Learning and Evaluation Situation

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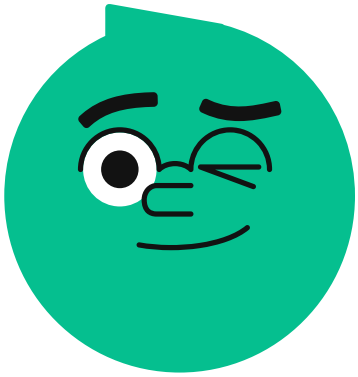


Culture and Citizenship in Québec

Secondary 1

What Does Environmental Responsibility Look Like?

Teacher's Guide

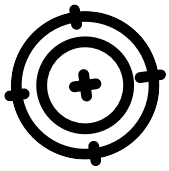
Overview

Grade level	Duration	Main theme	Concept(s)
1st year of Cycle 1 (Secondary I)	One 75-minute period	Collective life and public space	Environmental responsibility Civic participation

During this learning and evaluation situation, students will learn about the concept of environmental responsibility and participate in class discussions on the impact of individual and collective actions.

This activity could be a good lead-in to teaching ecocitizenship the following period.

Objectives



- Define environmental responsibility
- Identify everyday examples of environmentally responsible actions at the individual level
- Study the impact of individual and collective efforts to protect the environment
- Study the impact of industry and government actions on the environment

By the end of this activity, students will be able to define environmental responsibility, and they will have identified individual and collective actions aimed at protecting the environment. The activity is designed to draw students' attention to the real impact of individual efforts to protect the environment, notably in comparison to the actions of other entities, such as industries and governments.

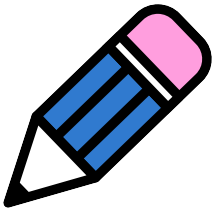
Competencies

C1 : Studies cultural realities

C1 – Establishes the scope of the object of study	C1 – Analyzes social relations	C1 – Evaluates elements of knowledge
Call on relevant concepts Collect primary data Collect secondary data	Characterize relations between individuals, groups, and institutions Draw up findings	Determine the relevance of the information gathered (Optional: Identify limitations of own interpretation)
At each stage, students use relevant concepts (vocabulary, ideas, information) to discuss and answer questions about environmental responsibility. In steps 1, 2, and 3, students draw on their personal experiences and prior knowledge (primary data) to explore and define the term environmental responsibility. In step 4, they use an infographic (secondary data) to answer a discussion question.	In steps 3 and 4, students examine how their actions, and those of businesses and governments, fit into an environmentally responsible approach. Then, they consider whether the actions of these entities are sufficient for protecting the environment and draw conclusions.	In step 4, students critically evaluate the relevance of the secondary sources of the infographic to answer a discussion question. In step 5 (optional), students shift their focus to what was not covered in the activity. They are asked to think about what additional information might help them better understand the object of study.

Materials

- One student booklet per student
- A marker
- A whiteboard



Steps

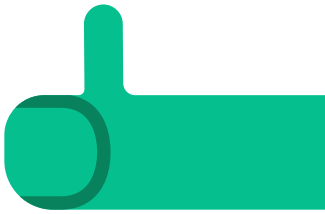
Step 1 (5–8 minutes)

Help your students create a word cloud on the theme of environmental responsibility. Write the words on the board.

What words come to mind when you think of environmental responsibility?

See Appendix 1 for suggestions.

Step 2 (5–8 minutes)



Help your students come up with a definition for environmental responsibility using the ideas in the word cloud.

See Appendix 2 for a sample definition.

Step 3 (15–18 minutes)

Have your students answer the following question in their booklets:

What environmentally responsible actions do you see around you, and what actions do you personally take?

If you notice that students are running out of ideas, share examples from the list in Appendix 3.

Step 4 (20 minutes)

Ask your students to share some of the environmentally responsible actions they wrote in their booklets. Then, pose the following discussion question:

Based on the information provided and your personal knowledge, do you think that the actions being taken at different levels (by individuals, businesses, or governments) have a big enough impact to help protect the environment?

Before they answer, have your students read over the "Facts About the Environment" section in their booklets.

When they are done, engage in a class discussion about the overall impact of individual actions. If needed, guide the conversation toward the fact that individuals are not the only source of pollution in the world, and that individual actions are only part of the solution.

Other entities also have a role to play: Governments, for example, have the power to pass laws and regulations to help protect the environment. Industry players, meanwhile, can reduce their negative impact on the environment by choosing eco-friendly technologies, waste management solutions, and so on.

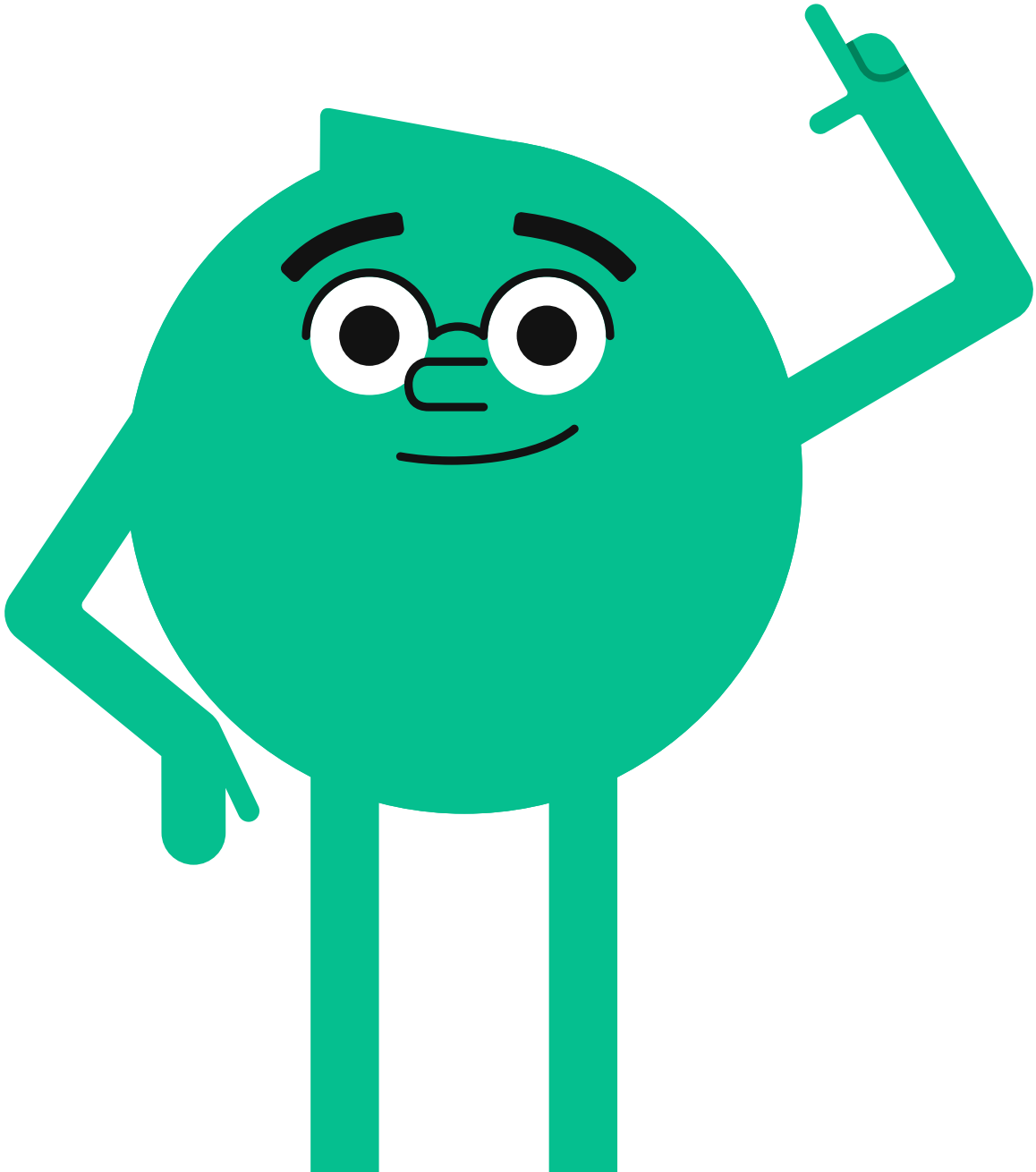
See Appendix 4 for facts and statistics.

Step 5 (optional)

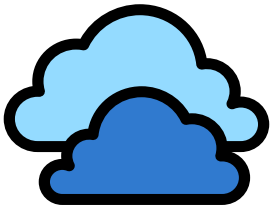
If there is time left at the end of the activity, ask your students these follow-up questions:

What stood out to you the most during this activity?

What additional information would it have been useful to have?

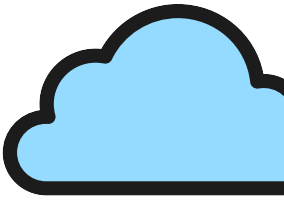


Appendices – Information to Help with Discussion



Appendix 1 – Word Cloud Ideas

Sustainable development
Environment
Ecology
Responsibility
Climate change
Global warming
Pollution
Bus
Active transportation
Biodiversity
Organic farming
Protection
Responsible consumption
Circular economy
Waste
Recycling
Reuse
Reduce
Organic
Greenhouse gases
Individual responsibility
Collective responsibility
Ecosystem



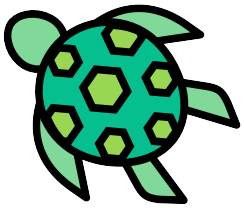
Appendix 2 – A Definition of Environmental Responsibility

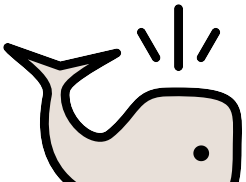
The definition below is intended as a reference. Your students' definition may be longer or shorter, but it should essentially reflect the same idea. It may also include the notion of individual and collective behaviour.

Environmental responsibility means adopting behaviours that respect the environment and that aim to minimize negative impacts on nature.

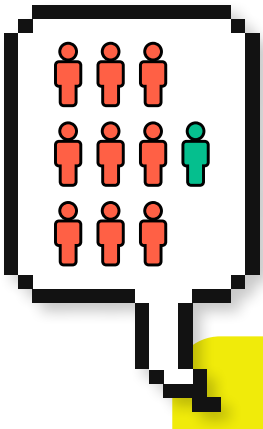
Appendix 3 – Examples of Environmentally Responsible Actions

- → Turn lights off when not in use
- → Sort waste properly and recycle
- → Request to stop receiving unaddressed advertising mail
- → Limit your use of air conditioning
- → Unplug electronic devices when not in use
- → Use water responsibly
- → Drink tap water (use a filter if necessary) instead of buying bottled water
- → Use LED bulbs
- → Try to buy produce when it's in season
- → Buy more locally produced foods
- → Learn how to preserve foods so they keep longer (e.g., make dried apples as a snack)
- → Shop at zero-waste grocery stores whenever possible
- → Use less harmful household products (e.g., vinegar and baking soda for cleaning the kitchen and bathroom)
- → Use a travel mug or reusable water bottle when you're on the go
- → Buy used furniture, clothing, books, and other items
- → Use a bidet instead of disposable toilet paper
- → Get involved in your community (e.g., attend city council meetings, encourage sustainable development and green space projects)
- → Use apps designed to combat food waste (e.g., apps that sell products nearing their best-before date at a discount)
- → Use your right to vote to support individuals who are committed to fighting climate change
- → Participate in petitions or marches in support of environmental causes





Appendix 4 – Environmental Facts About the Planet to Compare with Individual Actions

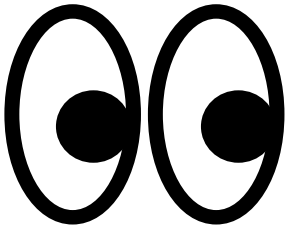


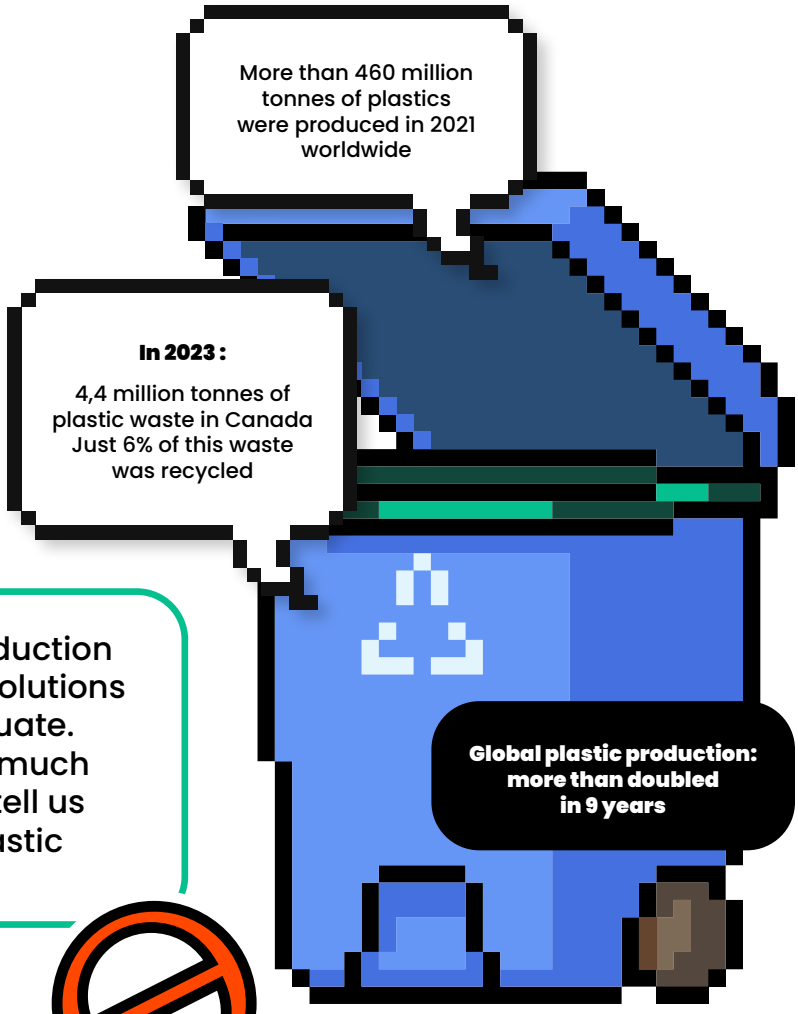
These statistics indicate that pollution is a worldwide issue that affects virtually the entire global population. They also provide evidence of the extreme consequences of pollution—consequences we may not always be aware of.

High pollution levels

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 9 out of 10 people breathe polluted air. Pollution causes around 7 million deaths worldwide every year.

Source : Radio-Canada, 2018





Source : Radio-Canada, 2024

These figures indicate that waste production is a major problem, and that existing solutions (in this case, recycling) are inadequate. What is driving the production of so much plastic waste? What do these facts tell us about how our lifestyles and/or plastic manufacturing have evolved?

The world's most polluting industries

Fossil fuels

Agriculture

Fashion

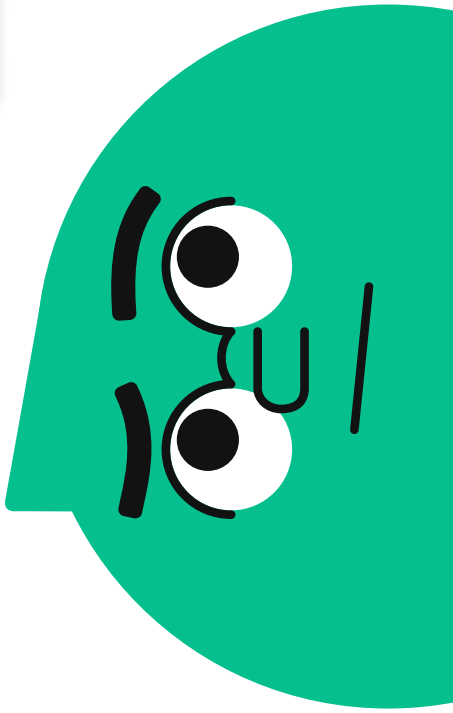
Source : Climate Trade, 2023

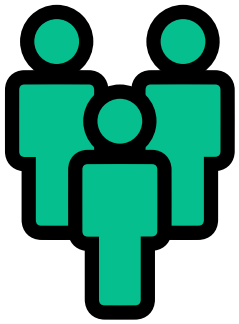
In 2012, the 10 most polluting companies in Quebec were responsible for 55.5% of GHG emissions. That's twice the amount of pollution produced by the residential sector.

Source : IRIS, 2015

These facts reveal the scale of the impact of industrial activities on pollution worldwide. Given the disproportionate effect of industrial pollution, what is the true impact of individual actions?

The most polluting industries in Quebec are aluminum smelters, mines, cement plants, and refineries.





According to a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

If people change their lifestyle by reducing their consumption → We can reduce greenhouse gas emissions

This finding highlights the fact that, if enough people make the effort, individual actions can make a real difference globally.

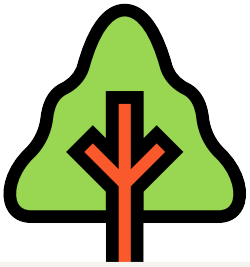
Adoption of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*

This law govern air and water pollution, the use of hazardous materials, greenhouse gas emissions, and waste management.

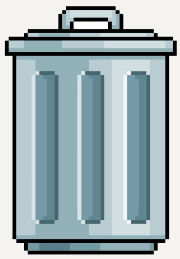
Adopted in 1999

Source : Government of Canada

This piece of information relates to the idea that other entities have the power to act in the interest of protecting the environment— in this case, at the federal level.



Results of waste management measures between 2010 and 2018 in the agglomeration of Montreal



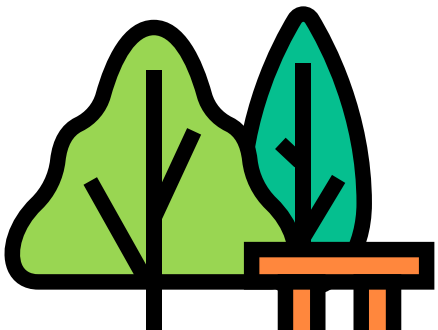
8% reduction in residual materials generated

Despite an increase in both population and economic activity

Source : *Plan directeur de gestion des matières résiduelles de l'agglomération de Montréal 2020-2025*

The agglomeration of Montreal has introduced measures that have helped reduce the total amount of residual materials generated throughout the territory, even though the population and economic activity have both increased.

Examples of actions that can be taken to protect the environment	
What governments can do	**What businesses can do**
Implement greening programs (to plant and maintain trees or flowerbeds on public land) Provide financial aid for the purchase of rain barrels or compost bins Promote carpooling, public transit, cycling, and pedestrian facilities Pass laws to combat planned obsolescence Enact legislation to support the right to repair (link in French) Ensure that their actions and laws align with the principles of sustainable development Enact legislation to regulate waste management Enact legislation to control and reduce industrial pollution	Participate in the circular economy by recovering materials that other companies consider to be waste and finding ways to recycle or repurpose them Use technology to reduce their pollutant emissions and energy consumption as much as possible Use less harmful chemicals whenever possible Replace fossil fuels with cleaner and renewable sources of energy Implement water conservation measures to reduce water consumption Replace pesticides with natural alternatives Prioritize the use of renewable raw materials Implement practices that prevent resource depletion Make sustainable products that require less packaging



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