



Course Journal

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NOTE: This Course Journal contains ONLY the assignment questions. Access course content and materials on the [Moodle Course Website](#).

Module 1: Why teach about controversial environmental issues and topics?

Getting Started: Self-Reflection

TASK 2: Record answers to the following questions.

1. Identify at least 3 environmental issues and/or topics that you have or would like to teach about. What makes these issues challenging to teach in your setting?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
4. What questions do you have about facilitating exploration of controversial issues with learners?
5. What challenges do you face in your school and/or organization in facilitating learning about controversial issues?

6. What do you hope to learn as a result of participating in this eeCourse?

What makes an environmental issue controversial?

TASK 3: After reading the article, for each of the three issues you identified in your self-reflection, identify the environmental problem, the environmental issue and any controversial topics. Use the table below to record your answers.

The Environmental Problem:	The Environmental Issue:	Controversial Topics (if applicable):
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

- Describe why it might be helpful to distinguish the difference. How might these subtle differences change how you frame an issue with learners?

TASK 4: Reflect on the following from the climate information you just explored:

- What surprised you?
- What wasn't surprising?
- How does your state/region compare to the rest of the nation on these questions? How might this data impact your teaching about climate change and/or other environmental issues?

How Teaching about Controversial Issues and Topics is a Component of High Quality EE

TASK 5: What benefits do you anticipate in engaging your learners in exploring controversial environmental issues and topics?

Module 2: Role of the Educator in Addressing Environmental Issues and Topics

Our Role as Educators in Exploring Environmental Issues with Learners

TASK 1: After reading the article, respond to the following questions:

- How do the "two hats" differ? When is it appropriate and when inappropriate to wear each of these hats?
- Describe a scenario for wearing each hat. Where have you worn each hat?
- Why is it important to be aware of which hat you are wearing in exploring environmental issues with learners?

TASK 2: After watching the view, reflect on the following: Would you share your personal views with your learners? Why or why not? Give at least one example of a situation where you would share your views and one where you might not.

TASK 3: After reading the article, reflect on how you currently or could incorporate the 8 best practices into your instruction. Which practices are strengths and which could be improved?

- Cultivate a Supportive Environment:
- Select Authentic Issues:
- Prepare Thoroughly:
- Choose Research and Pedagogies:
- Think through Teacher Stance:
- Guide Discussion:
- Communicate Proactively:
- Address Emotions:

TASK 4: Insert a screenshot of how you sorted the Sources of Information cards.

Then answer the following questions:

1. Briefly explain why you sorted the cards the way that you did.
2. How could an educator encourage student awareness of citing and judging quality of sources without doing the card sort?

OPTIONAL: Read through [The Stink Test](#), an activity teaches students how to recognize whether a source is valid or not. How could you use this activity with your students?

Communicate Proactively on Controversial Topics

TASK 5: After watching the video, answer the following questions:

- Who would you need to communicate with to ensure the exploration of an environmental issue goes smoothly?
- Write a communication (email, letter, handout, etc) or explain how you would communicate with your stakeholders about the environmental issue exploration you are going to engage in.

Module 3: 5 Step Process for Investigating Environmental Issues

STEP 1: Choosing an Issue

TASK 1: After reading the article, write a 1 paragraph reflection brainstorming several reasons why it can be important or advantageous to select smaller, locally-oriented and/or issues your students may have agency in.

TASK 2: Review the issues you identified in module 1. Identify the local, regional, and global aspects of the environmental problems you identified. What might be age-appropriate ways/scales to explore the problem and/or issue with your learners?

TASK 3: Write 1-2 paragraphs about considerations that will be important in your school or organization for how you would select an issue to investigate with learners. What things might you want to consider?

STEP 2: Clearly Identify the Problem, Stakeholders, and their Values

TASK 4: After reading the article:

1. Identify the players who are affected by or have a role in the issue
2. Suggest how they stand on the issue
3. Hypothesize what each player cares about (values)
4. Suggest what each group would propose as a solution

STEP 5: Taking Action

TASK 5: After completing your internet search, answer the following questions:

- What motivated the individual or group in this story to take action?
- What types of action did they undertake?
- What barriers and challenges did they face?
- How did they overcome these barriers?
- How might you use this story with your learners?

TASK 6: After reading the article, answer the following:

- Describe an example of a specific action students could take that fits each of the categories.
- Which of these action categories do you feel most comfortable facilitating with your students? Why?
- Are there any types of action you could facilitate with your students?

Practicing the 5 Steps

TASK 7: After investigating your environmental issue, write a one page summary addressing the following:

- Describe the environmental problem and issue. Why did you select this issue?
- Identify the players (at least 3) and their positions, beliefs and values. Cite your three sources of information.
- Did you recognize any bias in the information you found?
- What solutions would the stakeholders you identified propose? Are there any additional solutions that should be considered?
- What solution would you recommend based on your research? How would it benefit/hurt the stakeholders you identified?
- What is/are the most responsible action(s) to be taken concerning your issues?
- What would the consequences (both positive and negative) of action be?
- Is there sufficient evidence to warrant action on this issue?
- What steps would need to be taken to take action on this environmental problem or issue?

Reflecting on the Process

TASK 8: Reflect on each of the five steps. What are the strengths of this process? What are your concerns?

Write a 1 paragraph summary of your answers to both questions.

TASK 9: In your current practice, which steps of the process are you currently engaging in with learners and which steps would you like to incorporate more. Write a one paragraph reflection.

Module 4: Managing Conflict

Setting the Stage: Creating Agreements for Exploring Environmental Issues and Topics

TASK 1: After reading the article, generate a list of sample group agreements that you might be helpful for engaging in challenging discussions with your learners. Be sure to consider the age of your learners and make sure the terms and phrases you list are ones they would understand. What process would you use to generate or adopt the agreements?

Utilizing Discussion

TASK 2: Answer the following questions:

- Think about discussions you've been in when you have felt comfortable participating and when you haven't felt comfortable participating. What strategies are helpful for you when you are participating in a discussion?
- What strategies might help learners to participate?

TASK 3: After watching the video, write a short one paragraph reflection to answer the following questions:

- How comfortable are you in incorporating high quality discussion?
- How can incorporating more opportunities for discussion throughout your instruction might be beneficial and/or challenging?

TASK 4: After reading the article, write a one-two paragraph reflection on the following questions:

- What things do you already consider when planning a discussion with learners?

- What questions might help you plan or evaluate a discussion in the future?

TASK 5: Using the discussion map, write a series of questions to help your learners discuss an environmental issue or topic of your choosing.

TASK 6: After reading one of the discussion resources, describe a discussion routine you might use to help explore an environmental issue or topic and describe why you would use it.

Facilitating Hot Moments in the Classroom

TASK 7: After reading the article, reflect on which 2-3 strategies would be most effective for you.

Using a Trauma Informed Approach

TASK 8: After reading the article, reflect on how you can intentionally bring some of the strategies mentioned into your instructional practice.

Module 5: Making a Plan for Exploring Controversial Issues and Topics

Culminating Assignment: Designing a Lesson and/or Program

TASK 1: Create a lesson, unit, or program plan using the [Inquiry Design Model Template](#) or another lesson and/or program template that you use at your school or organization. (*you will submit your lesson/program plan as a separate assignment in this module*)

TASK 2: Answer the following questions:

- Why did you select this particular issue and/or topic to explore? Why is this issue or topic important to your learners?
- How can you incorporate student voice into your lesson and/or program plan?
- Who would you need to communicate with to ensure the exploration of this environmental issue and/or topic goes smoothly?
- Is this an environmental issue and/or topic where you would share your personal view with students?
- How else will you incorporate tools and/or strategies you have practiced and/or strengthened during this eeCourse into your instruction?
- How will this lesson and/or program help meet educational and/or organizational goals?
- What questions do you still have about exploring controversial environmental issues and topics with students? How will you continue your learning?