

I Don't Like Mondays

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Directed by Micheline Chevrier

Resource Guide by Toni Hakem



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I Don't Like Mondays - An Introduction

Cast and Production Crew

Playwright

Alexandria Haber

Cast

Charlotte Rogers

Adam Driscoll

Production Team

Micheline Chevrier - Director

James Douglas - Stage Manager

James Lavoie - Set & Costume Designer

Troy Slocum - Sound Designer

Synopsis : *I Don't Like Mondays*

Ellie just started school at St. James. She hasn't told anybody why she switched schools in the middle of the year. Jake just got kicked off of the hockey team. And everybody knows why. Ellie and Jake meet during a school lock-down exercise. While each struggle with the consequences of a violent act, they find in each other unlikely confidantes to help unravel their own secrets.

Ellie describes her experiences: "And then I heard it. We all did. And the world stopped. Nobody in the class moved. We all looked up at Mr. Garret. There was no mistaking the sound. None whatsoever. Even though we live in Canada, in a good neighborhood. Even if none of us had ever seen a gun in real life. You can't escape knowing what it is, knowing what it sounds like. Imagine the kind of world we would have to be living in for that to be true?"

Introduction to Study Guide

The educator's guide for *I Don't Like Mondays* has been divided into 3 units.

- *I Don't Like Mondays*
- Politics and Violence
- Media and Violence

Each unit has various lesson plans and activities. Each lesson and activity can be used as a stand alone and therefore you do not need to follow them in sequential order. Please choose the activities that would be of interest to your students. If you have any feedback or comments please contact the developer, Toni Hakem through Geordie Productions or toni@tonidesign.ca.

Thank you and we hope you enjoy the play and the guide.

Geordie Productions Theatre Rules and Etiquette

Objectives

To discuss theatre etiquette

To discuss behaviour during a live cultural event

Before attending *I Don't Like Mondays*, please discuss theatre etiquette with your students.

Some questions to discuss with your students:

- Have they ever attended any live cultural events outside of school? Please name them.
- How often do they attend cultural events (including concerts, museum visits etc...).
- What did they like and dislike about them?
- Have they ever been annoyed by someone else's behaviour at these events? What was the behaviour? Did they do anything about it?
- How do we show our respect during a performance? (No talking or texting, clapping when appropriate etc...)
- Please remind them to stay seated during the performance, and if it is absolutely necessary to get up, to do so in a quiet and respectful manner.

Please discuss the following Geordie Productions Theatre Rules prior to attending *I Don't Like Mondays* performance.

Geordie Productions Theatre Rules

1. Because of union rules and safety issues, no cameras, cell phones, video cameras or any other recording devices are permitted during the performance.
2. No food or drink is allowed during the performance.
3. Please have your students remain seated throughout the performance. If you must take students out of the theatre, please do so quickly and quietly so as not to disturb those around you.

General Play Discussion

Objectives

- To enhance analytical skills
- To develop critical thinking skills
- To expand one's world view
- To practice creative writing skills

Core Competencies

Cross-Curricular

- Uses information
- Exercises critical judgment
- Uses creativity
- Cooperates with others
- Communicates appropriately

Languages

- Uses language to communicate and learn
- Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

As a class, discuss with your students what they thought of *I Don't Like Mondays*.

Here are some questions to help get the discussion started:

- What did they think of the play?
- Was the story realistic?
- What did they think of Jake and Ellie? Their relationship?
- Are there any differences between Jake's actions and Darien's actions (the shooter)?
- Was Jake's punishment too harsh? Why or why not?
- Have we come to equate violence with masculinity? Why or why not?
- Did the play capture how students really are?
- Name some of the themes from the play.
- Were the themes familiar to them?
- Can they think of real life stories that this play may be based on?

Activity: For the critics

Having discussed the play *I Don't like Mondays* with your students, ask them to now write a critique of the play. Before they begin writing their critique, as a class, discuss the elements of writing an effective critique.

Some topics to discuss:

- Be objective
- Clear and concise writing
- Analyzing the play and its themes
- Theatrical elements
- How to be constructive
- How to discuss the content of the play without spoiling it for those who haven't seen it.

Some areas for them to focus on when writing their critique:

- The actors
- The script
- The set design

Assignment: *I Don't Like Mondays*

In the play *I Don't Like Mondays*, Ellie and Jake are forced to work together on a class assignment. Have your students complete the same assignment.

The assignment from the play as read by Jake:

“Pick a topic frequently in the news that you feel strongly about. Respond with a personal essay, short story or video.”

To complete this assignment:

- Put students in small groups.
- They can be as creative as they like (in fact the more creative the better!)
- They should include a bibliography and copies of any articles they use.
- Have students present their final project to the class.
- Encourage a Q&A after each presentation.

I Don't Like Mondays – themes and topics

Objectives

To discuss play themes

To practice communication skills

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

Exercises critical judgment

Adopts effective work methods

Achieves his/her potential

Communicates appropriately

Languages

Uses language to communicate and learn

Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Discuss the following topics/themes with your students in relation to their experiences at school and with their peers. (N.B. Include any additional topics/themes your students have brought up during any play discussions you have.):

- Aggression
- Entitlement
- Getting through high school
- Forgiveness
- Anger

Questions to help prompt discussion:

- Have they witnessed any students portraying these behaviours? How so?
- Are these common feelings for teenagers?
- Can people learn to better deal with these feelings? How so?
- How do these topics/themes relate to the play? To Jake? To Ellie?
- How have they affected Jake and Ellie?

Essay: Themes and Characters

Have students choose 1 of the following essay topics:

1. A personal essay on one of the topics/themes discussed in the class. Ask students to think of the following when writing their essay:
 - Have they ever felt that way? Why?
 - How did they deal with it?

-OR-

2. A short essay on if they identify with Jake or Ellie. They should think of the following when writing their essay:
 - Why do they identify with this character?
 - What characteristics do you identify with?

Dealing with Negative Feelings

Objectives

To be creative

To learn new ways to deal with feelings

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

Solves problems

Uses information

Exercises critical judgment

Uses creativity

Communicates appropriately

Personal Development

Constructs a moral frame of reference

Takes a reflective position on ethical issues

Engages in moral dialogue

As a class, discuss the various ways one can channel their negative feelings into a creative outlet.

Some questions to help start the discussion:

- How do you usually react when you're angry or frustrated?
- What do you do with that energy? Ask for students to elaborate if necessary.
- List some healthy ways to deal with anger.
- List healthy ways you or someone you know has used to deal with anger or negative feelings.
- Did that help them cope with the feelings better?

Activity: Creative Outlets

After the discussion, ask students to choose a topic or a personal issue that has made them angry recently. Once chosen, they will think of a way to channel that energy into a positive creative outlet. You may need to help them by providing art supplies or any other resources. Once the task is complete, have students write a few short paragraphs on whether or not they found the exercise helpful and if they will use it in the future.

School and Youth Violence

Objectives

To expand creative thinking skills

To work well in a group

To enhance presentation skills

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

Uses information

Solves problems

Exercises critical judgment

Uses creativity

Cooperates with others

Communicates appropriately

Languages

Uses language to communicate and learn

Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts

Personal Development

Constructs a moral frame of reference

Takes a reflective position on ethical issues

Engages in moral dialogue

As a class discuss the following:

- Do you often think about school/youth violence? If so, what do you think?
- Do you think school/youth violence is more prevalent today than say 10 years ago? 20 years ago? Why do you think this way?
- Have you ever witnessed a violent situation arise at school? Between your peers outside of school? If comfortable, please share the story with the class.
- How did you react?
- Do you feel like you always have to watch your back in case of something happening – as though you're constantly under attack?
- How does that feel?
- Are you ok with feeling this way (is it now considered normal)?
- Do you think anything can be done to improve this situation? Please elaborate.

With students in small groups, ask them to brainstorm and research possible solutions and preventative measures to help deal with school/youth violence. As a group they will present their findings to the class.

Areas to focus on:

- Causes of school/youth violence
- Preventative measures to school/youth violence
- Solutions to school/youth violence
- Are these solutions practical?

Some resources to help students get started:

Schools, Violence, and Society (1996) by Allan M. Hoffman

50 Ways to a Safer World (1997) by Patricia Occhiuzzo Giggans & Barrie Levy

School Violence: Current Issues (2008) by Peggy J. Parks

With presentations complete, as a class discuss how practical the solutions and preventative measures are and try to implement them into your classroom and/or school.

The Gun Registry

Objectives

- To learn about current political issues in Canada
- To develop a viewpoint on legislation
- To enhance research and writing skills
- To improve critical thinking skills

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

- Uses information
- Exercises critical judgment
- Adopts effective work methods
- Uses information and communication technologies
- Achieves his/her potential
- Cooperates with others
- Communicates appropriately

Languages

- Uses language to communicate and learn
- Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts
- Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Social Sciences

- Constructs his/her consciousness of citizenship through study of history

Personal Development

- Takes a reflective position on ethical issues
- Engages in moral dialogue

Background Information

In the mid 1990's the Federal Liberal Government introduced the Canadian Firearms Registry in response to the shooting at École Polytechnique. The registry requires all gun owners to register their guns and to keep their Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) up to date. There has been a lot of support and opposition to this law.

The people, who support it, do so because they want to see gun control in this country. Those who oppose it feel that their democratic rights have been taken away from them, specifically those who hunt as shotguns and hunting rifles must be registered. Those who oppose it decry the fact that they are law-abiding citizens while the black market supports illegal guns in this country, where they feel the real problems with gun control are to be found. Police across the country, overwhelmingly state that they use the registry on an on-going basis despite the fact that there have been problems with it.

Currently the Federal Conservative Government has a bill (Bill C-391) in place to abolish the registry for long guns (shotguns and hunting rifles). This has been an on-going battle for them and one of their long standing campaign promises. In the fall (2010), Parliament will have a vote to determine if the long gun registry will be abolished or not.

Some statistics on the gun registry and long guns in Canada:

- 1998 - 2008, 14 of the 16 police shootings were committed with long guns
- In 2008 alone, 1 in 5 gun homicides was committed with long guns
- Half of all gun homicides in rural areas were committed with long guns
- Of the 23,000 firearms seized by police, more than 18,000 were long gun seizures
- Police say they used the registry 10,000 times every day

Information taken from:

<http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/apicazo/2010/03/playing-guns>

As a class discuss the gun registry.

Some questions to help get the discussion started:

- Are you aware that there is a Gun Registry in Canada?
- What do you know about it?
- Do you have an opinion on the Gun Registry?
- Discuss the statistics posted above with your students.

Gun Registry Research Project

This project can be completed individually or with students in small groups.

For the Gun Registry Research Project, students will research the following:

- A brief history of the Gun Registry and the current status of Bill C-391 (to abolish the registry for long guns).
- The main political parties in Canada and their positions on the Gun Registry.
- Why do some political parties want to abolish the long gun registry?
- What do police forces across the country think of the gun registry? Do they find it useful?
- Why are some Canadians opposed to the registry? Have any tactics been employed to make the registry irrelevant and to inflate its cost?
- Why are some Canadians in favour of the registry?
- What is your opinion of the gun registry – should it be kept as is, kept with modifications made or abolished? Defend your position.

Their final paper should address everything listed above and also needs to include a bibliography and relevant articles on the subject. (N.B. If the initial research and write up is done in groups, students need to individually write an essay stating and defending their opinion of Bill C-391 and the gun registry.)

Some resources to help students:

Highlights of Canada's Firearms Laws

<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/pol-leg/hl-fs-eng.htm>

They can search for **Bill C-391 on the Government's** website:

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/search/refine/Advanced.aspx?Language=E>

National Firearms Association

<http://www.nfa.ca/>

Coalition for Gun Control

<http://www.guncontrol.ca/>

Extension Activity: Gun Registry Debate

With students having completed their research and paper on the gun registry and its current status, you can now have a debate on this topic. You can randomly divide the class into 2 camps or have students put themselves into groups based on their opinion.

Each team should present a clear argument stating their position and why. With initial speeches completed, students can then debate back and forth.

Law and Order Policies

Objectives

- To learn about current political issues in Canada
- To develop a viewpoint on legislation
- To enhance research and writing skills
- To improve critical thinking skills

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

- Uses information
- Exercises critical judgment
- Adopts effective work methods
- Uses information and communication technologies
- Achieves his/her potential
- Cooperates with others
- Communicates appropriately

Languages

- Uses language to communicate and learn
- Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts
- Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Social Sciences

- Constructs his/her consciousness of citizenship through study of history

Personal Development

- Constructs a moral frame of reference
- Takes a reflective position on ethical issues
- Engages in moral dialogue

Background Information

In the past decade, Canada's crime has fallen by 15%. Our current Conservative Government has introduced a number of Law and Order bills to help promote their "tough on crime agenda". Experts appearing before both the House of Commons and Senate Justice Committees testified that mandatory minimum sentences do not deter crime, and in the U.S. have led to skyrocketing incarceration rates (source: <http://www.thehilltimes.ca/page/view/tough-03-22-2010>). Most opposition to these new bills are due to the fact that they will cost a lot of money and do nothing to deter crime, especially with crime rates falling.

Some of these Law and Order bills include:

Bill C- 4: An Act to amend the Youth Criminal Justice Act

Bill C-16: An Act to amend the Criminal Code

Bill C-25: Truth in Sentencing Act

As a class, discuss the following:

- Law and Order Bills
- Current Crime Statistics (see paragraph above)
- Is being tough on crime a good solution to the issue?
- What about focusing on rehabilitation (for certain crimes)?

Law and Order Research Paper

Students will conduct research on the current Law and Order Bills.

Areas to focus on:

- US-style Prison System and Cost
- Mandatory Sentencing
- Youth Criminal Act

Their paper should include the following:

- A brief summary of the areas to focus on (as mentioned above) – include estimated costs of these new prisons.
- Are prisoners' rights groups for or against these new laws? Highlight the reasons for their support or opposition.

- Why do you think the Conservatives are introducing these new tough on crime bills at a time when crime rates are falling?
- Do you think these new laws will be effective in reducing crime? Use sources to back up your opinion.
- With current statistics stating that crime in Canada is down, do you agree or disagree with the current Law and Order Bills? Explain and defend your position.
- Is society safer with harsher laws and punishment, or is it just smoke and mirrors? Please explain and defend your position.
- Discuss alternatives that you feel will be effective (ex. rehabilitation programs or other crime prevention ideas).

Resources to help get students started:

Parliament website – use search tools for information on Bills

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/>

Does Tough on Crime Work?

<http://criminology.utoronto.ca/lib/CrimHighlightsV11N1.pdf>

The Rise of the Modern “Tough On Crime” Movement

<http://www.defendingjustice.org/pdfs/chapters/toughcrime.pdf>

Tory plans for U.S.-style prisons slammed in report

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2009/09/24/conservative-prison-plan024.html>

Stronger Laws

<http://www.tacklingcrime.gc.ca/ocom/str/index-eng.aspx>

Crime down last year, continues 10-year trend

<http://www.ctv.ca/CTVNews/TopStories/20100720/crime-canada-100720/>

Mixed Messages and Social Groups

Objectives

- To increase one's world view
- To think critically about how to get a message across
- To question institutions and their methods
- To develop a point of view

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

- Uses information
- Exercises critical judgment
- Uses creativity
- Achieves his/her potential
- Cooperates with others
- Communicates appropriately

Languages

- Uses language to communicate and learn
- Represents his/her literacy in different media
- Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts
- Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Personal Development

- Constructs a moral frame of reference
- Takes a reflective position on ethical issues
- Engages in moral dialogue

There are many instances of social groups using violence to make their voices heard. Whether it is the anti-choice groups shooting abortion doctors or PETA using violent or aggressive advertisements to make a point, these occurrences happen quite often in our society. These actions can cause dissonance to many people, especially young minds. How can a group that wants to improve animal rights, use violence against humans to make a point? How can a religion that preaches peace and love use violence against dissenters? How can a group that preaches its moral superiority use violence against other people as a means to an end?

Using the Socratic Questioning Technique, discuss these mixed messages concerning social groups as a class.

Some questions to ask your class or to help you prepare for this lesson:

- Can you think of any social groups?
- Can you think of any organized groups that use violence? Please give examples.
- What about when religious groups use violence?
- What types of techniques do these groups use to bring attention to their cause? Please give examples.
- What do you think of these techniques?
- Do you think these techniques are effective?
- Do you think these techniques are useful?
- Do you think their techniques are hypocritical?
- Do you think their techniques are counter-productive?
- Why do you think these techniques are employed?
- Is it ever acceptable to use violence for a cause? For a religion?

For information on the Socratic Method please visit:

The Role of Socratic Questioning in Thinking, Teaching, & Learning

<http://www.criticalthinking.org/articles/the-role-socratic-questioning-ttl.cfm>

The Socratic Questioning Technique *

http://www97.intel.com/en/ProjectDesign/InstructionalStrategies/Questioning/The_Socratic_Questioning_Technique.htm

Socratic Seminars

<http://www.maxlow.net/avid/socsem/socraticseminaroverview.html>

Socratic Method

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/4994>

Assignment: Clear Messages

With students in small groups, have them each pick 1 social group or religion that uses violence as a means to an end, (if possible have them choose one group that was discussed in class). They will conduct research on the group and the types of violent messages or actions they have used. With research complete, they will come up with feasible alternatives for the groups to use that do not require them use to violence in order to make their point. If possible, have students send these suggestions to the groups.

* N.B. If the link does not work, please copy and paste into your browser. Thank you.

Consequences of Our Actions

Objectives

- To think of others
- To practice communication skills
- To learn about victims' rights

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

- Exercises critical judgment
- Uses creativity
- Achieves his/her potential
- Cooperates with others
- Communicates appropriately

Languages

- Uses language to communicate and learn
- Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts

Arts Education

- Creates dramatic works
- Performs dramatic works

In the play *I Don't Like Mondays*, we see Ellie recovering from the trauma she experienced when Darien used a gun at her school – she had a very hard time discussing it and her feelings with it.

Role Play Activity: Someone Else's Shoes

With students in small groups (2-4), they will come up with a scenario based on how it feels to be a victim. Some examples of scenarios are: bullying, being a victim of petty theft etc... Ask students to choose a scenario they may encounter or have encountered. Once each group has practiced their skit, have them present it to the class.

After each group has presented their skit, discuss the following:

- What it means to be a victim.
- How it feels to be a victim.
- Victims' Rights (for more information please visit: www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/pcvi-cpcv/vsd-rsv/over-aper.html)

As a class research how violence affects people and how they deal with being victims of violence (specifically school violence). With research complete, discuss it with the class.

Areas to consider:

- List healthy/effective ways to deal with being a victim.
- List unhealthy/ineffective ways to deal with being a victim.

Media and Violence - Unit

How Does the Media Fit Into This?

Objectives

- To expand media literacy skills
- To enrich analytical skills
- To question messages in the media
- To develop essay writing skills

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

- Uses information
- Solves problems
- Exercises critical judgment
- Adopts effective work methods
- Uses information and communication technologies
- Achieves his/her potential
- Cooperates with others
- Communicates appropriately

Languages

- Uses language to communicate and learn
- Represents his/her literacy in different media
- Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts
- Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Personal Development

- Constructs a moral frame of reference
- Takes a reflective position on ethical issues
- Engages in moral dialogue

Do the media play a role in the violence we see today?

As a class, discuss the television shows, video games, books and music that students consume.

- Is it violent?
- Do they pay attention to the messages in it?
- Name some mainstream media that have violence or violent messages in it.
- Does it have an effect on your behaviour or attitudes towards others?
- Does seeing violence in media, desensitize you to it?
- Why do you think violence is used so frequently in mainstream media?
- Do you think violence is necessary to tell a story or make a point? Or is it just used to garner hype and attention?

Essay: Is the Violence Necessary?

Students will choose 1 piece of media (a television show, a song, a book, a movie etc...) in popular culture that uses violence to make a point. To help students complete this assignment you may wish to use this resource:

http://www.medialit.org/reading_room/article94.html

To complete this essay, students will need to:

- Provide a sample of the media they have chosen (sample lyrics, summary of a television episode etc...).
- Analyze the piece of media chosen and summarize its message.
- Determine if violence was essential to the message and explain their position.
- Provide alternative ways that the [author], [songwriter], [director/scriptwriter] could use to make the same point.

Extension: Violence vs. Nudity

We hear a lot in the media from family/conservative groups who decry nudity in the media, yet rarely bat an eye over violence in the media. Why is that? Why are these groups more accepting of violence over nudity?

Write an opinion essay on 1 of the following:

a) Why do parents/parent's groups/family-conservative groups seem to be more outraged over nudity on television shows instead of violence?

-OR-

b) Does society accept violence in the media over sexual messages and nudity? Why is that?

Both papers should include the following:

- Research on which (nudity/sexual images or violence in the media) has more of a negative impact on society.
- A bibliography

Nursery Rhymes

Objectives

To foster creative writing skills
To think outside the box

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

Uses information
Solves problems
Uses creativity
Exercises critical judgment
Adopts effective work methods
Uses information and communication technologies
Communicates appropriately

Languages

Uses language to communicate and learn
Represents his/her literacy in different media
Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts
Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Nursery rhymes have been known to have violent messages in them but are generally seen as cute rhymes for younger children. We normally hear blame being put upon violent music or other pop culture media that teenagers consume as being a reason for violent behaviour, but what about nursery rhymes? Can something that very young children consume, have an effect on them? For more information: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/4019801.stm>

As a class discuss the following:

- Do nursery rhymes contain violent messages?
- Can you think of any examples?
- Do you think that hearing these messages at a very young age can have an effect on what one perceives as normal in terms of violence (i.e. do we normalize this type of behaviour)?

As a class, choose 2 or 3 nursery rhymes and analyze them for violent messages or themes.

Examples of nursery rhymes to choose from:

- Ding Dong Bell Poem
- There Was an Old Women Who Lived in a Shoe
- Goosey Goosey Gander
- Jack and Jill

Activity: Writing a Nursery Rhyme

Have students individually write their own nursery rhyme. Their rhymes can be short but cannot include any violent messages.

Sports and Violence

Objectives

To examine violence in different realms

To discuss the effects of violence sports

To question one's desensitization to violence

To improve critical thinking and analytical writing skills

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

Uses information

Solves problems

Exercises critical judgment

Adopts effective work methods

Uses information and communication technologies

Achieves his/her potential

Communicates appropriately

Languages

Uses language to communicate and learn

Represents his/her literacy in different media

Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts

Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Personal Development

Constructs a moral frame of reference

Takes a reflective position on ethical issues

Engages in moral dialogue

In the play *I Don't Like Mondays*, Jake is in trouble for a fight that he started during a high school hockey game. Jake doesn't think he did anything wrong and believes that since it was during a hockey game, it's to be expected that there will be some fighting.

As a class discuss sports and violence. Questions to help get the discussion started:

- Is Jake's situation in hockey typical?
- Have you ever witnessed violence in high school sports? What was your initial reaction?
- Has violence in sports ever made you stop playing or watching a sport?
- Do you think there is too much violence in sports, specifically hockey?
- Do you think fighting/violence and some sports go hand in hand?
- Do you think some sports (ex. mixed martial arts) normalize violence and fighting?

Essay: Sports and Violence

Have students choose 1 of the following questions to write a short opinion essay on:

1. Is hockey too violent of a sport? Why or why not?
2. Does ultimate fighting or mixed martial arts, desensitize its viewers to violence?
3. With violence in professional sports increasing (or becoming talked about more), is there also an increase in high school sports? What can be done to decrease violence in sports?
4. Do fans/spectators play a role in the violence we are seeing in sports? What can be done to improve the situation?

Ethical Journalism

Objectives

To examine ethics and journalism

To discuss ethics and the media

To practice ethical journalism

QEP Competencies

Cross-Curricular

Uses information

Solves problems

Exercises critical judgment

Adopts effective work methods

Uses information and communication technologies

Achieves his/her potential

Communicates appropriately

Languages

Uses language to communicate and learn

Represents his/her literacy in different media

Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts

Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes

Personal Development

Constructs a moral frame of reference

Takes a reflective position on ethical issues

Engages in moral dialogue

As a class discuss violence in high schools (can include all levels of schooling):

- What are some examples of violence in high schools (Columbine, École Polytechnique etc...)?
- What can we learn from these situations?
- What have we learnt from these situations?
- Does the media sensationalize these events?
- Do they provide too much coverage of these situations when they first occur?
- Does the media's coverage of these events create copycats?
- What would be a responsible way to cover these stories in the media?
- What type of ethics and morals should journalists follow?

As a class discuss ethics in journalism.

Some resources to share with your students:

Journalistic ethics: moral responsibility in the media (2006) by Dale Jackquette

Ethics and Journalism (2003) by Karen Sanders

The Invention of Journalism Ethics -The Path to Objectivity and Beyond(2006) by Stephen J. A. Ward

Society of Professional Journalists – Code of Ethics

<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp#>

Canadian Association of Journalists – Statement of Principles

<http://www.eagle.ca/caj/principles/principles-statement-2002.htm>

CEP Journalism Code of Ethics

www.cepmedia.ca/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=164&Itemid=68

International Perspectives on Offensive Journalism

http://www.journalismethics.ca/feature_articles/international_perspectives.html

Activity: Ethical Reporting

Have students research and collect newspaper articles about high school violence.

As a class discuss them and how newspapers cover these situations:

- Do they present only the facts?
- Do the articles sensationalize the events?
- Do the articles follow the codes of ethics discussed in class?
- What could be done to improve the articles?

Have students write a newspaper article about a fictional high school shooting using the responsible journalism ethics and techniques discussed in class.

Some resources for your students:

The Elements of Journalism (2007) by Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel (Author)

How to Write Articles for Newspapers & Magazines (2002) by Dawn B. Sova

Society of Professional Journalists – Code of Ethics

<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp#>

Canadian Association of Journalists – Statement of Principles

<http://www.eagle.ca/caj/principles/principles-statement-2002.htm>

Reporting and Writing Basics

http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php/Reporting_and_Writing_Basics