

Identities and individualism: Youth cultures

StrandTime, Continuity and Change
Culture and Identity

Core learning outcomes

*Time,
Continuity
and Change*

- TCC 6.4** Students produce a corroborated argument concerning causes of a change or continuity in environments, media or gender roles.
- TCC 6.5** Students develop criteria-based judgments about the ethical behaviour of people in the past.

*Culture and
Identity*

- CI 6.1** Students analyse the ways in which various societies inhibit or promote cultural diversity.
- CI 6.2** Students develop a proposal to promote a socially just response to perceptions of cultures associated with a current issue.
- CI 6.3** Students collaboratively develop a community strategy for celebrating or moderating the effects of globalisation on cultural groups to which they belong.
- CI 6.5** Students analyse ways in which social construction of gender in different cultures and socioeconomic circumstances affects adolescent identities.

Purpose and overview

Activities explore youth identities as constructed by the media. They assist students to consider how they might take greater control of their lives, especially their ideas, values and attitudes in present-day globalised Australia.



Phases (Minimum time recommended: 12 hours)	Activities	Core learning outcomes	Assessment opportunities
1. Exploring youth cultures (approximately 3 hours)	Activities in this phase assist students to begin to gain an understanding of themselves by exploring their own youth cultures and other cultures. 1. Identities — media influences 2. Identities — gender 3. Identities — age 4. Influences — ethical or not?	TCC 6.5 CI 6.1	Group oral reports or individual written responses
2. Investigating youth gender roles (approximately 6 hours)	Students investigate youth gender roles in different times and places and compare findings to produce an argument about the main causes of changes or continuities in these roles. 5. Gender roles in different times and places 6. Locating and analysing evidence 7. Communicating an argument	TCC 6.4 TCC 6.5 CI 6.1 CI 6.5	Research essay (Resource 1)
3. Young people and globalisation (approximately 3 hours)	Students review what they have learnt about ethical behaviour. They consider the impacts of globalisation. They use prior learning to collaborate and create proposals for socially just responses to current youth-related issues. 8. Current issues — young people and globalisation 9. Reflection	TCC 6.5 CI 6.1 CI 6.2 CI 6.3	School or local community strategy

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 6 learning outcomes. Some assessment opportunities may be used to decide whether students are demonstrating the learning outcomes at levels before or after Level 6. To guide judgments about students' demonstrations of learning outcomes consider whether students are:

- working towards demonstrations of the Level 6 learning outcomes
- demonstrating the Level 6 learning outcomes
- demonstrating the Level 6 learning outcomes and working towards Beyond Level 6 learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes in the syllabus at Level 5 and Beyond Level 6 could provide a guide for teacher judgments. Studies of Society and Environment learning outcomes are organised so that there is a progression of concepts and processes within a strand. For example, the progression from CI 5.2 and CI 6.2 to CI D6.2 involves increasing sophistication and complexity, particularly related to the concept of *cultural perceptions* and the process of *creating*, 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.qscq.edu.au for more information.

Using this module

The activities in this module are based on a cultural studies approach, which promotes interdisciplinary analysis and evaluation of cultural practices. A tenet of cultural studies is that the analysis of media and popular cultural texts can make a difference to the way people perceive themselves and others. Media studies approaches could be used to analyse media representations of youth; study youth as a media audience; explore the relationship between media technologies and youth; examine media institutions; and analyse media languages, particularly visual language.

Background information

Terminology

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

adolescence	gender	representation
consumerism	globalisation	socialisation
deconstruction	media	youth
ethics	popular culture	

School authority policies

Be aware of and observe school authority policies that may be relevant to this module.

Equity considerations

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

- develop criteria-based judgments about ethical behaviours
- apply multiple perspectives to develop understandings of gender socialisation processes.

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.qscq.edu.au for more information.

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

- Level 5: *Talkin' 'bout my generation: 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 students' 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 youth cultures

Core learning outcomes emphasis: TCC 6.5, CI 6.1

Activities in this phase assist students to begin to gain an understanding of themselves by exploring their own youth cultures and other cultures.

Focus questions:

- How can I be myself?
- Who/what may influence what I think and who I am?
- How can I have more control over my life?

Activity 1 Identities — media influences

Discuss what students expect to gain from a study of youth cultures and an exploration of identities and individualism. Ask what they think may be the benefits and disadvantages of becoming an adult. This could be a discussion or students could record their feelings and discuss them later.

Discuss students' perceptions of adolescence, a period between childhood and adulthood. Review students' knowledge of the socialising forces that influence young people as they move through adolescence. Consider the influence of the media. Show a segment of a popular television program or an advertisement aimed at adolescents. Ask small groups of students to discuss whether this program or advertisement inhibits or promotes cultural diversity. Encourage students to consider characteristics such as wealth, clothing, homes, attitudes, ethnicity and levels of disability, and to decide whether or not the young people depicted are from diverse groups. Discuss whether television is a socialising force and how students might challenge, be aware of and critique such a force.

Discuss the media portrayal of gender roles. Encourage students to consider the 'nature versus nurture' aspects of this issue. Ask students to consider:

- Although many questions in Studies of Society and Environment do not have definite answers, they are extremely important to consider.
- Even a 'who cares?' attitude will have been influenced to some extent by socialising forces.
- Identifying and discussing socialising forces and doing something about them can help us to have more control over our lives.
- We can learn more about how to control our own lives by investigating influences on young people, and their responses, in other times and places.

Activity 2 Identities — gender

Support materials and references

Provide a variety of resources that students can use to explore the construction of gender in past and present Australia. For example, refer to Chapter 6 of McCauley, Brown and Mills (2001).

Assessment

Assist students to analyse how cultural diversity is promoted or inhibited. This analysis may provide evidence of demonstrations of CI 6.1.

Activity 3 Identities — age

Discuss the concept that certain generations in 'Western' society have been labelled as having something in common. For example, the so-called 'Depression generation' refers to people who were young in the 1930s when unemployment reached over 30%. It has been claimed that as a group they are very concerned about saving money. The so-called 'baby-boomers' are the largest generation alive at present. They were born between 1947 (when women who had postponed having children during World War II began having children) and 1963 (when the contraceptive pill began to be widely used).

This generation, who were young people at a time when there was almost no unemployment, have sometimes been stereotyped as spoilt spendthrifts with a sense of social justice. Generation 'X' refers to people born between the 1970s and early 1990s when unemployment was rising. This group is sometimes claimed to be cynical and less susceptible to socialising influences.

Discuss how accurate such stereotypes and labels might be. Remind students that the sources of evidence they have analysed so far will vary in their degree of representativeness. Discuss whether they consider their generation to have any common characteristics and refer to the effects of globalisation (CI 6.3) as well as to construction of gender (CI 6.5). Explore whether students believe their attitudes and values are different from those of older people and why this may be the case.

Activity 4 Influences — ethical or not?

Ask students to reconsider sources that provide evidence about how the ideas and attitudes of young people have been influenced and answer these questions:

- How acceptable is it that young people's lives should be controlled by a variety of influences?
- What are these controlling influences?
- What are the motives of people who shape these influences?

Assist small groups of students to create criteria that can be used to make judgments about the motives of people who shape controlling influences. Consider whether their motives are ethical. (Note: the Level 4 sourcebook module *Influences on me: Global media and identity* provides opportunities to develop ethical criteria.) Discuss the criteria. These may be based on utilitarianism (the greatest good for the greatest number) and/or the key values that are central to your school.

As students share their criteria and answers, opportunities may be provided to demonstrate TCC 6.5.

Phase 2 Investigating youth gender roles

Core learning outcomes emphasis: TCC 6.4, TCC 6.5, CI 6.1, CI 6.5

Students investigate youth gender roles in different times and places and compare findings to produce an argument about the main causes of changes or continuities in these roles.

Focus questions:

- How do the times we live in affect our ideas?
- How have ideas about 'masculinities' and 'femineities' varied in different times and places?
- What issues may cause changes in gender roles?
- How do societies inhibit or promote acceptance of differences between people?
- On what bases can we make judgments about the behaviours of other people?

Activity 5 Gender roles in different times and places

Explain how investigating gender socialisation processes in different times and places can help us to:

- notice the socialisation processes around us
- expand our ideas about possible different roles
- take more control of the forces that are shaping our ideas.

Negotiate with students the times and places to be investigated. Do not stop students from investigating familiar current Australian subcultures, but encourage exploration of more culturally diverse groups.

Resource 1

Distribute and discuss Resource 1. Explain that you will assist students to complete the tasks.

Activity 6 Locating and analysing evidence

Divide the class into groups of about five students to investigate gender roles in:

- the same society and time spans or
- different societies and time spans.

Discuss what is involved in producing a corroborated argument based on evidence about the main causes of change or continuity in adolescent gender roles (TCC 6.4). Assist students to locate and begin to analyse evidence for their essay. Ensure cultural diversity is included in the discussion.

Activity 7 Communicating an argument**Resource 1**

Continue to assist students to complete the tasks on Resource 1. Revise the concept of an argument, including possible sequences and the use of rebuttal. Assist students to plan and draft their essays, and compare and revise their findings and arguments.

Conduct a whole class discussion of the issues raised.

Phase 3 Young people and globalisation

Core learning outcomes emphasis: TCC 6.5, CI 6.1, CI 6.2, CI 6.3

Students review what they have learnt about ethical behaviour. They consider the impacts of globalisation. They use prior learning to collaborate and create proposals for socially just responses to current youth-related issues.

Focus question:

- How does globalisation influence youth issues?

Activity 8 Current issues — young people and globalisation

Discuss the globalisation of culture and how this may be evident in everyday lives. With students, identify a current issue that involves young people and globalisation.

Assist students to investigate the effects of globalisation in relation to the issue identified. Consider whether the issue may impact negatively or positively on the school or local community. Invite students to discuss and decide:

- whether the effects of globalisation should be celebrated or moderated
- how the school or local community may assist in such celebration or moderation.

Ask students to work in groups to develop a strategy for the school or local community to celebrate or moderate the effects of globalisation as demonstrations of CI 6.3.

Activity 9 Reflection

Assist students to reflect on the strategy they have developed. Ask whether their strategy is a socially just response.

Distribute definitions of social justice. Remind students of the criteria they developed earlier to make judgments about the ethical behaviour of people (TCC 6.5) and emphasise that community strategies also need to be ethical.

Assist small groups of students to:

- collaboratively consider strategies
- create visual summaries or written reports on how strategies support social justice
- develop ethical ways of promoting the strategies.

Assessment task**Resource 1**

Core learning outcomes:

- TCC 6.4** Students produce a corroborated argument concerning causes of a change or continuity in environments, media or gender roles.
- TCC 6.5** Students develop criteria-based judgments about the ethical behaviour of people in the past.
- CI 6.1** Students analyse the ways in which various societies inhibit or promote cultural diversity.
- CI 6.5** Students analyse ways in which social construction of gender in different cultures and socioeconomic circumstances affects adolescent identities.

Topic:

- What characterised youth cultures in terms of values, expectations, attitudes towards work, family, learning and society?

Your tasks:

1. Choose at least two societies and investigate the way young people were socialised into gender roles. That is, what expectations did their families have of them? Did the expectations differ if they were male or female? What values were they expected to show? What attitudes towards work, learning and society were expected?
2. How have the ways young people are socialised changed over time?
3. What were the causes of any changes or continuities?
4. Write a corroborated argument about these causes. You will need to refer to the evidence you have used and include information about the ways cultural diversity was inhibited or promoted.
5. At the end of your essay, in point-form, add some ethical judgments about the behaviour of people involved in the changes or continuities you have described. This could begin with: 'The *(insert name of people)* were/were not *(delete one)* particularly ethical because *(include a description of something they did and a reason why this was or was not ethical)*.

Support materials and references

Alexander, A. & Rouen, M. 2001, *Heinemann SOSE for Queensland Book 3*, Heinemann, Melbourne. (See the sections on the globalisation of culture, tribalisation of culture, Americanisation of youth and gender and culture.)

Cuffley, P. (ed.) 2001, *Send the Boy to Sea: The Memoirs of a Sailor on the Goldfields*, The Five Mile Press, Noble Park, Vic. (Documents the life of James Smith, who left home at 14 and travelled from Britain to Australia several times by the time he was 21; illustrates that people in the 1850s had a very different concept of youth culture than people in Australia today.)

Department of Education 1996, *Piecing It Together: Understanding the Construction of Gender*, Brisbane.

Gaarder, J. 1996, *Sophie's World*, Berkley, USA.

Healey, K. (ed.) 1998, 'Gender Roles', *Issues in Society*, The Spinney Press, Balmain, NSW.

Hoepper, B. et al. 1996, 'Changing Gender Relations: A History', *Inquiry 2: A Source-Based Approach to Modern History*, Jacaranda, Milton, Qld.

Lovat, T. et al. 1994, *New Society and Culture, A Student Text*, Social Science Press, NSW.

McCauley, D., Brown, P. & Mills, M. 2001, *SOSE for Queensland 2*, Jacaranda, Milton, Qld. (See Chapter 6 and the sections on identities, gender, culture and youth cultures.)

Nayler, J. (ed.) 1997, *Gender Up Front: Strategies for a Gender Focus Across the Key Learning Areas*, The Association of Women Educators, Caloundra, Qld.

Quin, R., McMahon, B. & Quin, R. 1995, *Teaching Viewing and Visual Texts (Secondary)*, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Vic.

The Kit: Legal Info User's Guide 1996, Youth Advocacy Centre, Woolloowin, Qld.

Westbury, M. 'Generating Some Noise', *Out Loud: Giving Youth a Voice [supplement]*, *The Weekend Australian*, 3–4 January 1998.

Videos

ABC Television 1993, *Attitude: US Influence on Australian Television*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC Worldwide 1997, *The People's Century: Half the People*, ABC Video.

National Film and Sound Archive, *Fashion Daze: Australian Style 1910–1970*.

Websites

(All websites listed were accessed in June 2002.)

Future Leaders of Australia. www.members.tripod.com/~fla_/index2.htm

Thai Students On-Line. www.thaistudents.com/

The Source. www.thesource.gov.au/

Youth Studies Australia: Organisations. www.acys.utas.edu.au/ncys/organisations/index.html

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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