

Nat Geo Certification Lesson

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THE M.A.D (Make A Difference) PROJECT

RECOMMENDED GRADES: All Grades

TIME NEEDED: Varies according to grade and task. The M.A.D Project may be done as a school, class, small group or individually.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE:

Applicable to all: *Students will understand gain an understanding of local, regional, national and global issues. Students will realize their place in their world and their ability to make a difference.*

Applicable to Ontario Curriculum:

Grade 4 *Students will investigate some issues and challenges associated with balancing human needs/wants and activities with environmental stewardship in one or more of the political and/or physical regions of Canada (FOCUS ON: Perspective)*

Grade 5 *Students will create a plan of action to address a social issue of local, provincial/territorial, and/or national significance (e.g., homelessness, child poverty, bullying in schools, availability of physicians in remote communities), specifying the actions to be taken by the appropriate level (or levels) of government as well as by a citizen.*

Students will create a plan of action to address an environmental issue of local, provincial/ territorial, and/or national significance (e.g., managing waste disposal, regulating industrial practices that damage the environment, ensuring safe drinking water, expanding availability of energy from renewable sources, reducing vehicle emissions), specifying the actions to be taken by the appropriate level (or levels) of government as well as by citizens, including themselves.

Grade 6 *Students will use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some global issues of political, social, economic, and/or environmental importance, their impact on the global community, and responses to the issues (FOCUS ON: Cause and Consequence)*

*** Many specific objectives (eg. generating a list of ideas and questions, questioning, planning, reading for understanding, writing for a specific audience,etc) can be covered.

MATERIALS: Will vary according to grade and task.

Downloadable material (PDF):

The M.A.D. Project Guidelines

<https://mrcssharesease.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/mad-guidelines-pdf.pdf>

The M.A.D Inquiry Model-

<https://mrcssharesease.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/m-a-d-model.pdf>

The M.A.D Project Journal-

<https://mrcssharesease.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/mad-project-journal-pdf.pdf>

The M.A.D Project Outline/Template-

<https://mrcssharesease.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/mad-project-outline-pdf.pdf>

The M.A.D Certificate-

<https://mrcssharesease.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/m-a-d-certificate-pdf.pdf>

PREPARATION:

Students should be given every opportunity to explore issues specific to their city and region (eg. visit a local landfill site or a community shelter), province/state, nation and the world in general. This may be accomplished during Social Studies and Science units of study, etc.

Teachers may also wish to refer to the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals-

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

In addition, all teachers are encouraged to "take" their students on virtual field trips via Explorer Classrooms

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/programs/explorer-classroom/> and

Exploring By the Seat of Your Pants <http://www.exploringbytheseat.com/>).

***I suggest having students keep an "Adventure Log" to record their questions, observations and learning.

DIRECTIONS:

Applicable to all: Teachers will create opportunities to make students more aware of the social and environmental issues within their cities, provinces/states, nations and throughout the world in general (see Preparation above). Students are required to select an issue that they wish to help make a difference for.

Applicable to Ontario Curriculum: In Ontario, upon completion of their Social Studies Units "People and Environments" and through opportunities as outlined above (see Preparation), students in grade 4 will pick a local or regional issue, students in grade 5 will pick a provincial or national issue and students in grade 6 will select a global issue. Once the issue has been selected, students complete the Make A difference Project as outlined below:

The M.A.D (Make A Difference) Project

Use the steps below to help you complete your **Make A Difference** Project. This is a guide only. The steps are meant to be fluid and adaptable. Do what works best and makes sense to you as you complete your M.A.D Project!

STEP 1- QUESTION: After becoming a more globally conscious citizen, develop a question that you'd like to answer as part of your M.A.D project. By answering this question YOU will Make A Difference! (eg. *How can I help the Homeless in my Community? How can I help to stop the polluting of a local river? How can I bring awareness to discrimination against minorities in Canada? How can I stop world hunger?*)

STEP 2- RESEARCH: Do research to help you determine ideas as to how you might answer your question.

STEP 3- IDEA: Come up with one specific idea that you will put into action. Your idea will be the driving force behind your M.A.D project.

STEP 4- PLAN: To put any idea into action you need a plan. Make a plan that is attainable and that allows you to take steps to put your idea into action.

STEP 5- ACTION: From this point forward you will be making a difference. At what point will you put your plan into action? How will you do it? What resulted from your actions? In other words, how did you **Make A Difference**?

STEP 6- SHARE: Our ideas and actions are only as good as the people we share them with. How do you plan to share what you have done to **Make A Difference**? Be proud of what you've accomplished. Share your success with the world!

STEP 7- REFLECT: You should be reflecting on your project during all steps and you'll change and refine it as you proceed. However, once you've completed your M.A.D project, reflect to determine how you may continue to grow it or what changes you need to make it even better. Did this project lead to other questions you may like to explore for another M.A.D project idea?

MODIFICATIONS:

The strength of this project is the fact that it can be modified to meet the needs of all ages, audiences and subject areas. It may be completed as a school, class, group or individual project. M.A.D projects can also be used to have students make a difference for themselves, their peers, family members, school and community. The options are simply endless!

EXTENSIONS:

Have students create a “Digital Adventure Log”

Join the GLOBAL M.A.D Project:

<https://mrcssharesease.wordpress.com/m-a-d-project/>

Teachers/students may wish to share their Make A Difference Projects with the greater education community and the world in general. Social media is a powerful tool; by encouraging students to use it to share good news, they are modelling to their peers how to use Social Media in positive, constructive ways.

LEARNING FRAMEWORK:

I believe all children have a natural curiosity to explore. When kids explore, they learn about themselves and their surroundings. If we create opportunities for students to explore beyond the walls of their classroom and the pages of a textbook; to travel to all ends of the earth to visit incredible people and places, we’ll light a flame of curiosity within our students, empowering them not only to learn more, but to question. When our children question, they’ll want to find answers. In finding answers, they’ll become part of the solution to making their world a better place!

Attitudes

CURIOUS and adventurous- Virtual field trips via Explorer Classrooms and Exploring by the Seat of Your Pants sparks curiosity and gives all kids the opportunity to take adventures to all ends of the earth.

RESPONSIBLE- Students who interact with others gain both knowledge and empathy. These traits make our students responsible citizens who want to do what is right .

EMPOWERED- By giving students the opportunity to explore, “travel” and interact with people beyond the walls of our schools, we empower them with a sense worth and knowledge and in doing so they want to make a difference.

Skills

OBSERVE- During the virtual field trips, students record their observations in their “Adventure Logs”.

COMMUNICATE- Through the virtual field trips, students must be effective communicators. They are interacting with people from all parts of the world and are often recorded live, on air. The M.A.D project’s key element is the sharing piece. This is the student’s opportunity to tell their story. This can be accomplished via a multitude of tools, face to face and social media.

COLLABORATIVE SOLVE PROBLEMS- The Make A Difference project encourages students to work together to come up with a solution to help solve an environmental or social issue.

Knowledge

OUR HUMAN STORY, OUR LIVING PLANET, CRITICAL SPECIES, NEW FRONTIERS- The Explorers Classroom program and Exploring By the Seat of Your Pants provides a multitude of opportunities for students to interact with explorers, adventurers, scientists and conservationists to learn about our living planet, critical species and new frontiers. The Make A difference project will empower students to have a first hand impact on the people, places and species they are learning about.

VOCABULARY:

Will vary according to project.

ASSESSMENT:

Personally, I don't like to have students focus on the mark they will receive for such a project, but the difference they have made and will continue to make. I keep many checklists and make anecdotal observations. Since some many expectations are covered according to the topic individual rubrics are used. Since reflection is a key component to the Make A Difference Project, I always like to have students do a self reflection piece (using Google forms) on their whole project, reflecting on each step, outlining successes, shortcomings and next steps. We want students to get into the mindset that making a difference shouldn't just be a "one off", it should become a mindset and a way of life.

RESOURCES:

Explorer Classrooms

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/programs/explorer-classroom/>

Exploring By the Seat of Your Pants <http://www.exploringbytheseat.com/>)

UN's Sustainable Development Goals

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

The M.A.D Project

<https://mrcssharesease.wordpress.com/m-a-d-project/>

