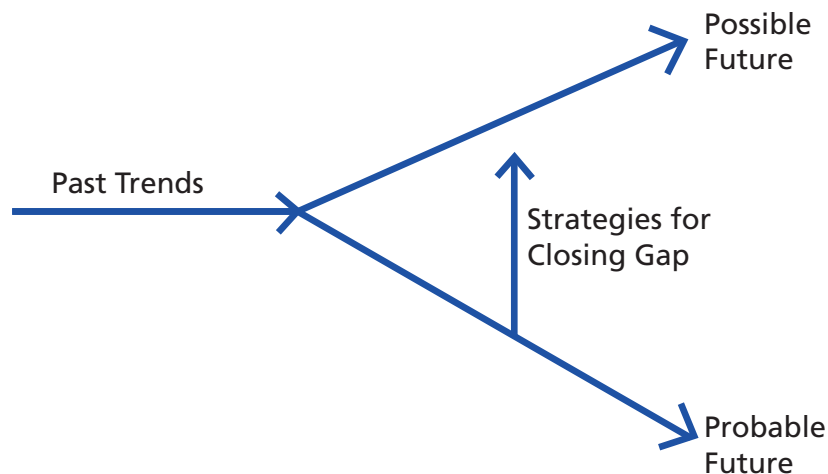
“All it takes is the imagination to dream it and the will to make the dream reality. So let’s get on with making it happen and show what our species is really capable of.” –David Suzuki

Purpose: To explore the concept of possible and probable futures.

Background: The concept of intergenerational rights is familiar to First Nations’ peoples, who are credited with the wisdom inherent in this notion, summed up by the saying, “We do not inherit the land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.”

Procedure:

- Use the following diagram to plot where we have been as a society, the possible future, the probable future and how we might better align the probable with the possible in planning for future generations.



Activity 2:

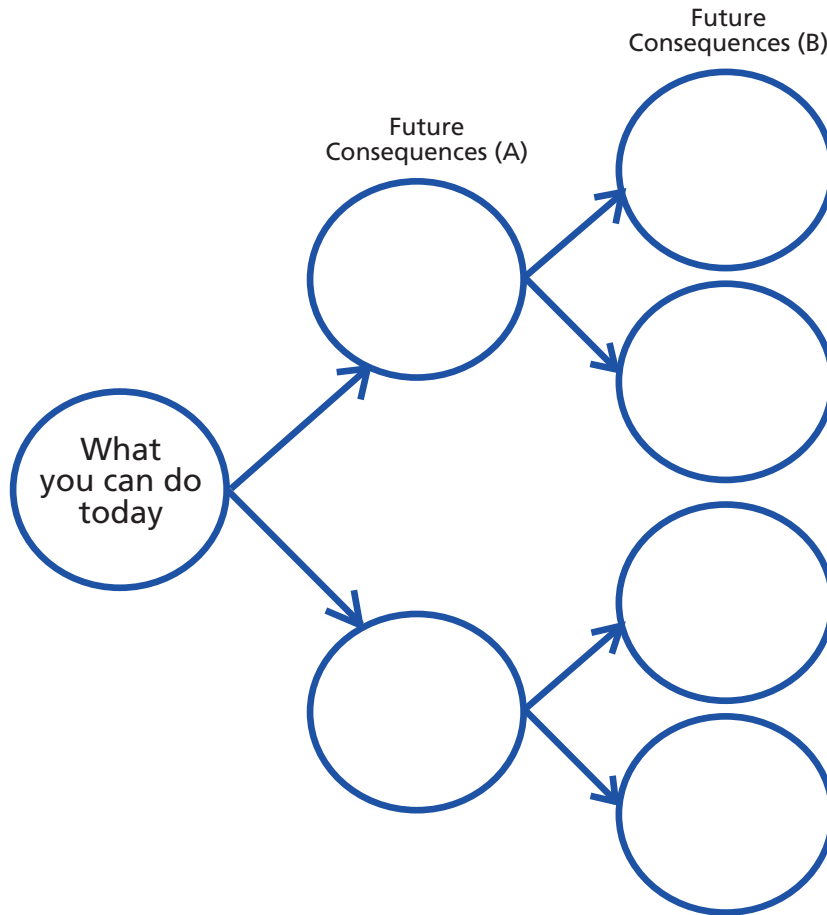
Actions for Future Generations

Purpose: To identify specific actions that might guarantee a better future for the planet and its people.

Background: Strategies for closing the gap between the possible and probable future need to be delineated in terms of concrete activities that might be undertaken today.

Procedure:

- Students use the first circle to identify specific actions that may impact on the future to better guarantee intergenerational rights. In the next circles (A & B) students are asked to indicate the hoped-for consequences of these actions. By having students complete the second layer of consequences, teachers can encourage the systemic thinking that is critical to a sustainable future.



Appendix

Curriculum Matrix

PROVINCE	SUBJECT	RELEVANT COURSES	CURRICULUM UNITS
Alberta	History	Canadian History 20	A Nation on Trial
British Columbia	Social Studies	Social Studies 11	Autonomy & International Development; Society & Identity
British Columbia	History	History 12	Turmoil & Tragedy
British Columbia	Social Justice	Social Justice12	Defining & Analyzing Social Justice, Moving Toward a Socially Just World
Manitoba	History	History of Canada, Grade 11	Identity, Diversity & Citizenship
New Brunswick	Social Science	History 11	Totalitarianism & Total War
New Brunswick	Social Sciences	Canadian History 12	New Challenges & New Ideas
New Brunswick	English Language Arts	English Language Arts	Reading & Viewing
Newfoundland and Labrador	Social Studies	World History	International Tensions During the 1930s & WWII
Newfoundland-Labrador	Social Studies	Canadian History 1201	A Time of Depression, Turmoil & War
Northwest Territories	History	Canadian History 20	A Nation on Trial
Nova Scotia	History	Canadian History 11	Justice
Nova Scotia	English Language Arts	English Language Arts	Reading & Viewing
Nunavut	History	Canadian History 20	A Nation on Trial
Ontario	History	Canadian History Since WWI, Grade 10	Communities: Local, National & Global
Ontario	History	American History, Grade 11; Canadian History & Politics Since 1945, Grade 11; World History Since 1900, Grade 11; Canada: History, Identity & Culture	Citizenship & Heritage: Communities: Local, National & Global
Ontario	Law	Understanding Canadian Law, Grade 11: Canadian & International Law, Grade 12	Rights & Freedoms
Ontario	Politics	Canadian Politics & Citizenship, Grade 11	Power, Influence & the Resolution of Differences
Prince Edward Island	Social Studies	Canadian Studies 401	Canada's Cultural Mosaic
Quebec	Social Sciences	Social Sciences	Examines/Interprets social phenomena from a historical perspective; Constructs his/her consciousness from a historical perspective; Constructs his/her consciousness of history

PROVINCE	SUBJECT	RELEVANT COURSES	CURRICULUM UNITS
Saskatchewan	History	History 20: World Issues	National Sovereignty & Collective Security
Saskatchewan	Social Studies	Canadian Studies 30	Culture
Saskatchewan	Social Studies	Social Studies 20, Grade 11	Human Rights
Yukon	Social Studies	Social Studies 11	Autonomy & International Development; Society & Identity
Yukon	History	History 12	Turmoil & Tragedy
Yukon	Social Justice	Social Justice 12	Defining & Analyzing Social Justice, Moving Toward a Socially Just World

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