

GLOSSARY

This glossary includes selected terms used in this Integrated Resource Package, defined as they pertain to Social Justice 12. The definitions provide specificity and context to help clarify the intent of expectations articulated in the curriculum. This glossary is a starting point only, and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of terminology related to social justice.

A

ableism

discriminatory attitudes or behaviours on the basis of physical or mental ability or disability.

Aboriginal

refers to all indigenous peoples in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

advocacy

seeking to influence public policy to redress social injustice for those who are marginalized or otherwise oppressed.

anthropocentrism

making decisions or examining situations solely on the basis of their effect on human beings, to the exclusion of consideration of other living things. See also *speciesism*.

C

colonialism

attitudes, policies, and practices that result in the exploitation or subjugation of a nation or group by a larger or more powerful group. While an understanding of the historical concept of colonialism is important, Social Justice 12 focusses more on the present-day legacy of colonialism and how it is reflected in current policies and practices.

cultural imperialism

promoting or imposing one culture over another, usually an invading culture over an indigenous culture. In the present day, this bias usually results in a lack of visibility and role models in broadcast media, literature, films, and education resources, but is also pervasive in laws and in societal values and practices. In present-day North America, cultural imperialism is commonly manifested as Eurocentrism, the practice of viewing the world from a European perspective and the implied belief in the pre-eminence of European concerns and values.

culture

the way of life (attitudes, behaviours, etc.) of a group of people and how they interact with their natural and manufactured environments. Culture is generally understood to embrace characteristics beyond race or ethnicity; for example, "Canadian culture" encompasses elements and influences of a range of ethnic groups and nationalities. Culture may also be based on individual or social characteristics other than ethnicity (e.g., deaf culture, gay culture, corporate culture, hip-hop culture, culture of peace). Although cultural characteristics are considered together as being distinguishing features of a particular group, it is also understood that there is diversity among individuals within any culture.

culture of peace

as defined by the United Nations, a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour, and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation. Included in a culture of peace is the need to

- foster a culture of peace through education
- promote sustainable economic and social development
- promote respect for all human rights
- ensure equality between women and men
- foster democratic participation
- advance understanding and solidarity
- support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge
- promote international peace and security.

D**discrimination**

occurs when a person—on the basis of characteristics such as her or his sex, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, or physical or mental ability—suffers disadvantages or is denied opportunities available to other members of society. Discrimination may be overt, such as a law or policy that is explicitly intended to treat individuals or groups differently (e.g., denying entry of a specific nationality to Canada). Discrimination also includes “adverse effect discrimination,” when a law or rule is applied equally or consistently in a way that results in certain individuals or groups being disadvantaged (e.g., applying university entrance requirements equally discriminates against individuals who belong to groups that historically have not been able to acquire the requirements). See also *equality*.

diversity

refers to the ways in which people within a society differ from each other. Some of these differences may be visible (e.g., race, ethnicity, sex, age, ability), while others are less visible (e.g., culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background). Honouring diversity is based on the principle that, if these differences are acknowledged and utilized in a positive way, it is of benefit to the quality of life for all in society.

E**economic imperialism**

also known as neocolonialism, the economic dominance of one country or group (e.g., a corporation) over another country or region, resulting in the dominant power having increased control over natural resources, labour forces, and the marketplace.

economic liberalization

refers to a policy of reduced government regulations and restrictions in the economy, resulting in increased participation of private commercial enterprises. Examples of economic liberalization policies and practices include free trade, privatization, outsourcing, and the establishment of economic protection zones.

emotive conjugation

a form of euphemism, in which the word or phrase is intended to produce a heightened emotional response. “Our boys overseas” is an example of emotive conjugation, designed to instill a feeling of empathy and connection with the military.

empowerment

addressing or eliminating legal and institutional injustices that have excluded individuals or groups from full participation in society.

entitlement

the conscious or unconscious belief held by individuals or groups that they are deserving of particular benefits not equally enjoyed by other sectors of society.

equality

a social justice value, achieved when all groups and individuals receive the same treatment, have the same opportunities, and are able to attain the same achievements, and where any differences are not based on prejudice or forms of oppression. Included in this concept is “equality of opportunity,” where the same standards and requirements are applied to individuals in relation to access to education or other advancement. This can in turn perpetuate inequality when an injustice has prevented certain groups or individuals from achieving the relevant standards or requirements (see also *discrimination*). On the other hand, “equality of outcome” refers to ensuring that all groups are able to attain the status and benefits possible in society, which requires action to address historical and systemic disadvantages. See also *equity*.

equity

equality while accommodating individual and group differences. An example of *equality* would be basketball team tryouts where boys and girls compete against each other; a parallel example of *equity* would be separate teams for girls and boys basketball, each receiving equal financial and time resources. Equity also describes those practices and policies that seek to remove and prevent traditional discriminatory barriers to services and resources.

ethics

a set of concepts or principles that guide people in determining what behaviour helps or harms others; perceptions of right and wrong; the rightness or wrongness of actions, the virtue or vice of the motives that promote them, and the goodness or badness of the consequences of those actions.

F**feminism**

a broad term encompassing a range of social and political movements and philosophies concerned with sexual equality and the elimination of discrimination, stereotyping, objectification, and oppression of women and girls. Issues such as voting rights (suffrage), property rights, employment equity, pay equity, education equity, institutionalized sexism, sexual harassment, domestic violence, reproductive rights, and gender inclusive language are all examples of feminist causes. Feminist theory crosses a range of social sciences disciplines, including anthropology, economics, law, literary and artistic criticism, philosophy, and sociology.

G**gender identity**

refers to the gender with which a person identifies (i.e., whether one perceives oneself to be a man, a woman, or describes oneself in some less conventional way), but can also be used to refer to the gender that other people attribute to the individual on the basis of what they know from gender expression indications (e.g., social behaviour, likes and interests, clothing, hair style). Gender identity may be affected by a variety of social structures, including the person’s culture, employment status, religion, and family. See also *sex*.

globalization

refers to the increasing connectivity among countries and regions, including the integration and interdependence within economic, social, technological, cultural, political, and environmental spheres. Globalization is the outcome of many factors such as advanced technology, communication, and economic structures.

H

harassment

repeated, objectionable conduct or comment, directed toward a specific person or persons, with the effect of creating an intimidating, humiliating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment. Harassment may be physical, verbal, or social.

hate crime

also known as bias-motivated crimes, when a perpetrator targets a victim specifically because of her or his race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender identity, or other characteristic. Hate crimes may also be targeted toward entire groups, such as in the case of religious persecution, ethnic cleansing, or genocide.

hegemony

political dominance of one power over others in a group in which all are supposedly equal; how one group maintains power. In the context of Social Justice 12, hegemony specifically refers to a situation in which a worldview or cultural belief is so dominant in a society that individuals in that society take it as self-evident, and are not even aware that other ways of thinking are valid.

heterosexism

the assumption that heterosexual orientation is better than other sexual orientations and therefore deserving of public acceptance and legal privilege. See also *homophobia*.

homophobia

a fear, dislike, or hatred of homosexuality or homosexuals, or of people or behaviours perceived to be homosexual. Homophobia manifests itself as prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and/or acts of violence. Homophobia can exist at personal, institutional, and societal levels. Also transphobia: fear, dislike, or hatred of transgendered or transsexual people. See also *heterosexism*.

humanitarianism

the belief that people's duty is to promote human welfare, based on the assumption that all human beings deserve respect and dignity and should be treated as such.

human rights

the provision for every individual to have the right to live, work, and learn in an environment free from fear, discrimination, and harassment. Human rights emphasizes the rights of the individual, the responsibilities of employers and service providers, and the need for preventive action. Human rights policy goals generally focus on prevention, remedial action, and correction, and are guided by the principle that human rights violations are harmful to an entire organization and community, and not simply to those who are oppressed.

Goals or purposes of human rights include, but are not limited to, the following:

- preventing discrimination
- redressing discrimination against individuals
- correcting persistent patterns of inequality affecting groups
- providing a fair process to achieve an effective, efficient, and timely remedy for incidents or situations in which human rights are threatened.

In BC, human rights are primarily defined by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/index.html) and the *BC Human Rights Code* (www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/H/96210_01.htm).

I **identity**

sense of self, acceptance, belonging, and citizenship. Identity is understood to be evolving as a result of a number of influences (e.g., migration, media, technology, pluralism). Identity becomes a social justice issue when one group's identity is diminished (e.g., as a result of cultural imperialism or globalization), or when two or more groups' identities are in conflict.

L **LGBT**

an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered. As a collective term, LGBT is also used to avoid specific sexual orientation labels, and to recognize that issues of harassment and discrimination are common to all sexual minorities. The acronym also sometimes appears as LGBTQ, with the Q standing for "queer" and/or "questioning."

M **marginalization**

exclusion from full and meaningful participation in society. A form of *oppression*, marginalization can be experienced at an individual level, a community level, and/or at a policy level.

O **oppression**

refers to the injustices and disadvantages some individuals or groups suffer as a consequence of intentional or unintentional practices within a society. Oppression can take many forms including, but not limited to, exploitation, *marginalization*, powerlessness, *cultural imperialism*, *economic imperialism*, and violence.

P **power**

the real or perceived ability or potential to make choices and to bring about significant change in a society or in people's lives. Power can be based on a dominance of sex, age, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, socioeconomic class, geography, etc. Power can also be conferred on an individual by a group, and can be used for the benefit of others. An inequity of power is one of the most common causes of social injustice.

R **restorative justice**

emphasizes repairing the harm rather than punishing the perpetrator. Restorative justice solutions are usually arrived at via dialogue and co-operation among all affected parties.

S **sex**

the biological determination of female or male. See also *gender identity*.

sexual orientation

refers to a person's feelings of sexual or romantic attraction. There are many labels that individuals use to describe their sexual orientation, including, but not limited to, lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual, straight, and two-spirited. Concepts of and terminology for sexual orientation vary from culture to culture and have evolved over time.

social justice

the full participation and inclusion of all people in society, together with the promotion and protection of their legal, civil, and *human rights*. The aim of social justice—to achieve a just and equitable society where all share in the prosperity of that society—is pursued by individuals and groups through collaborative social action.

speciesism

assigning different values or rights to beings on the basis of their species membership. Speciesism is manifested both on a universal level (i.e., the belief that humans have intrinsic rights over all animals—see *anthropocentrism*) and in categorizing groups of animals (e.g., some animals are for food, some are to be used as tools, some are for entertainment, some are for companionship). The concept of speciesism is used mostly in relation to animal rights advocacy.

stereotype

preconceived notions about a person or group of people based on their characteristics such as their sex, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, or physical or mental ability.

stewardship

an ethic that emphasizes co-operative planning and management of resources in the interest of long-term sustainability. This ethic is most commonly manifested as environmental stewardship, focussing on the responsible management of natural resources to ensure that they are available for current and future generations.

systemic analysis

a technique of social analysis and an approach to understanding a situation or reality of injustice. Systemic analysis focusses on analysing the roles of institutions (e.g., legal, education, media), infrastructures, and belief systems within a society that may or may not create unjust situations. It shifts the focus from individuals and their personal experiences to social dynamics of power imbalance, exclusion, marginalization, etc.

T**transformational leadership**

a philosophy of social change that focusses less on short-term goals and more on broader social change and higher order intrinsic needs. Under transformational leadership, group members work together in a setting that inspires the individuals in that group to work toward a common good.

two-spirited

a modern term for a traditional North American Aboriginal concept implying a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit in the same body. Two-spirited individuals were found in many, if not most, pre-contact Aboriginal communities, and played important societal roles within communities. There are terms for these individuals in the various North American Aboriginal languages, and their social function varied from nation to nation. In present-day parlance, two-spirited is also used to refer to gay, lesbian, and bisexual Aboriginal people.