

Standards for Environmental Education in the Curriculum

The Standards for Environmental Education are statements that, taken together, describe the nature and scope of environmental education as it will be reflected throughout the revised curriculum. The standards will help curriculum writers devise and incorporate environmental education expectations and opportunities across the curriculum.

The statements are grouped around four themes – *community, knowledge, perspectives, and action* – and are designed to prepare students to support environmental sustainability by bridging the gap between their awareness of issues and their ability to take action. On the basis of these standards, environmental education in Ontario schools will provide opportunities for learners to



become environmentally literate; to apply their acquired knowledge, perspectives, skills, and practices in real-world situations; and to become environmentally responsible citizens who are aware of the global implications of local action. The standards are based on current research and a sound theoretical foundation and have been reviewed by elementary and secondary school educators and school board staff,

environmental educators, and other stakeholders across the province.

Students need the knowledge, perspectives, skills, and practices that will enable them to understand and deal with complex environmental issues today and in the future. For example, in addition to a sound knowledge base, students will need well-developed skills in problem solving, inquiry, decision making, action planning, higher-level thinking, systems thinking, and critical literacy. They will need the ability to identify relevant issues and perspectives, carry out research, and communicate their ideas in meaningful ways. In short, they need to develop the environmental literacy skills that will enable them to become informed, engaged, and responsible global citizens.



reach every student



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These standards should be regarded as a guide for writers of the revised curriculum.

THEMES	STANDARDS	RELATED CONCEPTS
COMMUNITY	<p>The curriculum provides students with opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage in authentic learning situations and interactions in their local environment (e.g., natural, built, cultural); explore and appreciate the outdoors, to help develop their understanding of the local environment; develop and communicate a sense of connection with the local and global environments; demonstrate environmental stewardship by thinking globally and acting locally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sense of connection ✓ Responsible citizenship ✓ Sense of place ✓ Sense of local and global citizenship
KNOWLEDGE	<p>The curriculum provides students with opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> study a variety of human and natural systems at the local, regional, and global levels; develop a general understanding of the kinds of interactions that occur within and between human and natural systems; understand the concept of sustainability and the behaviours, practices, and approaches that promote sustainability in various areas of human activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Human and natural systems ✓ Interactions within and between systems ✓ Sustainability
PERSPECTIVES	<p>The curriculum provides students with opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider different points of view or perspectives (e.g., historical, economic, political, Aboriginal, cultural, technological) on the environment and the role of human beings in relation to it; examine and explain the assumptions and motivations underlying their own and others' (e.g., other individuals', NGOs', governments', other countries') actions and reactions with respect to environmental issues or concerns; develop and articulate their own perspective on human–natural interactions and environmental issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consideration of diverse points of view ✓ Critical thinking and evaluation ✓ Formation of an opinion
ACTION	<p>The curriculum provides students with opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop skills in problem solving, inquiry and research, decision making, and action planning; contribute to the protection, conservation, and remediation of the environment; develop, communicate, and implement plans to support sustainability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skills and practices ✓ Protection ✓ Innovation ✓ Conservation ✓ Remediation

