

# September 11-Teachable Moment or Pandora's Box?

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## A new resource for Secondary Social Science classes may help you decide.

There is seemingly no end to the war and conflict raging on our planet at any given time. For many of us, the tragic events of 2001 brought home the need to pay attention to this fact and to the underlying causes of violence and war at home and around the world. As teachers, we recognize not only the influence these events have on our students, but also the role of education in creating systemic change within a culture. We know that a "teachable moment" has occurred. We have an opportunity to help students reflect, react and find meaning in the wake of these events and engage in the broader exploration of our place in this world and the forces that shape it. But where do we start? How can we help students to become active global citizens, to respond to conflict with methods other than violence, and to recognize injustice locally and globally and act upon it responsibly? Many of us feel ill equipped. It seems to require a lot of background knowledge to tackle these issues effectively, and where do they fit into the Ministry course requirements? Unfortunately, the "Big Issues" may end up taking a back seat to the demands of the day.

Identifying the need for 'easy to use' teaching tools to address 'difficult to deal with' issues, Classroom Connections has undertaken the development of a new resource project focusing on issues of Peace, Conflict, and Global Citizenship. The *Cultivating Peace* initiative is a series of educational resources that provides teachers with mechanisms for tackling the "Big Issues" within the curriculum. The first Module in the series, *Cultivating Peace in the 21st Century*, is a ready-to-use set of activities that examines the basic concepts of peace, why we still don't have it, and what we need to do to get it. It is designed to have applications in Social Science and Canadian/World History curricula across the country at the Grade 10-12 level. To make it as easy to integrate

as possible, the lessons are complete with ready-to-copy student materials, video components from the National Film Board, full teacher instructions, and suggestions for evaluation. In addition, all materials are modular, allowing you to integrate the complete unit or choose individual activities. *Cultivating Peace in the 21st Century* will be available for delivery to schools in August 2002 and available online in June 2002. As well as providing online versions of all developed resources, the Web site has an extensive database of related Web sites and support materials, as well as a student area and a teacher idea sharing feature. Go to [www.cultivatingpeace.ca](http://www.cultivatingpeace.ca) for updates, links, resources, and full project information.

The *Cultivating Peace* project is being developed under the direction of Classroom Connections, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting public education in Canada. ([www.classroom-connections.com](http://www.classroom-connections.com)). To undertake this project, Classroom Connections brought together Boards and Districts of Education, Peace Organizations,



Faculties of Education and Global Education consultants from across Canada. The initial Modules are being made available to schools through the generous financial support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Keep checking the Web site ([www.cultivatingpeace.ca](http://www.cultivatingpeace.ca)) for new developments and look for Module 2 in your school starting August of 2003. While the first two Modules are being developed at the Secondary level, funding is currently being sought to expand this initiative into the Elementary grades.



Hopefully, the *Cultivating Peace* project will help provide the tools and motivation to tackle the "Big Issues" with our students more confidently. Moreover, it will actively engage us all in the search for a Culture of Peace in our homes, our schools, our neighbourhoods, and our global communities. Cultivating a Culture of Peace starts with education. It starts with us.

"A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can only be achieved with systematic education for peace" (*Hague Agenda for Peace & Justice for the 21st Century*).

\*\*All school boards that are registered with Classroom Connections will be sent this free resource in August of 2002. To find out if your Board or District is registered, please phone 1-888-882-8865.

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