

Talkin' 'bout my generation: Youth cultures

Strand

Time, Continuity and Change
Culture and Identity

Core learning outcomes

Time, Continuity and Change

- TCC 5.3** Students collaborate to locate and systematically record information about the contributions of people in diverse past settings.
- TCC 5.4** Students explain the consequences of Australia's international relations on the development of a cohesive society.

Culture and Identity

- CI 5.1** Students investigate aspects of diverse cultural groups, including Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander groups, and how others perceive these aspects.
- CI 5.3** Students share their sense of belonging to a group to analyse cultural aspects that construct their identities.
- CI 5.4** Students describe how governments have caused changes to particular groups.
- CI 5.5** Students express how dominant and marginalised identities are constructed by media and other influences.

Purpose and overview

Activities encourage students to recognise that their sense of belonging to peer groups constitutes youth cultures and to appreciate that youth cultures are many and varied. Students reflect on how the media and government influence the construction of identities. There is an emphasis on cultural diversity, but also recognition that contributing to and celebrating diversity can unify and support a sense of belonging to a cohesive society.

Concepts of cultural diversity and belonging are explored. Investigations are conducted using the sequences of a social investigation strategy.



Phases (Minimum time recommended: 12 hours)	Activities	Core learning outcomes	Assessment opportunities
1. Exploring a sense of belonging (approximately 2 hours)	1. Groups to which we belong 2. Other groups	CI 5.1 CI 5.3	Observation of student group discussions and collection of short written pieces as negotiated. Assignment drafts.
2. Investigating how governments, media and individuals influence young people (approximately 4 hours)	3. Governments and youth cultures 4. Media and youth cultures 5. Contributions individuals make to youth cultures	TCC 5.3 CI 5.1 CI 5.3 CI 5.4 CI 5.5	An essay that follows a provided model, reports or draft assignments as described in Resource 2.
3. Investigating global influences on youth cultures (approximately 4 hours)	6. Youth cultures and Australia's international relations 7. Reflecting in preparation for the youth culture assignment 8. Research	TCC 5.3 TCC 5.4 CI 5.1 CI 5.3 CI 5.4 CI 5.5	Student reports, point-form summaries, assignment drafts and the submitted assignment (Resource 2).
4. Reflecting (approximately 2 hours)	9. Where to now?	CI 5.5	Oral report.

Assessment

The assessment opportunities outlined are examples of how to assess students' demonstrations of the identified learning outcomes. As often as possible, negotiate assessment with students and support a variety of ways of demonstrating the learning outcomes. Reflect with students on evidence gathered when making judgments about their demonstrations of learning outcomes. Some students may require more time and/or other contexts in which to demonstrate these learning outcomes. Other modules may provide such time and/or contexts and the 'Levels 1 to 6 module learning outcomes maps' in the *Years 1 to 10 Studies of Society and Environment Sourcebook Guidelines* can be used to identify these modules.

Assessing learning outcomes at different levels

Activities are designed primarily for students working towards demonstrations of Level 5 learning outcomes. Some assessment opportunities may be used to decide whether students are demonstrating the learning outcomes at levels before or after Level 5. To guide judgments about students' demonstrations of learning outcomes consider whether students are:

- working towards demonstration of the Level 5 learning outcomes
- demonstrating the Level 5 learning outcomes
- demonstrating the Level 5 learning outcomes and working towards Level 6 learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes in the syllabus at Level 4 and Level 6 could provide a guide for teacher judgments. Studies of Society and Environment learning outcomes are organised in rows so that there is a progression of concepts and processes within a strand. For example, the progression from CI 4.3 to CI 5.3 to CI 6.3 involves increasing sophistication and complexity, particularly related to the concept of *belonging* and the process of *participating*, though neither of these is exclusive of other concepts and processes. The elaborations provide specific content examples of how the concepts and processes may be levelled from Levels 1 to 6. See the Queensland School Curriculum Council website at www.qscc.qld.edu.au for more information.

- Resource 2** The assignment described in Resource 2 could be introduced in Activity 1 and drafts used to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate core learning outcomes. Other opportunities to gather evidence of students' demonstrations of learning outcomes are listed in the overview table.

Using this module

- Resource 1** The activities in this module are structured and sequenced using a social investigation strategy (Resource 1). Activities gradually increase students' awareness of this strategy. The following focus question is investigated throughout this module:
- What are the main factors that have influenced the characteristics of different youth cultures?
- Youth cultures** Numerous approaches can be taken to studying youth cultures. Students can investigate youth as 'outsiders' or as 'insiders'. This means they may look at youth either as a topic with which they have limited connection or they can conduct a study of their own culture. Both are encouraged in this module.

Background information

Terminology

In this module students have opportunities to become familiar with and use the following terminology:

adolescence	culture	marketing appeal	social investigation
advertising	dominant	media	strategies
anthropologist	enterprise	peer group	subculture
audience	marginal	popular culture	youth
consumerism	market	representation	

School authority policies

Be aware of and observe school authority policies that may be relevant to this module, particularly those related to social justice.

Equity considerations

Activities take place in a supportive environment. They provide opportunities for students to increase their understanding and appreciation of equity through valuing cultural diversity and challenging inequities. Activities encourage students to:

- consider a variety of youth cultures
- value peaceful cooperation, introspection, sharing and cooperation.

Some students with disabilities may need assistance with some activities. Advice should be sought from their support teachers.

It is important that these equity considerations inform decision making about teaching strategies, classroom organisation and assessment.

Links

Studies of Society and Environment

This module is one of a suite of modules for Levels 1 to 6. See the Queensland School Curriculum Council website at www.qscc.qld.edu.au for more information.

This module has conceptual and process links to the following modules:

- Level 4: *The telly never lies: Media representations*
- Level 6: *Identities and individualism: Youth cultures*.

Other key learning areas

Activities may offer opportunities for planning across key learning areas. However, it is important that the integrity of the key concepts, organising ideas and processes within key learning areas is maintained.

Evaluation of a unit of work

After completion of units of work developed from this module, collect information and make judgments about:

- teaching strategies and activities used to progress student learning towards demonstrations of core learning outcomes
- opportunities provided to gather evidence about student's demonstrations of core learning outcomes
- future learning opportunities for students who have not yet demonstrated the core learning outcomes and to challenge and extend those students who have already demonstrated the core learning outcomes
- the extent to which activities matched needs of particular groups of students and reflected equity considerations
- the appropriateness of time allocations for particular activities
- the appropriateness of resources used.

Information from this evaluation process can be used to plan subsequent units of work so that they build on, and support, student learning. The evaluated units of work may also be adapted prior to their reuse. For further information, refer to the 'Curriculum evaluation' section in the sourcebook guidelines.

Activities

Phase 1 Exploring a sense of belonging

Core learning outcomes emphasis: CI 5.1, CI 5.3

Resource 1

In this phase students explore the concept of youth culture and examine cultural aspects that help to construct their identities. The activities involve exploration of concepts such as cultural diversity and belonging. In accordance with the social investigation strategy (Resource 1), initial questions are framed.

Focus questions:

- Who am I?
- How do cultures affect who we are?
- What are some characteristics of youth cultures?
- Is there a single youth culture?
- What do cultures look like from different perspectives?
- What are the major influences that define the characteristics of youth cultures?

Resource 2

Teaching considerations

Initial opportunities to assess students' demonstrations of the core learning outcomes can occur through a series of small tasks and observations, with additional opportunities being provided through the assignment task described in Resource 2. Alternatively, the assignment task might constitute the main source of evidence of students' demonstrations of learning outcomes. Multiple opportunities to demonstrate the learning outcomes will occur as students provide written drafts or oral reports of a work in progress.

Activity 1 Groups to which we belong

Teaching considerations

Sensitivity to the values, beliefs and structures of different cultural groups is crucial. Emphasise that there are elements of risk in communicating honestly with each other, but that it is important that we all learn to accept and respect the opinions and beliefs of others.

Resources 1 and 2

Share your own feelings associated with group membership (sense of belonging to a group) and identify cultural aspects of that group that may have helped construct your identity. Explain that other people may perceive those cultural aspects differently. Use this opportunity to motivate student interest in this module and to clarify the core learning outcomes, especially CI 5.1 and CI 5.3. Distribute copies of the core learning outcomes. Briefly outline the phases of this module and explain how they emphasise different core learning outcomes. Explain the assignment tasks to be completed and the social investigation strategy that will be used to guide research (Resources 1 and 2).

Ask students to form small groups and to take turns sharing their sense of belonging to a group and explanations of how that group may influence their sense of identity. Invite students to record four or five cultural aspects of groups that may have influenced the identity of another student and which are different from the aspects that influenced themselves. Each student then shares their list with the rest of the group. The group removes repetitions, modifies the descriptions where necessary and creates one list.

Activity 2 Other groups

Provide a range of sources that illustrate a variety of youth cultures. For example:

- photographs from current teenage magazines
- a TV guide with some popular teenagers' shows circled
- a short video segment from a program popular with young people
- past and current newspaper advertisements directed at young people
- artefacts or photographs of artefacts that young people in other countries might value
- samples of music popular with teenagers in different places
- textbook interpretations of what constitutes youth cultures (for example, Alexander & Rouen 1999, Chapter 3 and/or McCauley, Brown & Mills 2001, Chapter 6).

Support materials and references

Make sure that several of the sources reflect positive aspects of a range of youth cultures. If your school has a high proportion of Indigenous students, talk to some of them and find out about their favourite TV shows. Use this as the basis for circling shows in the TV guide.

Invite students to form small groups, different from those they were in during Activity 1. Explain that each group will use a source to identify cultural aspects of a group of young people. Explain that this is similar to the work of anthropologists and sociologists and that the group under investigation could exist in a specific location or across nations. Encourage students to use a range of perspectives when interpreting the sources.

Each student should record:

- the source
- the cultural group identified
- the cultural aspects that are agreed to exist.

A table such as the following may be useful for this purpose.

Source	Youth cultural group	Cultural aspects of group	Perceptions of others

As student groups discuss their interpretations and try to reach conclusions, join different groups and ask some students to share their own sense of belonging to a group. Use this information to analyse aspects of culture that help to construct their identities. This discussion may provide opportunities to collect evidence of demonstrations of CI 5.3.

Ask groups to exchange sources and support more discussion. Ensure that each group has at least one opportunity to investigate aspects related to groups of Indigenous Australian youth. After analysis of three or four sources, ask students to form new groups. In these new groups, students add 'Perceptions of others' to the last column of the table and compare their perceptions with those of others. Opportunities to collect evidence of students' demonstrations of CI 5.1 occur during discussions, but could be supported by brief written submissions where students explain what is represented by the findings summarised in the table.

Ask students to reflect on the information they have summarised in the table and decide on any common aspects that seem to influence all youth cultural groups. Explain that, at this stage, these decisions are hypothetical. Help students to frame some questions to test their hypothesis, keeping in mind the focus questions of Phase 1.

Phase 2 Investigating how governments, media and individuals influence young people

Core learning outcomes emphasis: TCC 5.3, CI 5.1, CI 5.3, CI 5.4, CI 5.5

These activities involve framing questions, negotiating and gathering information.

Focus questions:

- How have governments changed or tried to change particular youth groups?
- How are youth cultures portrayed by the media in Australia?
- Does the media present some youth cultures as dominant and marginalise others?
- To what extent have individuals been able to influence youth cultures?

Teaching considerations

These activities should link to the contexts created in the first phase.

These activities will assist students to recognise the socialising forces that act upon them, whether they be from the government, the media or individuals. The activities in this phase are intended to develop gradually understandings about socialisation processes and personal empowerment. By Activity 5, students should appreciate that they can deepen their understandings far more by collaborating to explore the contributions of a range of people in the distant and recent past than they could through explorations based only in their own youth cultures.

Activity 3 Governments and youth cultures

Assist students to investigate how governments have caused changes to particular youth groups. For example:

- the removal of young Indigenous Australians from their parents — the stolen generation
- the provision of 'free' universities
- the lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18 in 1974.

Model how to use the information gathered to write an essay. For example, provide an essay describing the effects of military conscription during the 1960s. Highlight essay features such as:

- the way modifiers like 'some' or 'many' can help avoid over-generalisation
- how the question (see 'Using this module') can be answered in three or four component parts and how these can be introduced in general terms in the first paragraph, then detailed in subsequent paragraphs.

Ask students to present their findings in an essay.

Activity 4 Media and youth cultures

Ensure the meaning of the term culture is clear to students and that they understand that it can be defined in two ways:

- in a narrow aesthetic or artistic manner that focuses on artistic forms of expression within commonly accepted artistic institutions
- in a broad anthropological manner that embraces ways of living, habits, ideas, popular culture and everyday aesthetic activities.

Provide a definition of the term youth culture as it refers to the ideas and attitudes that are central to the lives of young people between the ages of approximately ten and seventeen. These ideas and attitudes may be expressed in many ways, including through language, clothing, musical choices, leisure interests and other lifestyle choices.

Invite students to assume the role of anthropologists who have been given the job of creating a brief profile of a local youth. Explain that an anthropologist is a social scientist who studies human behaviour in an objective and non-judgmental way. Explain that the profile could include an illustration with annotations and a short report. The annotations should refer to dress, accessories and other physical features. The report should be organised under basic anthropological headings — for example, habitat, appearance, clothing, behaviours.

Resource 3 Discuss possible sources of information and raise the question of whether a group can objectively and critically observe itself. Suggest that the media may provide insights into young people as a general group. Explain that advertisements directed at young people may be a useful place to start looking for evidence of how some people depict their target audience. Consider distributing Resource 3 to guide analysis.

Support materials and references

Ask students to form groups and to use advertisements to list and identify what is used to represent young people. Encourage students to discuss, group and classify their findings until they have compiled a categorised list. Discuss images that are not represented in the advertisements. Introduce and discuss the terms 'dominant identities' and 'marginalised identities'. Use textbook exercises that reinforce understandings of these concepts (for example, Kenman 2000, Chapter 9).

Encourage students to use the information in their lists to develop their profiles. Display the completed profiles and ask students to discuss how accurately they believe these profiles reflect the youth cultures of which they feel part. Ask them to explain their views.

Describe a youth culture that is not represented among the student cohort. Ask students to consider whether the profiles reflect this youth culture and to explain their views.

Activity 5 Contributions individuals make to youth cultures

Ask students to compile a list of people they feel have made a contribution to youth cultures. Ask students how many of these people:

- are from countries other than Australia or the USA
- represent cultural areas other than rock music, movies or television.

Encourage several students to read their lists while others record the names on a whiteboard or an OHT. Discuss the general cultural areas associated with each of the people listed and the possible advantages of investigating the contributions made by people from diverse settings.

Ensure that students discuss and record a variety of individuals who have made a major contribution to youth cultures.

Explain that before the mid-1950s, there was little commercialisation of and marketing to a mass youth culture. The culture of young people was usually a replica of adult culture. These adult-oriented 'youth cultures' were, nonetheless, influenced by the contributions of many individuals.

Ask students to select an individual or group that they would like to research. Assist them to use the social investigation strategy to begin to conduct their research, analyse sources of data, make judgments and prepare to present their findings. Students will work in groups to present their findings as an oral report.

Opportunities for demonstrations of learning outcomes may occur as students conduct their research, develop records and present their findings.

Phase 3 Investigating global influences on youth cultures

Core learning outcomes emphasis: TCC 5.3, TCC 5.4, CI 5.1, CI 5.3, CI 5.4, CI 5.5

The activities in this phase assist students to use the social investigation strategy to conduct their own research.

Focus questions:

- How have global issues influenced youth cultures?
- What have we been investigating?
- How have we been investigating?
- How can we investigate our own topic more effectively?

Activity 6 Youth cultures and Australia's international relations

Explain that you are going to give a brief oral presentation that explains the impact Australia's foreign policy has had on youth cultures and the development of a cohesive society. Explain the meaning of cohesive. Tell students that they are to record systematically information as you speak and that they will need to provide their notes in a point-form written summary. This may provide opportunities to collect evidence of demonstrations of TCC 5.4.

In your oral presentation, summarise what has been learnt so far about youth cultures and what influences them. Highlight the fact that socialisation forces are not always obvious and that our ideas and attitudes are often influenced by the past as well as by government actions, media and individuals. For example, if students have studied the White Australia Policy, remind them how this policy meant that the culture of Australian youth was primarily British in origin, at least until World War II. The multicultural post-war immigration program created a wider variety of cultures within Australia, but these were often marginalised. For example, although Melbourne in the 1950s and 1960s had the largest Greek population outside Athens, advertisements intended for the youth market rarely reflected Greek youth cultures.

Explain that the US was the dominant post-war cultural influence on young people and that to a certain extent this was a result of Australia's international relations. Read part of Prime Minister John Curtin's 1942 speech about Australia being free of any traditional ties to Britain and keen to turn to the USA. Mention the reality of Australia relying on the USA to help defend the nation against a Japanese invasion, as exemplified in the battle of the Coral Sea in 1942. Refer to the ANZUS Treaty and how keen some Australians have been to support it, particularly in Vietnam and after the September 2001 attack on the USA. Explain that the USA is Australia's second largest trading partner after Japan and that military and economic reliance on the USA since 1942 has contributed to Australian youth cultures having a very American appearance.

Explain that since the 1970s Australia has celebrated the diversity of its multicultural population, although it still remains strongly tied to the USA. While fewer youth cultures are marginalised as a result of this more open and tolerant society, Australia is still developing as an inclusive society.

Activity 7 Reflecting in preparation for the youth culture assignment

Remind students of the focus question for this module:

- What are the main factors that have influenced the characteristics of different youth cultures?

**Resources
1 and 2**

Ask students to consider this question and discuss their responses. Explain that they have been involved in the inquiry process. Review the assignment tasks (Resource 2) and how they relate to the social investigation strategy (Resource 1).

Activity 8 Research

Assist students to research the focus question and complete the tasks on Resource 2. Use this assignment to collect evidence of demonstrations of learning outcomes.

Phase 4 Reflecting

Core learning outcomes emphasis: CI 5.5

Activity 9 Where to now?

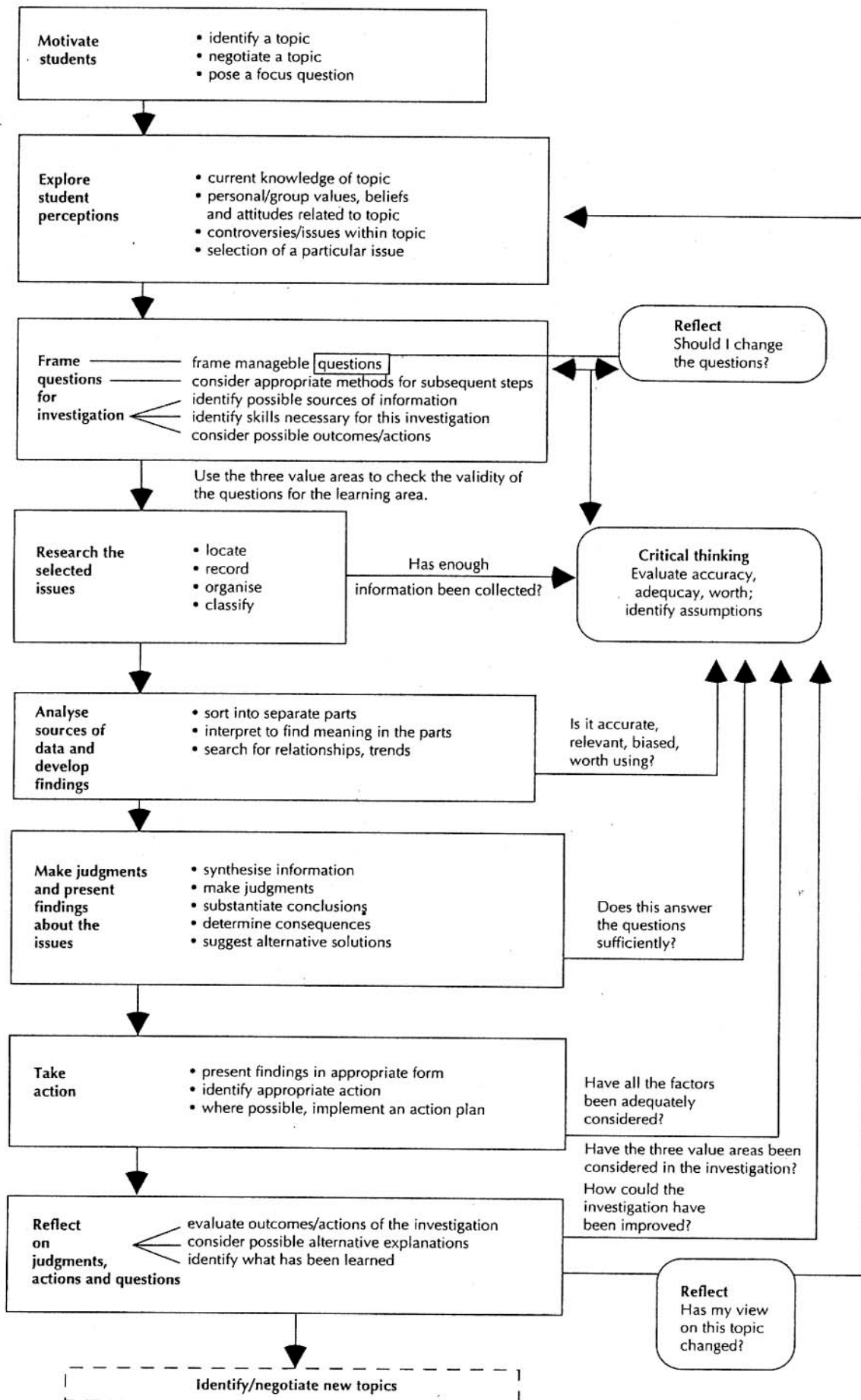
Ask students to:

- share what they have investigated and their findings in a oral report
- decide what to do with their findings
- decide if anything needs further investigation and, if so, how this might occur — for example, students might consider continuing their investigations in their own time, in collaboration with another key learning area or in collaboration with a school or community group
- decide if any actions are needed.

Ask someone from each group to present the group's decisions. Assess the decisions and then discuss possibilities for further investigation and/or action as a class.

Social investigation strategy

Resource 1



Youth culture assignment

Resource 2

Focus question: What are the main factors that have influenced the characteristics of different youth cultures?

Core learning outcomes: TCC 5.3, TCC 5.4, CI 5.1, CI 5.3, CI 5.4, CI 5.5.

Completion of the following tasks will enable you to demonstrate the focus core learning outcomes. You will begin by selecting a youth culture on which to focus and will then follow the stages of the social investigation strategy.

Remember that this investigation will not provide an absolute answer to the focus question. You will have gathered and analysed information, completed some critical thinking and analysed the evidence from more than one perspective, but other perspectives will always be possible. Although conclusions are always tentative, you should be able to justify them with the evidence collected.

Tasks

1. Identify a youth culture on which to focus. It could be a youth culture that is distinctive to your local area or it could be a culture that exists around Australia or even around the world. Describe some aspects of this youth culture — for example, fashions, tastes and attitudes. Be prepared to justify your description. Explain why you may or may not belong to or identify with the youth culture you have chosen.
2. Explore your current knowledge of this youth culture by describing some possible influences on it, such as government and media influences. Discuss your descriptions with others. Discuss what information may be available.
3. Frame your question for investigation in negotiation with your teacher.
4. Use library and/or Internet resources to gather information.
5. Analyse the information and use it to reach a conclusion. Remember to support your conclusion with evidence and to record the source of this evidence — for example, a URL or the bibliographical details of books.
6. Gather information about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth cultures are portrayed by the media. Perhaps they are not portrayed by the media and are therefore perceived as marginal. Compare the identity of your youth culture with aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth culture as portrayed in the media. Record your conclusions.
7. During your investigations you should have identified some individuals who have made a contribution to youth cultures. Share your information with another student and collaborate to record systematically this information. To be systematic involves, for example, recording the details of sources of information. You will have to submit your work and all preparation notes to your teacher for assessment, so keep them organised.
8. You should have identified a number of influences on your youth culture. Find between one and three other students who have also completed the previous tasks. Compare the influences you have identified with those identified by other students and look for any similarities.

Consider whether the youth cultures investigated had anything in common and what these commonalities resulted from. Consider whether Australia's international relations have influenced commonalities. Negotiate with your teacher a particular aspect of Australia's international relations to investigate. Draft a one- or two-paragraph reply to the following question:

'How did Australia's international relations assist the development of a cohesive society?'

9. Use the information you have collected to develop a proposal to promote a socially just response to a current cultural issue raised in the media. The proposal could be in the form of a letter to a local politician and the cultures referred to could be one or more of the youth cultures you have just investigated.

When you have completed your research and proposal, submit all your work and notes to your teacher.

Analysing news stories and advertisements in the media**Resource 3**

The media portrays youth cultures in advertisements, fictional accounts and news stories. A range of techniques can be used to analyse these portrayals — you may have learnt of some of them during English lessons.

News stories — scan newspapers and magazines for stories about young people. Although these may not be about the youth culture you are investigating, they may raise issues that could relate to your chosen youth culture. If possible, locate news stories about your chosen youth culture. Look for key words that imply a bias, either in favour of or against young people (their behaviours, dress, attitudes etc.). Look for bias in:

- language — for example, the way the term 'youth' is used
- the sort of topic associated with young people — for example, what percentage of the stories about young people in a newspaper in one week are about crime or antisocial behaviours?
- the way stereotypes are used — for example, reporting on the behaviour or problems of a few as though they are a part of all young people's lives
- perspective — for example, is the voice of young people heard?

Advertisements — identify the techniques used in advertisements.

- Compare how young people are portrayed in advertisements aimed at youth and how they are portrayed in advertisements targeted at adults.
- Analyse advertisements shown during television programs intended for teenagers. Consider:
 - the products advertised and whether they can be grouped into certain categories
 - the target audience
 - the techniques that are used
 - the type of language used
 - the youth cultures that are portrayed
- any groups of youths that are not portrayed or that are not portrayed as often — for example, ethnic groups, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, people with disabilities.

Support materials and references

- Alexander, D. & Rouen, M. 1999, *SOSE for Queensland 1*, Heinemann, Port Melbourne, Vic.
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- VASST 1994, 1995, 1996, *New Perspectives in Social Education 1, 2 and 3*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Websites

(All websites listed were accessed in June 2002.)

- Addicted To Noise. www.addict.com/
Music news, samples and reviews focusing on alternative and independent bands.
- Australian Broadcasting Authority. www.aba.gov.au/
- Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training. www.dest.gov.au/
- Families in Queensland. www.families.qld.gov.au/
Contains specific references to youth policy and issues.
- Spank! Youth Culture Online. www.spankmag.com/
A youth-based online magazine containing articles, regular columns, reviews, letters, editorials and archives of past issues.
- Time Off Magazine. www.timeoff.com.au/
Contains all the text from the weekly street press publication.
- Youth Studies Australia. www.acys.utas.edu.au/ncys/ysa/index.html
A research-based, interdisciplinary journal of youth research. Contains articles, summaries of press reports, study starters linked to articles, news about related Internet links and reviews.

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This sourcebook module should be read in conjunction with the following Queensland School Curriculum Council materials:

Years 1 to 10 Studies of Society and Environment Syllabus

Years 1 to 10 Studies of Society and Environment Sourcebook Guidelines

Studies of Society and Environment Initial In-service Materials

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