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# Empowering Confident, Resilient Changemakers

*Teaching CSPE for Active and  
Informed Citizenship*

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# CSPE Specification

‘CSPE...provides opportunities for students to gain confidence, resilience and a sense of agency as they participate in actions and connect with a wider community working to help build a more equal, just and sustainable future.’

CSPE Specification, p. 4



## Short Course Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Specification for Junior Cycle

# Today's sessions



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## Session 1:

Explore what a changemaker is and how to support students to become positive changemakers



## Session 2:

Exploring issues deeply in CSPE to support students in Citizenship Action



## Session 3:

Empowering and enabling our CSPE students to engage in sensitive issues

# Today's breaks



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Coffee break

11.00 – 11.20



Lunch

12.30 – 13.30

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# Building Confident Changemakers: Connecting CSPE with Community Action



# Our Focus



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Explore what a changemaker is



Consider how to support students to become positive changemakers through citizenship action

# Who are changemakers?



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# Who are changemakers?



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# Junior Cycle Statements of Learning



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**A FRAMEWORK FOR JUNIOR CYCLE**

**Innovation & Identity**  
Schools developing Junior Cycle

**NCCA**  
An Chomhairle Náisiúnta um An tAisling  
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

## Statements of Learning

**The student**

- 1 communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in L1\*
- 2 listens, speaks, reads and writes in L2\* and one other language at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to her or his ability
- 3 creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts
- 4 creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved
- 5 has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making
- 6 appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives
- 7 values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts
- 8 values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change
- 9 understands the origins and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around her/him
- 10 has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably
- 11 takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others
- 12 is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active
- 13 understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices
- 14 makes informed financial decisions and develops good consumer skills
- 15 recognises the potential uses of mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning
- 16 describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships
- 17 devises and evaluates strategies for investigating and solving problems using mathematical knowledge, reasoning and skills
- 18 observes and evaluates empirical events and processes and draws valid deductions and conclusions
- 19 values the role and contribution of science and technology to society, and their personal, social and global importance
- 20 uses appropriate technologies in meeting a design challenge
- 21 applies practical skills as she/he develop models and products using a variety of materials and technologies
- 22 takes initiative, is innovative and develops entrepreneurial skills
- 23 brings an idea from conception to realisation
- 24 uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner

\*L1 is the language medium of the school (Irish in Irish-medium schools). L2 is the second language (English in Irish-medium schools).

SOL 7: The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts.

“Students learn about issues that concern them and the wider world and consider the role and responsibility of all citizens in bringing about positive change.”

CSPE Specification for Junior Cycle p.6

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# Junior Cycle Statements of Learning



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SOL 9: The student understands the origin and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around her/ him.

"Students ... examine the contribution citizens can make to creating a more equal, just and sustainable future at local, national and global levels."

CSPE Specification for Junior Cycle p.6

**A FRAMEWORK FOR JUNIOR CYCLE**

**Innovation & Identity**  
Schools developing Junior Cycle

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# Who are the positive changemakers?



- When you hear the term ‘changemaker’, what or who comes to mind?
- What values, qualities or characteristic would you attribute to positive changemakers?

# What matters most to young changemakers?



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Donnacha Lenehan, growing online risks facing children



Nathan Dunne, education in the context of economic disadvantage



Liadh Dalton, open dialogue between farmers and climate activist



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Click image to play

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# Civic, Social, Political Education



## Strand 1: Rights and Responsibilities

### Human dignity: the basis for human rights

- 1.1 discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities
- 1.2 create a visual representation to communicate a situation where human dignity is not respected
- 1.3 explain the hierarchy of human needs and how this relates to human rights
- 1.4 access and interpret numerical data showing local and global distribution of basic resources and patterns of inequalities

### Human rights instruments

- 1.5 share stories of individuals or groups who inspire them because of their work for human rights
- 1.6 create a timeline tracing the origin of the concept of human rights, showing five or more key dates, events, people and documents
- 1.7 communicate an understanding of the importance of the UDHR, UNCRC and the ECHR1 in promoting human rights
- 1.8 identify examples of social, cultural, language, economic, civic, religious, environmental and political rights
- 1.9 outline different perspectives in situations where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights
- 1.10 show an appreciation of their responsibility to promote and defend their individual human rights and those of others
- 1.11 reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them



## Strand 2: Global citizenship

### Sustainability

- 2.1 communicate how they are connected to and dependent upon eco-systems, people and places, near and far
- 2.2 consider a variety of definitions of development and devise their own definition of sustainable development
- 2.3 create a visual representation of data depicting their ecological footprint
- 2.4 discuss sustainability strategies that individuals, communities, businesses, agriculture and governments can employ to address climate change

### Local and global development

- 2.5 examine case studies or personal testimonies of people experiencing poverty or inequality from different contexts and countries and how they are working to overcome this
- 2.6 express an informed opinion about the root causes of poverty, both locally and globally
- 2.7 discuss, with evidence, positive and negative effects of development in their local area

### Effecting global change

- 2.8 identify one person and one institution with power and influence in the world today, explaining the role of each
- 2.9 analyse one global issue or challenge, under the following headings: causes, consequences, impact on people's lives and possible solutions
- 2.10 evaluate how they can contribute to responding to one challenge currently facing the world
- 2.11 examine a campaign for change in the area of sustainability and assess reasons why it has or has not been successful
- 2.12 reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them



## Strand 3: Exploring democracy

### The meaning of democracy

- 3.1 create a visual representation of the day-to-day contexts and institutions to which they belong, highlighting where they have power and influence
- 3.2 describe decision-making processes and the roles of different groups in their class/school
- 3.3 describe democratic structures for decision-making at local and national government levels
- 3.4 use the correct terminology to describe Irish and European democratic institutions, structures, political parties and roles
- 3.5 compare two or more systems of government, taking particular note of the ways in which the state interacts with its citizens, and citizens can shape their state
- 3.6 discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the democratic process

### The law and the citizen

- 3.7 identify laws that directly relate to their lives
- 3.8 explain how laws are made, enforced and evolve over time
- 3.9 explain the role and relevance of local, national and international courts
- 3.10 list the nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal in Irish law, with examples
- 3.11 investigate how individuals or groups have used the law to bring about change in society

### The role of the media in a democracy

- 3.12 explore the role of different media in generating information and news and assess the pros and cons of each
- 3.13 examine case studies of the use of digital or other media in one of the following: • a social justice movement • a political election or referendum • a criminal investigation • an environmental movement
- 3.14 reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them

# What matters most to your students?



In your group:

- Choose three issues that matter to your students
- Rank them in order of importance
- Nominate 1 person to share list in chat on return to the main room.





17

Junior Cycle  
Specification

Civic, Social and  
Political Education

## Short Course Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Specification for Junior Cycle

### Sample Strand Three Actions

Linking learning to action is a core part of the CSPE short course. The following suggested actions relate to Strand Three mainly, although linkages with other strands are possible. It is not intended as a prescriptive list.

- Imagine you are running for election, make a badge and an election poster designed to inform potential voters about your priorities and proposals.
- Conduct a survey to find out what students think about decision making processes in your school and how these might be improved; share the findings.
- Participate in an election count using the PR voting system. Compare the PR system with one other system of voting.
- Organise a mock election or referendum in parallel with an election/referendum in real time and compare results.
- Produce a short video, animation (or similar) to explain and compare two different systems of government.
- Participate in a debate on the following motion: young people don't need the vote to have power and influence in our world today.
- Design a game or infographic to help your peers understand the workings of the Equality Tribunal, European Court of Human Rights or the International Criminal Court.
- Use or create images (no words) to show the nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal in Ireland. [NB: respect copyright]
- Investigate the way that different media outlets report a local, national or global issue or topic of relevance to your CSPE course.
- Create a 'how-to' guide for people who want to be active online citizens, with a glossary of key terms, profiles of relevant social media platforms, and case studies of individuals or groups who have used these platforms to bring about positive change our world.
- Investigate the use of social media by one or more politicians.

# Meaningful action



Create a list of changemakers	Choose a sample action from the Specification	*
Curate a photography exhibition	Lobby those with influence	Design a Google doodle
Create a news broadcast	*	Gather data from your peers and present as infographic
Host a #TeenTalk	Create a Guinness world record challenge	Design supports for parents
*	Design an awareness campaign for local primary school	Publish a book for your library





# Empowering Changemakers- collaborative activity

1. Agree on 1 topic to focus on and note the relevant Learning Outcomes.
2. Individually, add a stimulus to engage students.
3. Identify a Changemaker. You may wish to add a local and global example.
4. Empowering students to be changemakers
5. Identify actions for change.

Oide • 9h

### Activity 1: Empowering confident and resilient changemakers

Instructions	Breakout Room 1	Breakout Room 2
<b>Instructions</b> 1. As a group, agree on 1 topic to focus on and note the relevant Learning Outcomes. 2. Individually, add a stimulus relevant to this topic that may engage students. As a group, 3. identify a Changemaker linked to this topic. You may wish to add a local and global example. 4. How can we empower students to be changemakers? 5. Identify actions for change.	<b>1: Agree on a topic to explore</b> Topic: Most relevant learning outcomes (consider integrating strands): <b>2: Upload stimulus to engage students</b> Describe how you might have students engage with this stimulus: <b>3: Changemaker(s)</b> List any local, national or global changemakers linked to this issue:	<b>1: Agree on a topic to explore</b> Topic: Most relevant learning outcomes (consider integrating strands): <b>2: Upload stimulus to engage students</b> Describe how you might have students engage with this stimulus: <b>3: Changemaker(s)</b> List any local, national or global changemakers linked to this issue:
<b>CSPE Learning Outcomes</b> Social, Political Education PDF LO CSPE	<b>4. Young people as changemakers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can we empower students to believe their ideas and actions matter?</li><li>• What experiences help students build confidence as changemakers?</li></ul>	<b>4. Young people as changemakers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can we empower students to believe their ideas and actions matter?</li><li>• What experiences help students build confidence as changemakers?</li></ul>
	<b>5: Identify actions students could take to make change</b>	<b>5: Identify actions students could take to make change</b>



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CSPE Specification, p. 4



## Short Course Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Specification for Junior Cycle



# Thinking About Community

1.1 discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities

2.1 communicate how they are connected to and dependent upon eco-systems, people and places, near and far

3.1 create a visual representation of the day-to-day contexts and institutions to which they belong, highlighting where they have power and influence

# Connecting to a wider community



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Click image to play

How have your CSPE students connected with a wider community?

# Citizenship Action in the Community



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RTÉ | 100

Meath pupils tackle fast fashion with 'Wear Again Wednesday' initiative

Cork school creates bottle top mural to bring students together during lockdown



Irish Examiner



RTÉ | 100

Teen disability activist Cara Darmody completes 50-hour sleep-out at Leinster House

# How can our changemakers connect with a wider community?



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Click image to play

Liadh Dalton, open dialogue between farmers and climate activist

How could linking with the community support students' engagement and action with Liadh's chosen issue?

# How can our changemakers connect with a wider community?



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Liadh Dalton, open dialogue between farmers and climate activist

- Within the school- LCA horticulture, TY micro-modules, Green schools, cross curricular links
- Beyond the school - Macra Na Feirme or former student speaking of sustainable farming
- Local or national events- Ploughing championships, Young Environmentalist Award
- Global events and connections- World Soil Day Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, Concern 1Planet4all resources

# Reflect on the road so far



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How might you support changemakers in your CSPE classroom?

Take note of two things you will bring back to your department colleagues.



# Please enjoy a break



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# Digging deeper: Supporting Active and Informed Citizenship



# Our Focus



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Exploring issues more deeply  
in CSPE



Supporting students in  
Citizenship Action

# Civic, Social, Political Education



## Strand 1: Rights and Responsibilities

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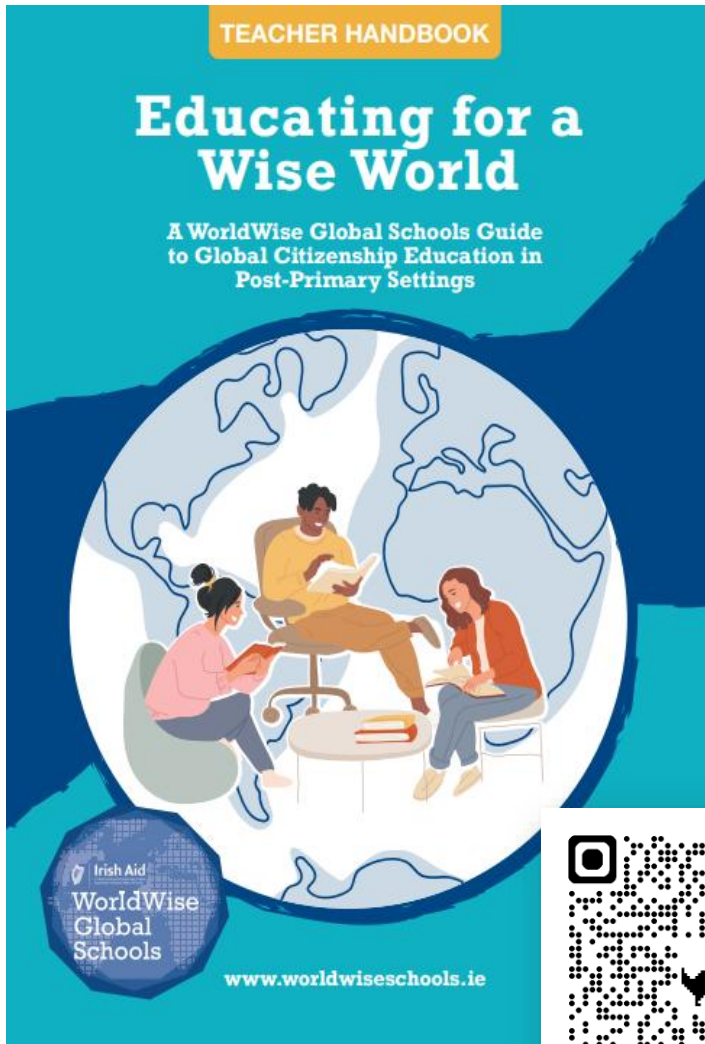
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# Digging Deeper into an issue



### Appendix 7: Digging Deeper Tool


**1. Examine**  
Explore prior knowledge and consider multiple narratives.

- What existing ideas do you have about this issue?
- What messages have you heard about this issue? From the media, from school, from friends, from family, from your own direct experience?
- Which messages do you think are 'mainstream' (dominant narratives)?
- Which messages are different from the 'mainstream' (alternative narratives)?
- Has this issue been oversimplified or over-complicated by the media, by public opinion, by leaders, by corporations?




**2. Power**  
Focus on the power issues and power structures at play.

- Who/what are the powerful players at the core of this issue?
- Who/what are most impacted by this issue?
- How is power distributed or balanced among those involved?
- Who/what has the power to change or influence this issue?
- Who has the most to gain/lose if the situation remains the same?



**3. Perspectives**  
Explore multiple perspectives; consider how power and perspectives are linked.

- What different viewpoints are presented on this issue?
- Whose voices do we usually hear on this issue? Whose voices are the loudest?
- Are there voices that are not heard but that are important to understanding this issue? If so, whose? Why do you think those views are under-represented/not represented?
- Who decides whose opinions are heard/valued?
- How are perspectives linked to power?



WWGS Teacher Handbook

**4. Root Causes**  
Explore the range of factors which contribute to the issue.

- What key factors contribute to this issue today? What influences those key factors?
- Are there historical influences to consider?
- In what ways do economic systems contribute to this issue?
- In what ways do political structures, actions or inactions impact on this issue?
- In what ways does this issue link with everyday lives in Ireland today?
- In what ways does it connect with the lives of people globally?



**5. Equity/Fairness**  
Explore the range of factors which contribute to the issue.

- What is the difference between an equal versus an equitable solution to this issue?
- What inequalities or unfairness surround this issue? Consider that there may be multiple or intersecting inequalities.
- How are the inequalities related to the power issues?
- In what ways are perspective and inequality linked?



**YOUR GLOBAL JUSTICE THEME IS:**

**6. Action**  
Consider possible actions and responses to address this global justice issue. Remember to make local to global connections.

- What can be done to improve this issue? To make it more fair and equitable?
- What can be done to empower the marginalized?
- What actions or responses can support change, improvement, or resolution of this issue?
- What options exist to advance these actions? Are there political avenues? Acts of protest or solidarity?
- How sustainable are the proposed actions?



**7. Future**  
Consider the potential impact of the proposed actions.

- What needs to happen for the proposed actions to become a reality?
- What could positive futures look like? What could future impacts of the proposed actions look like?
- How might the issue look different in 1 year, 5 years, 20 years, 100 years?

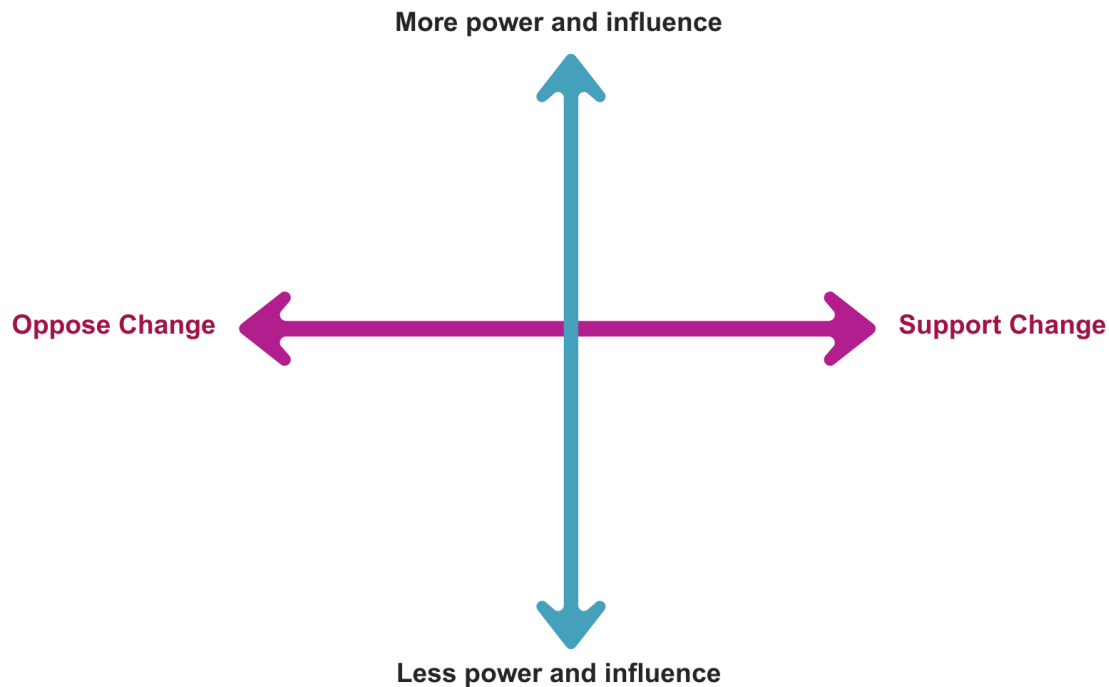


WWGS Teacher Handbook · 38

# Digging Deeper: Power



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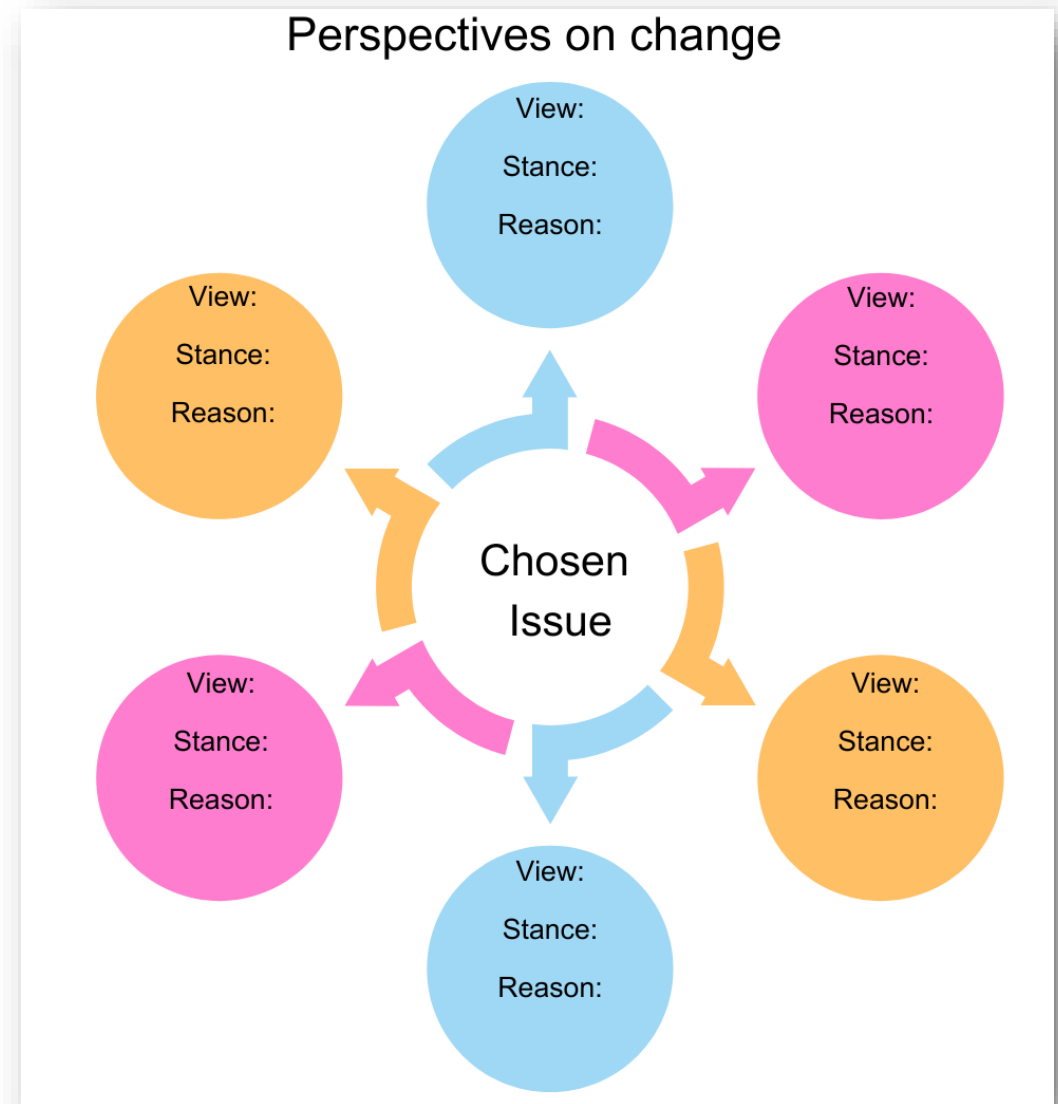


- Focus on the power issues and power structures at play.
- Who/what are the powerful players at the core of this issue?
- Who/what are most impacted by this issue?

# Digging Deeper: Perspectives



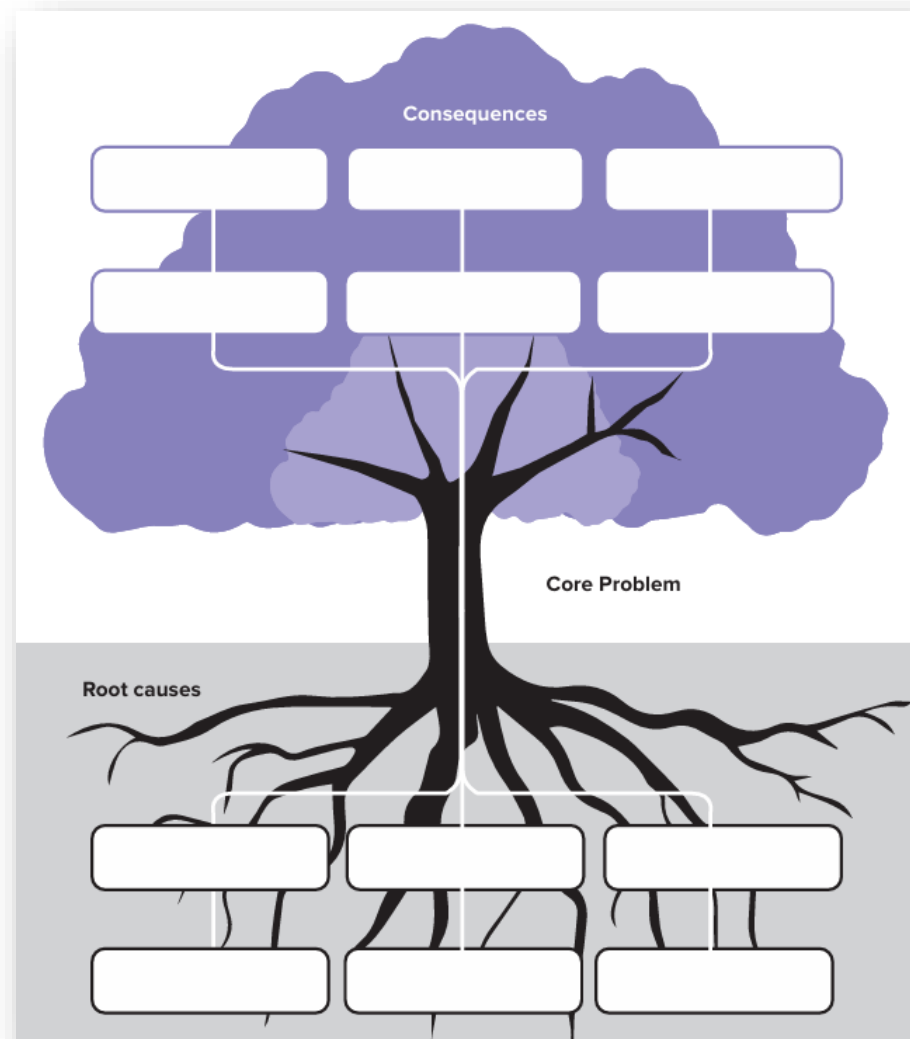
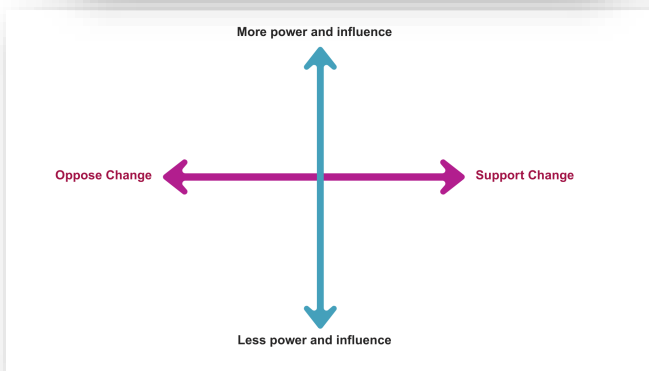
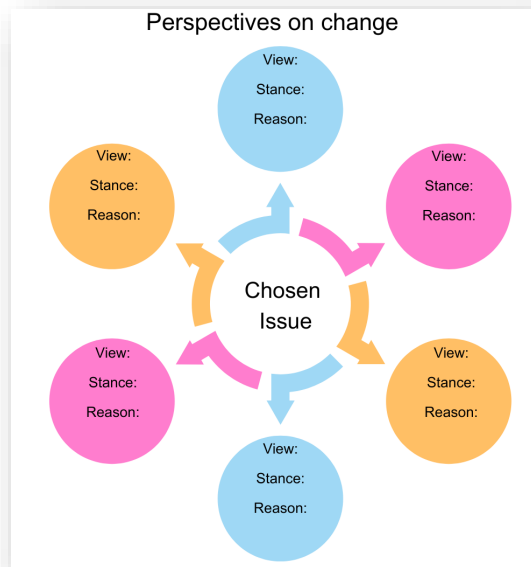
- 2.9 analyse one global issue or challenge, under the following headings: causes, consequences, impact on people's lives and possible solutions
- 1.9 outline different perspectives in situations where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights



# Digging Deeper: Root Causes



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# Digging Deeper: Action



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## Sample Strand One Actions

Linking learning to action is a core part of the CSPE short course. The following suggested actions relate to Strand One mainly, although linkages with other strands are possible. It is not intended as a prescriptive list.

- Use digital technology to create a display showing situations or cases where human dignity was or is respected. Display finished work in school or online.
- Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that 'Young people have a right to have their voices heard and for adults to listen and take them seriously in matters that affect them.' Examine how your school supports listening to and involving young people in decision making about matters that affect them in school and share your findings.
- Identify a human rights issue of concern and engage with an individual, group, organisation or campaign focusing on that issue.
- Lobby a relevant government department about a human rights issue of personal relevance and/or concern to young people.
- Design and administer a survey to find out what peers/family members know and think about an issue relevant to human rights or children's rights. Share your findings with survey participants and with someone of influence.
- Publish an article, blog, vlog, podcast (or similar) about the treatment of a minority group in Ireland, referencing one or more human rights instruments and/or equality legislation, that is relevant to the issue.
- Organise a celebration to mark International Human Rights Day to inform people about the UDHR, UNCRC or ECHR, and/or organisations working in the field of human rights in Ireland.
- Research the impact of one global challenge (such as COVID-19, biodiversity loss, climate change, poverty) on the human rights of children and young people in Ireland or in the Global South.
- Organize a guest speaker(s) to talk to the class/school about a human rights/children's rights issue of interest/concern.

## Sample Strand Two Actions

Linking learning to action is a core part of the CSPE short course. The following suggested actions relate to Strand Two mainly, although linkages with other strands are possible. It is not intended as a prescriptive list.

- Create a 'wellbeing' mural or noticeboard, highlighting the link between the wellbeing of people and the planet.
- Organise a class debate on a local or global development issue.
- Research case-studies to find out how Ireland's official development assistance (ODA) is tackling poverty and inequalities in specific countries.
- Write a letter or an email to a politician or to the media about a local or global issue of concern.
- Measure your class's attempts to lessen your collective impact on the planet over an agreed period by calculating your combined pre- and post- ecological footprints.
- Investigate the use of art, comedy, drama, poetry, music, multimedia (or similar) to communicate how to address the challenge of climate change.
- Organize a pop-up fashion swap-shop to recycle clothing and raise awareness about sustainable consumption and production.
- Invite a guest speaker(s) to talk to the class/school about a local or global development issue of interest/concern.
- Organise a visit to an organisation or community focused on sustainability issues.
- Support the work of a non-government organisation (NGO) that is working to address local or global inequalities, by supporting their awareness raising, campaigning or fund-raising efforts.

## Sample Strand Three Actions

Linking learning to action is a core part of the CSPE short course. The following suggested actions relate to Strand Three mainly, although linkages with other strands are possible. It is not intended as a prescriptive list.

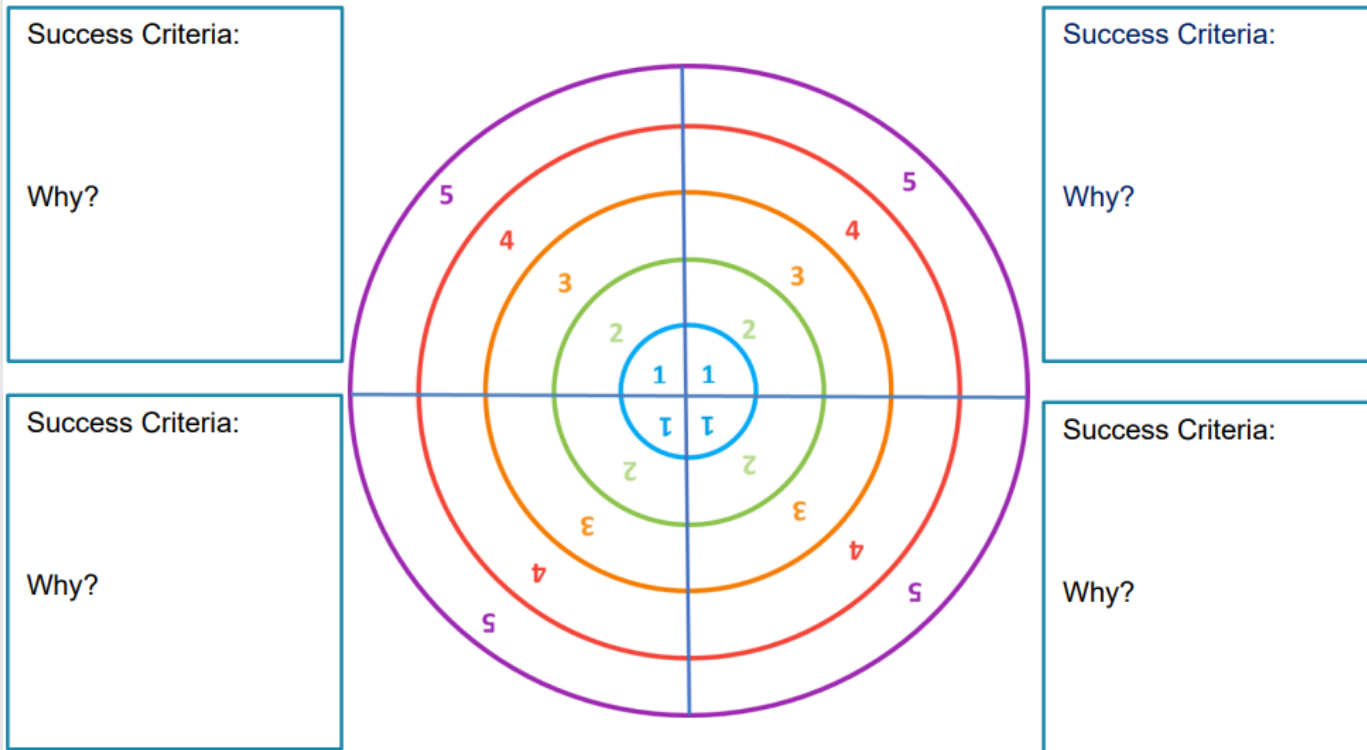
- Imagine you are running for election, make a badge and an election poster designed to inform potential voters about your priorities and proposals.
- Conduct a survey to find out what students think about decision making processes in your school and how these might be improved; share the findings.
- Participate in an election count using the PR voting system. Compare the PR system with one other system of voting.
- Organise a mock election or referendum in parallel with an election/referendum in real time and compare results.
- Produce a short video, animation (or similar) to explain and compare two different systems of government.
- Participate in a debate on the following motion: young people don't need the vote to have power and influence in our world today.
- Design a game or infographic to help your peers understand the workings of the Equality Tribunal, European Court of Human Rights or the International Criminal Court.
- Use or create images (no words) to show the nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal in Ireland. [NB: respect copyright]
- Investigate the way that different media outlets report a local, national or global issue or topic of relevance to your CSPE course.
- Create a 'how-to' guide for people who want to be active online citizens, with a glossary of key terms, profiles of relevant social media platforms, and case studies of individuals or groups who have used these platforms to bring about positive change our world.
- Investigate the use of social media by one or more politicians.

Consider possible actions and responses to address this global justice issue

# Successful learning in CSPE



## Peer Feedback Strategy Bullseye



- Participation
- Engagement
- Knowledge
- Key Skills
- Attitudes
- Behaviour change
- Impact of action on others
- Impact of action on me
- Future

# Digging Deeper- Collaborative Activity



Oide

1. Agree on 1 topic to focus on and note the relevant Learning Outcomes.
2. Build a Digging Deeper learning experience around this topic.
3. Identify actions for change and consider what success would look like.

Oide • 9h

## Activity 1: Empowering confident and resilient changemakers

Instructions	Breakout Room 1	Breakout Room 2
<b>Instructions</b> 1. As a group, agree on 1 topic to focus on and note the relevant Learning Outcomes. 2. Individually, add a stimulus relevant to this topic that may engage students.  As a group, 3. identify a Changemaker linked to this topic. You may wish to add a local and global example. 4. How can we empower students to be changemakers? 5. Identify actions for change.	<b>1: Agree on a topic to explore</b> Topic:  Most relevant learning outcomes (consider integrating strands):  <b>2: Upload stimulus to engage students</b> Describe how you might have students engage with this stimulus:  <b>3: Changemaker(s)</b> List any local, national or global changemakers linked to this issue:	<b>1: Agree on a topic to explore</b> Topic:  Most relevant learning outcomes (consider integrating strands):  <b>2: Upload stimulus to engage students</b> Describe how you might have students engage with this stimulus:  <b>3: Changemaker(s)</b> List any local, national or global changemakers linked to this issue:
<b>CSPE Learning Outcomes</b>  PDF LO CSPE	<b>4. Young people as changemakers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can we empower students to believe their ideas and actions matter?</li><li>• What experiences help students build confidence as changemakers?</li></ul>	<b>4. Young people as changemakers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can we empower students to believe their ideas and actions matter?</li><li>• What experiences help students build confidence as changemakers?</li></ul>
	<b>5: Identify actions students could take to make change</b>	<b>5: Identify actions students could take to make change</b>

# Citizenship Action in CSPE



- Students will complete at least three citizenship actions as part of their learning across the three strands.
- Students create a Citizenship Action Record for one of these as their CBA.
- This record captures evidence throughout the process (planning, research, and action), not only after the action is completed.
- Sample actions in the specification are indicative not prescriptive.

**Civic, Social, Political Education**

**Strand 1: Rights and Responsibilities**

**Human dignity: the basis for human rights**

1.1 discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities  
1.2 create a visual representation to communicate a situation where human dignity is not respected  
1.3 explain the hierarchy of human needs and how this relates to human rights  
1.4 access and interpret numerical data showing local and global distribution of basic resources and patterns of inequalities

**Human rights instruments**

1.5 share stories of individuals or groups who inspire them because of their work for human rights  
1.6 create a timeline tracing the origin of the concept of human rights, showing five or more key dates, events, people and documents  
1.7 communicate an understanding of the importance of the UDHR, UNCRC and the ECHR1 in promoting human rights  
1.8 identify examples of social, cultural, language, economic, civic, religious, environmental and political rights  
1.9 outline different perspectives in situations where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights  
1.10 show an appreciation of their responsibility to promote and defend their individual human rights and those of others  
1.11 reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them

**Strand 2: Global citizenship**

**Sustainability**

2.1 communicate how they are connected to and dependent upon eco-systems, people and places, near and far  
2.2 consider a variety of definitions of development and devise their own definition of sustainable development  
2.3 create a visual representation of data depicting their ecological footprint  
2.4 discuss sustainability strategies that individuals, communities, businesses, agriculture and governments can employ to address climate change

**Strand 3: Exploring democracy**

**The meaning of democracy**

3.1 create a visual representation of the day-to-day contexts and institutions to which they belong, highlighting where they have power and influence  
3.2 describe decision-making processes and the roles of different groups in their class/school  
3.3 describe democratic structures for decision-making at local and national government levels  
3.4 use the correct terminology to describe Irish and European democratic institutions, structures, political parties and roles  
3.5 compare two or more systems of government, taking into account the ways in which the state interacts with its citizens and how they can shape their state and the strengths and weaknesses of the democratic system

**Citizen**

citizens directly relate to their lives  
rights are made, enforced and evolve over time and the relevance of local, national and international law  
situations and contexts under which discrimination is illegal and the rights of individuals and groups have used the law to challenge discrimination in society

**Media in a democracy**

the role of different media in generating public opinion and assessing the pros and cons of each  
the impact of the use of digital or other media  
examples: • a social justice movement • a political campaign • a criminal investigation • an environmental movement  
reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them

Junior Cycle Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE) short course  
Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment

NCCA  
January 2019

# Recording and Presenting the Action



- Students can choose how they present their Citizenship Action Record.
- Approximately 6-8 hours preparation and completion.
- Group actions are encouraged to highlight the power of collective action. However, each student must complete an individual Citizenship Action Record.
- Sample Student Work is available on the NCCA website.

**Civic, Social, Political Education**

**Strand 1: Rights and Responsibilities**

**Human dignity: the basis for human rights**

**1.1** discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities  
**1.2** create a visual representation to communicate a situation where human dignity is not respected  
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**Human rights instruments**

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**1.8** identify examples of social, cultural, linguistic, economic, civic, religious, environmental and human rights  
**1.9** outline different perspectives in situation where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights  
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**Strand 2: Global citizenship**

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**2.1** communicate how they are connected to and dependent upon eco-systems, people and places, near and far  
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**2.4** discuss sustainability strategies that individuals, communities, businesses, agriculture and governments can employ to address climate change

**Local and global development**

**2.5** examine case studies or personal testimonies of people experiencing poverty or inequality from different contexts and countries and how they are working to overcome this

**Strand 3: Exploring democracy**

**The meaning of democracy**

**3.1** create a visual representation of the day-to-day contexts and institutions to which they belong, highlighting where they have power and influence  
**3.2** describe decision-making processes and the roles of different groups in their class/school  
**3.3** describe democratic structures for decision-making at local and national government levels  
**3.4** use the correct terminology to describe Irish and European democratic institutions, structures, political parties and roles  
**3.5** compare two or more systems of government, taking particular note of the ways in which the state interacts with its citizens, and citizens can shape their state  
**3.6** discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the democratic process

**Law and the citizen**

**3.7** identify laws that directly relate to their lives  
**3.8** explain how laws are made, enforced and evolve over time  
**3.9** explain the role and relevance of local, national and international courts  
**3.10** identify the nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal  
**3.11** investigate how individuals or groups have used the law to bring about change in society

**The role of the media in a democracy**

**3.12** explore the role of different media in generating information and news and assess the pros and cons of each  
**3.13** examine case studies of the use of digital or other media in the following: • a social justice movement • a political campaign • a referendum • a criminal investigation • an environmental movement  
**3.14** reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them

Junior Cycle Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE) short course

Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment

NCCA  
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

January 2019

# Teacher Tracker and Student Role Guide



Oide

**Oide** Office of the Director of Education

**CSPE: Citizenship Action Support – Teacher Tracker**

This resource may be used in supporting a teacher overseeing a Citizenship Action. Students in CSPE complete at least three Citizenship Actions, with a minimum of one from each strand.

Class Group	
Action Title	

**1: Issue**

- Class/Small Group has identified a relevant and meaningful issue linked to the course specification (Clearly defined, focused issue).
- Class/Small Group can explain why the issue is important and relevant (Well-supported, clear explanation).

Date/Progress Review, Notes, or Suggestions:

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**2: Research**

- Class/Small Group has used at least 3 reliable and diverse sources (Use of credible, varied sources).
- Class/Small Group has presented key facts and evidence clearly (Evidence of understanding and analysis).
- Class/Small Group has considered different perspectives and viewpoints (Balanced research).

Date/Progress Review, Notes, or Suggestions:

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**3: Actions**

- Class/Small Group has identified at least two realistic and feasible actions (Actions are clear, realistic, and achievable).
- Class/Small Group has assessed the strengths and weaknesses of each action (Critical thinking and reflection on impact).

Date/Progress Review, Notes, or Suggestions:

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**Oide** Office of the Director of Education

**CSPE: Roles in Planning, Action and Reflection**

**Student guide**

*NB – ensure every team member is clear on how much time is available to complete this guide before commencing. Appoint a timekeeper.*

Team members \_\_\_\_\_

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**1. A. Which of the following actions are you choosing to engage with?**

- Survey
- Exhibition/Awareness raising
- Petition – on-line or real-world
- Fundraising
- Visit or visiting speaker
- Town-hall style meeting
- Publishing - Digital or legacy media
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**B. What roles do you think will be necessary to plan, execute, report and reflect on the action that you are considering?**

Roles required *throughout* the action

\_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

Further roles required *only during planning*

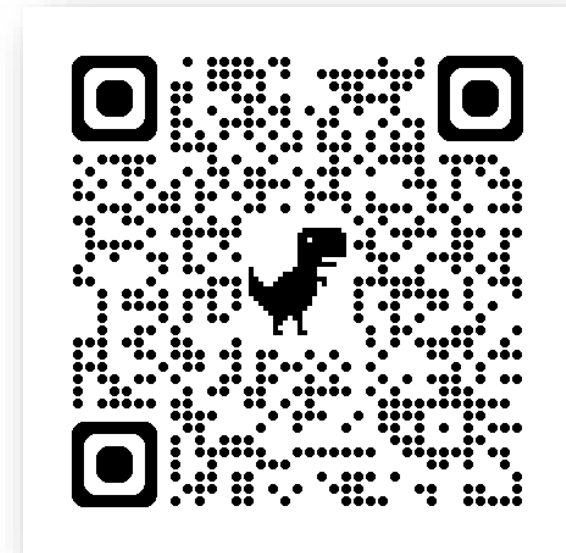
- \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

Further roles required *only during execution of the action*

- \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

Further roles required *only during the conclusion, presentation of and/or reflection on the action*

- \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_





# Anticipation, Action and Reflection in the CSPE Classroom



Oide

- Thinking ahead about the short term and long-term consequences of actions
- Engaging in purposeful and responsible action
- Reflecting on values, rights, and responsibilities

 **Anticipation, Action and Reflection** 

**Anticipation** – Thinking like an Active Citizen

Your local park where you and other young people hang around during the weekend is often covered with rubbish after the weekend. Some of your year group suggest organising a clean up after school on a Monday. Others in your year group feel it is not their responsibility.

Q1 What reasons might people have for responding in this way?

Q2. What could be the short-term/long-term consequences of organising a clean-up?

Q3 Whose perspectives should be considered? (Local residents etc)

**Action** – Taking Responsible Action

Choose **one** action that could be taken in response to the scenario.

The action I would support is:

Q1 What is the aim of this action?

Q2 How could this action contribute to well-being?

Q3 What possible negative outcomes should be considered?

Q4 How can this action be made more responsible and inclusive?


**Reflection** – Learning as a Citizen

Q1 Which CSPE values are relevant here?

Q2 How does your chosen action reflect these values?

Q3 What have you learned about being an active and responsible citizen?

Q4 How might this learning influence your future actions in school or the community?



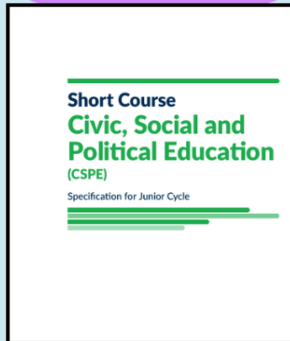
# Citizenship Action Record Supports



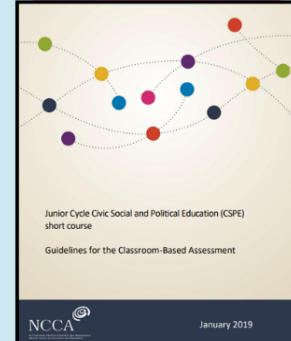
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## Supports for the CSPE Citizenship Action Record

**CSPE Specification,  
including sample  
actions**



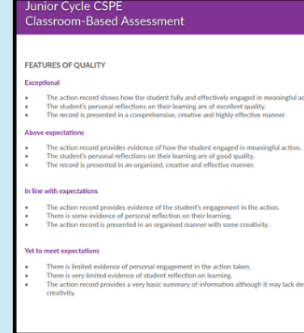
**NCCA Assessment  
Guidelines**



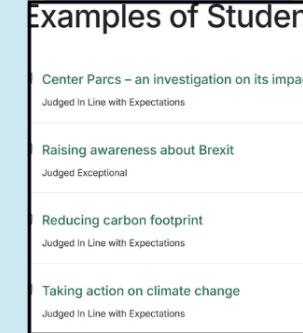
**Oide  
Supports**



**Features of  
Quality**



**Examples of  
Student Work**



Oide

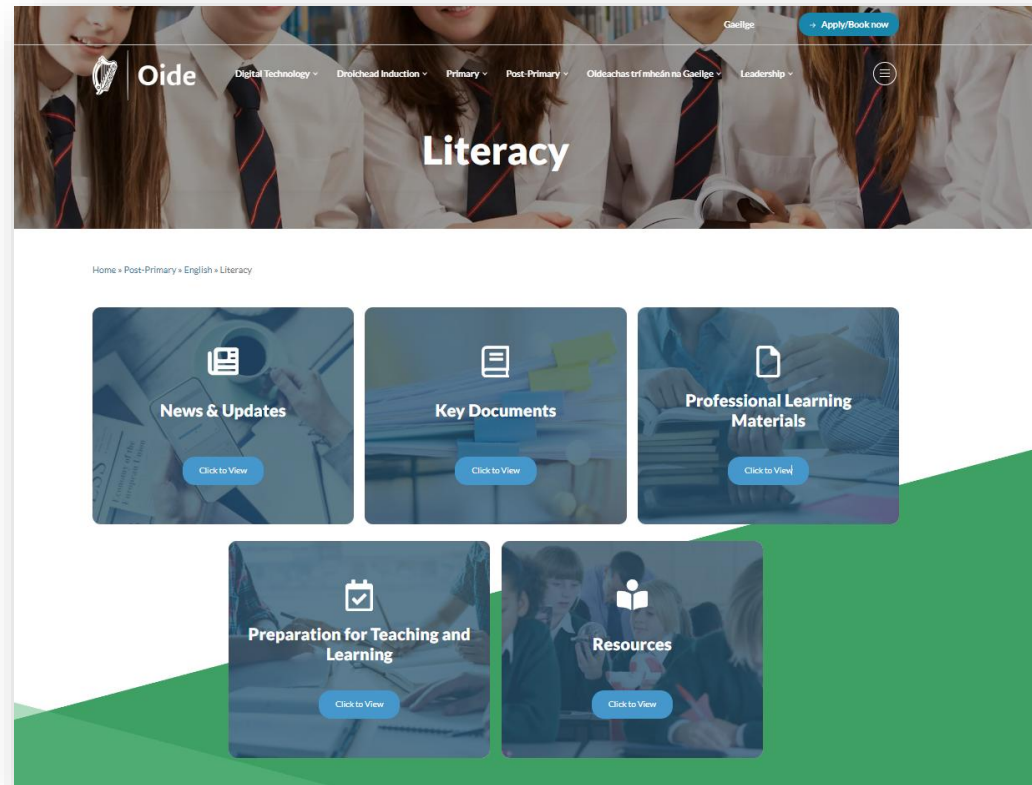
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Learning of School Leaders  
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# Literacy Supports



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# Reflection



What considerations will you make when planning for deeper engagement with issues in your CSPE classroom?

Take note of two things you will bring back to your department colleagues.



# Please enjoy a break



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Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers

Empowering and  
enabling our CSPE  
students to engage in  
sensitive issues



**Inspire**

**Empower**

**Enable**

# Our Focus



Oide



Approaching sensitive issues  
in the CSPE classroom



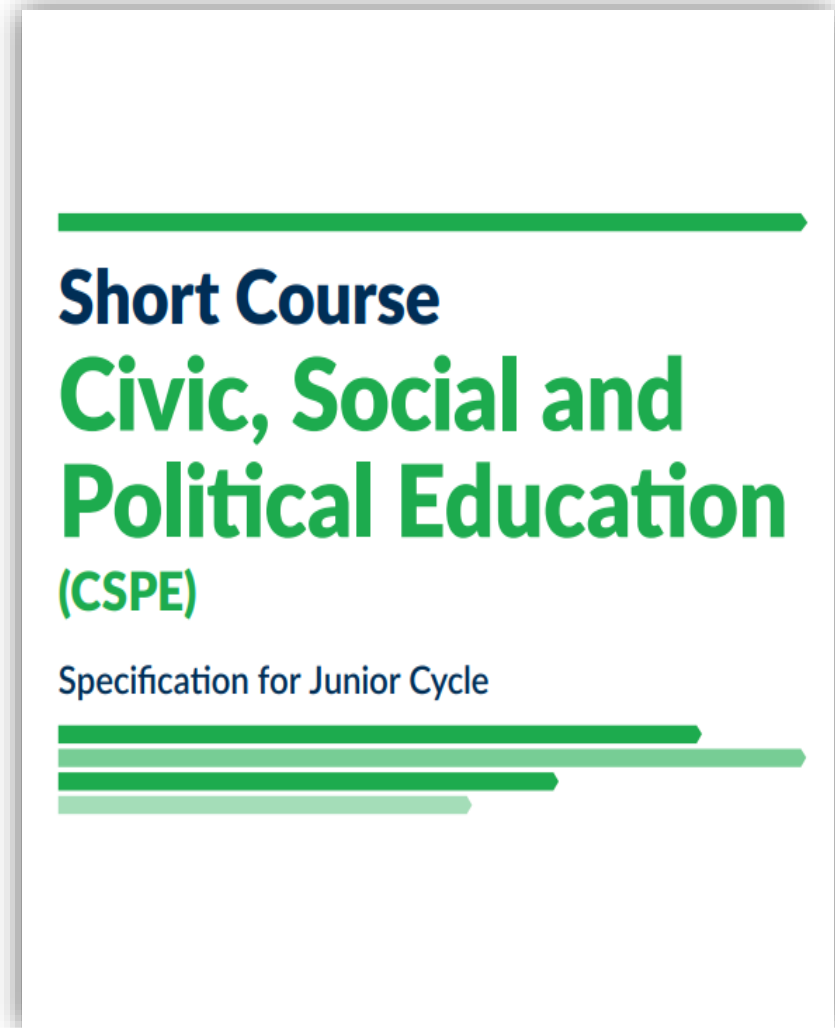
Exploring how to support  
CSPE students engaging  
with sensitive issues

# CSPE Specification



‘CSPE helps students to question, critique and evaluate what is happening in the world; provides students with an understanding of their human rights and social responsibilities’

CSPE Specification for Junior Cycle p.4



# Why do we teach sensitive issues in CSPE?

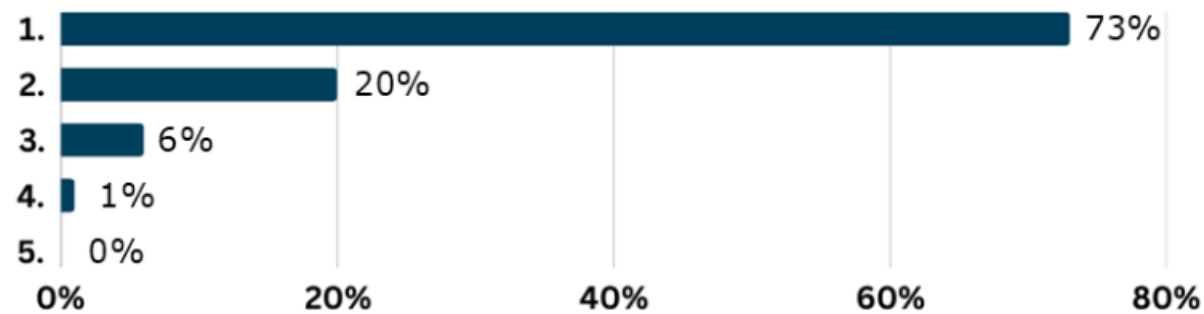


- They are in the specification
- Young people need to explore their values
- Young people need to know about global issues
- Help develop critical thinking skills
- Develop perspectives
- Life-long learning
- Empathy/ respect etc
- Support student understanding
- Student voice and advocacy





In your opinion, how important is it to include sensitive and controversial topics in education to foster tolerance, respect and informed decision-making?



1. Very important

2. Important

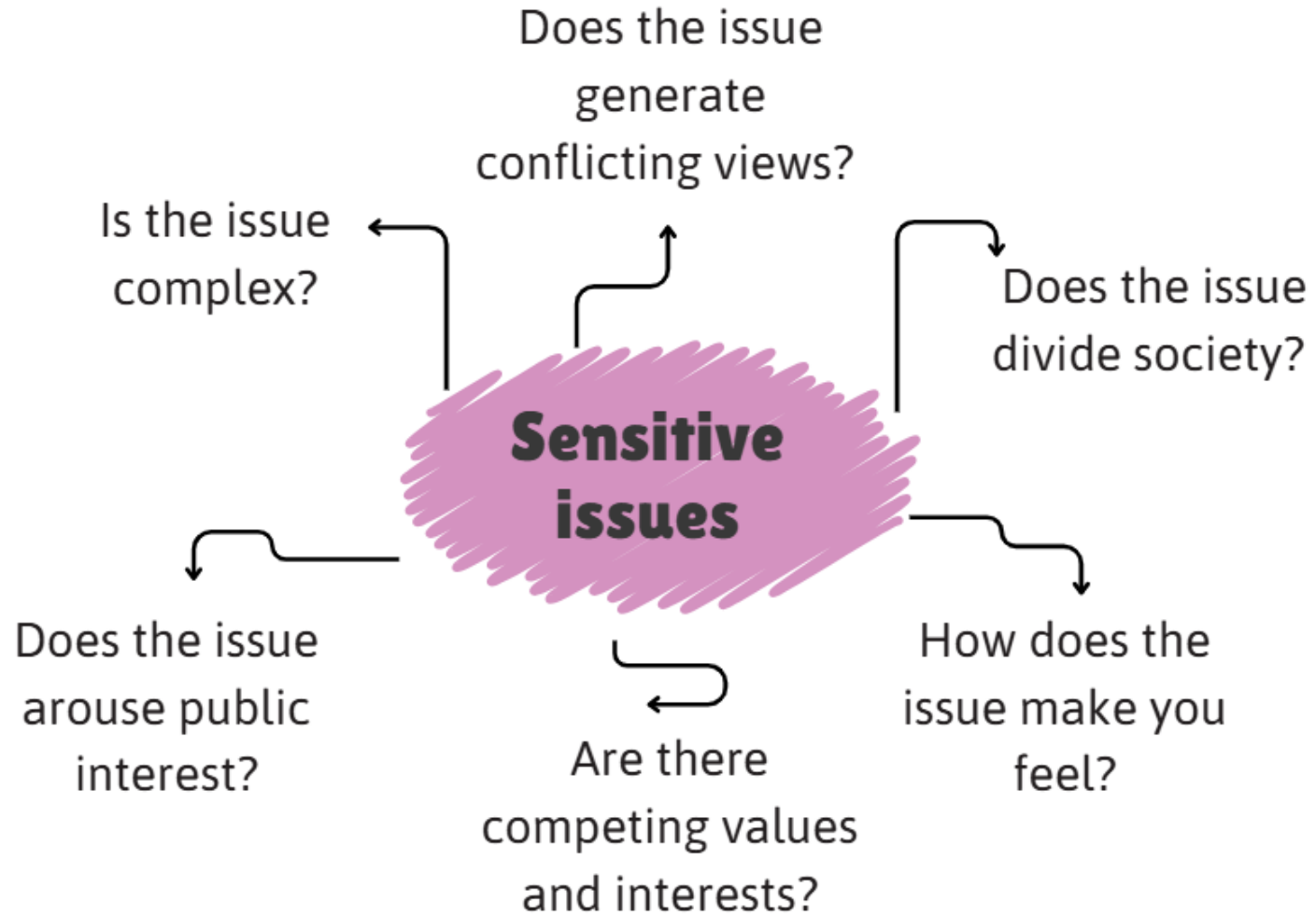
3. Moderately important

4. Slightly important

5. Not important at all



# What makes an issue sensitive?





# Your own CSPE classroom

- What do you think could be a sensitive issue in your own classroom?
- How have you approached looking at sensitive issues in your classroom?



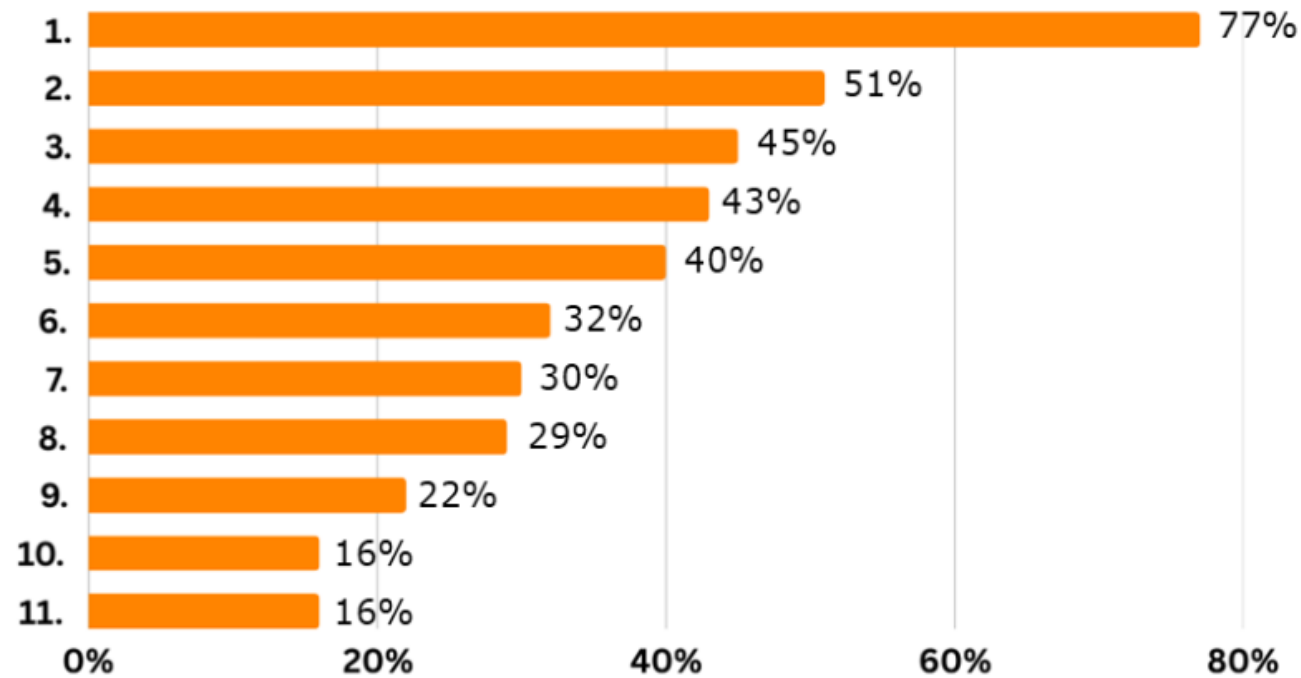
Click image to play

Daniel Campion,  
Presentation Secondary School,  
Kilkenny





## Which of the following topics would you consider to be sensitive or controversial to discuss with pupils?



<https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en/discover/surveys/survey-sensitive-controversial-topics>

2.4 discuss sustainability strategies that individuals, communities, businesses, agriculture and governments can employ to address climate change

4.Racism and discrimination

2.5 examine case studies or personal testimonies of people experiencing poverty or inequality from different contexts and countries and how they are working to overcome this

8.Historical or current conflicts and wars

3.5 compare two or more systems of government, taking particular note of the ways in which the state interacts with its citizens, and citizens can shape their state

# Civic, Social, Political Education



## Strand 1: Rights and Responsibilities

**Human dignity: the basis for human rights**

### Human Rights

1.2 create a visual representation to communicate a situation where human dignity is not respected

1.3 explain the hierarchy of human needs and how this

### Gender Equity

global distribution of basic resources and patterns of inequalities

**Human rights instruments**

1.5 share stories of individuals or groups who inspire them

### Racism

human rights, showing five or more key dates, events, people and documents

1.7 communicate an understanding of the importance of the UDHR, UNCRC and the ECHR in promoting human rights

### Poverty

1.9 outline different perspectives in situations where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights

1.10 show an appreciation of their responsibility to promote and defend their individual human rights and those of others

1.11 reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them



## Strand 2: Global citizenship

**Sustainability**

2.1 communicate how they are connected to and dependent upon eco-systems, people and places, near and far

2.2 consider a variety of definitions of development and

### Global Inequality

ecological footprint

2.4 discuss sustainability strategies that individuals, communities, businesses, agriculture and governments can

### Conflict Situations

**Local and global development**

2.5 examine case studies or personal testimonies of people experiencing poverty or inequality from different contexts and countries and how they are working to overcome this

### Immigration

2.7 discuss, with evidence, positive and negative effects of development in their local area

**Effecting global change**

2.8 identify one person and one institution with power and influence in the world today, explaining the role of each

2.9 analyse one global issue or challenge, under the following headings: causes, consequences, impact on people's lives and

### Direct Provision

challenge currently facing the world

2.11 examine a campaign for change in the area of sustainability and assess reasons why it has or has not been successful

2.12 reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them



## Strand 3: Exploring democracy

**The meaning of democracy**

3.1 create a visual representation of the day-to-day contexts and institutions to which they belong, highlighting where they have power and influence

### Governance and Democracy

3.3 describe democratic structures for decision-making at local and national government levels

3.4 use the correct terminology to describe Irish and European democratic institutions, structures, political parties and roles

3.5 compare two or more systems of government, taking its

### Climate Change

3.6 discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the democratic process

**The law and the citizen**

3.7 identify laws that directly relate to their lives

3.8 explain how laws are made, enforced and evolve over time

3.9 explain the role and relevance of local, national and international courts

### Homelessness

3.11 investigate how individuals or groups have used the law to bring about change in society

**The role of the media in a democracy**

3.12 explore the role of different media in generating information and news and assess the pros and cons of each

### Political Systems

election or referendum • a criminal investigation • an environmental movement

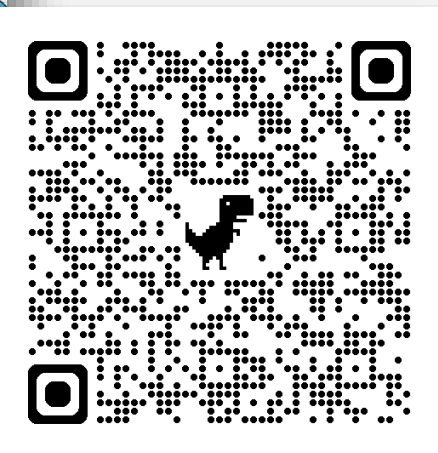
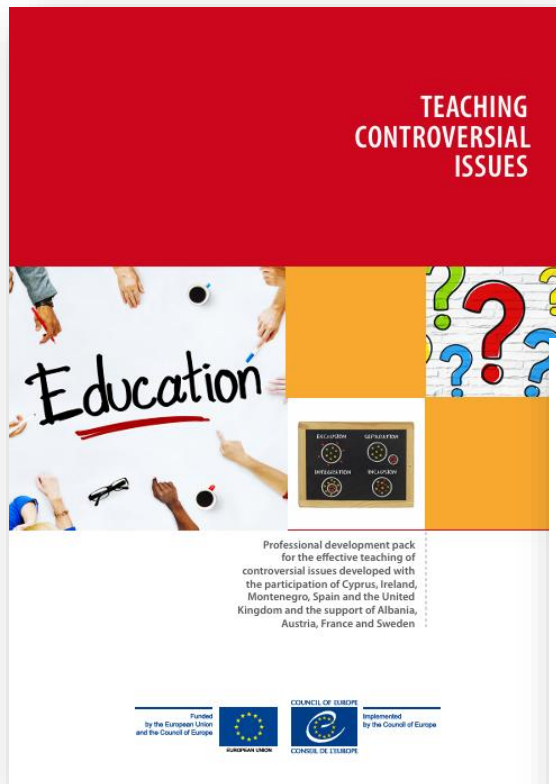
3.14 reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them

# Supports for teaching sensitive issues



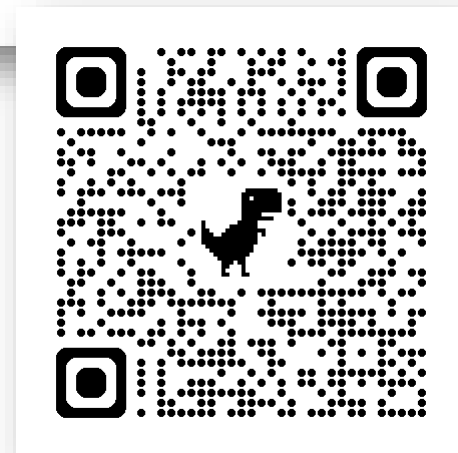
Oide

## Council of Europe: Teaching controversial issues (2015)



## NCCA SPHE Toolkits

Preparing to teach      Teaching SPHE      Resources for teaching and learning SPHE/RSE



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Supporting the Professional Learning of School Leaders and Teachers

# Considerations before teaching sensitive issues



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What is a sensitive issue?  
What makes issues sensitive or not?

What is my starting point in deciding to teach a sensitive issue?

Which values will shape how I want my students to learn?  
What is my goal?

Why should we teach sensitive issues?

What learning experiences can I create for my students?  
What resources might I need?

# How do you prepare to teach sensitive issues?



Oide

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## CLASS CONTRACT


**RESPECT**  
Show respect for ourselves, others and our environment.

**CURIOSITY**  
Be curious about the world around us and ask questions.


**COLLABORATION**  
Work with others develop our knowledge and understand the roles within a group.

**COMMUNICATION**  
Speak to others respectfully and communicate learning and needs.

**OPEN-MINDEDNESS**  
Be open-minded to other people's ideas and perspectives, and beliefs.

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## KWHLAQ CHART

What do you <b>know</b> ?	What do you <b>want to know</b> ?	<b>How</b> will you find out?	What have you <b>learned</b> ?	What <b>action</b> will you take?	What further <b>questions</b> do you have?
					

# Role of the teacher




Oide

- Neutral facilitator
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment
- Encourage critical thinking
- Encourage open dialogue
- Balance viewpoints
- Manage emotional responses
- Evidence based opinions
- Reflective practice





 **Oide** Tuairim ar Infheistíocht Ghairmiúil i nGairneoireacht  
Súil ar an tAistriúchán Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers

## Personal Reflection

Topic/Theme:

<b>Strengths</b> Prior knowledge, experience	<b>Vulnerabilities</b> Fears, uncertainties, gaps in knowledge	<b>Needs</b> Resources, information, advice

# How can we make the most of sensitive discussions



Oide

- Share the learning intention(s)
- Find out what students know and anticipate how the discussion might develop
- Appeal to students' better nature
- Encourage participation
- Depersonalise the discussion
- When and how to safely interrupt
- Establish a means of closure



Preparing to teach



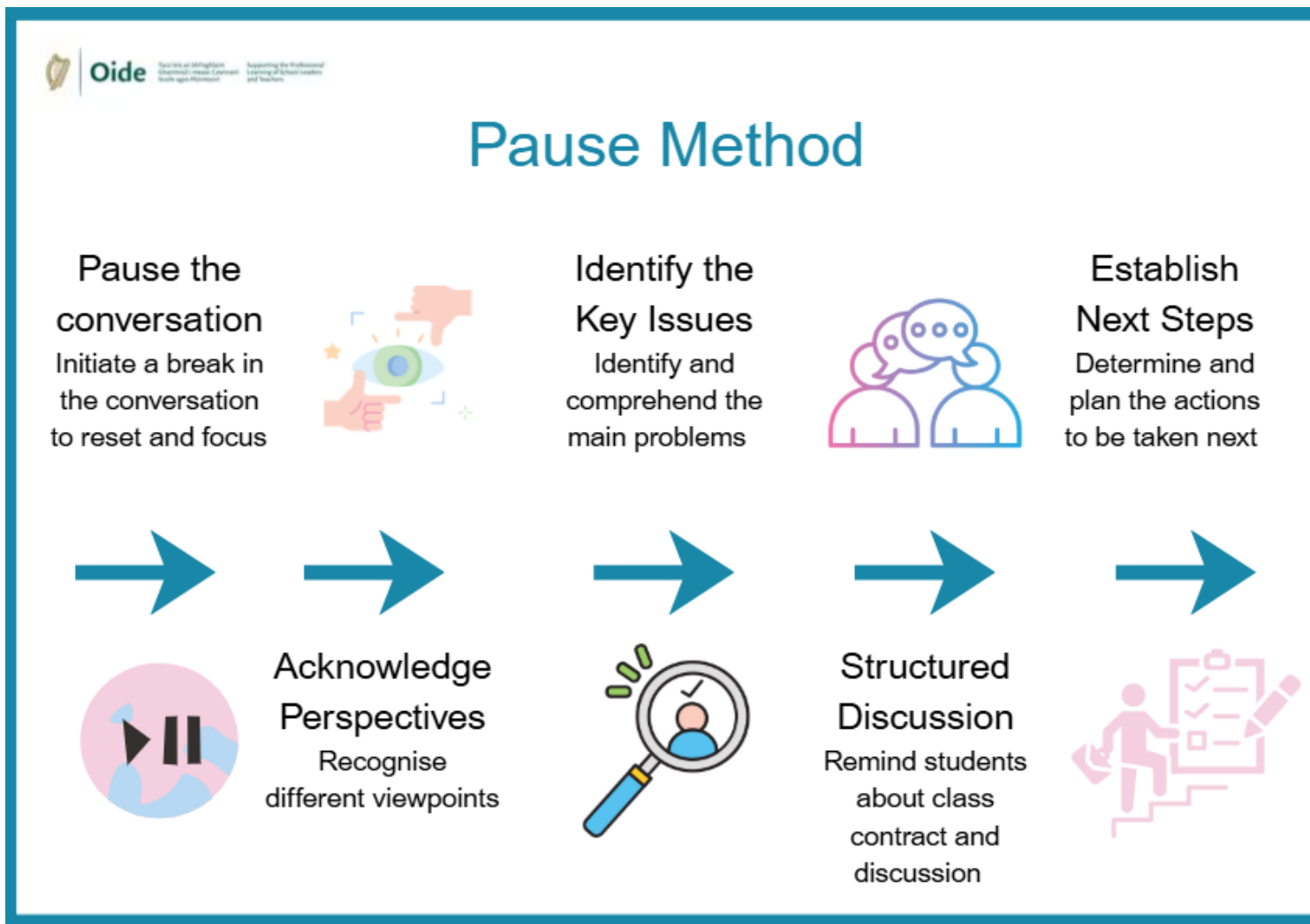
Teaching SPHE



Resources for teaching and learning SPHE/RSE



# Pause Method



When sensitive conversations begin, your role as teacher becomes especially important.

The Pause method can help you slow the moment, acknowledge emotion, and redirect if needed.



## Reframing, emphasising, or focusing

- I noticed that a lot of you were...
- I hear some of you are saying...
- I appreciate your honesty.
- Can you say a bit more about that?
- Share with me your thoughts about...
- Does anyone else have ideas?
- Does anyone feel differently about...
- Can you think of a situation where you might think/ respond differently?
- How might someone your age...?
- What do we already know about this?
- Can you give me an example?
- Are you saying...or...?
- Can you rephrase that please?

## Understand a viewpoint

- Please explain why/how ...?
- What evidence is there to support what you are saying?
- On what authority are you basing your argument?
- Another way of looking at this is..., does this seem reasonable?
- Why are you saying that?
- What exactly does that mean?
- How does this relate to what we have been talking about?



## Seeking clarification

- I am curious about...
- I understand that is your experience, I was wondering could there be another explanation?
- I wonder what the other person might be thinking?
- What would that look like?

## Assumptions

- That sounds like something that needs to be looked at more.
- What are the consequences of that assumption?
- What was the point of asking that question?
- Why do you think I asked this question?



Useful phrases to facilitate challenging questions/discussion in the CSPE class

# Supporting conversation in the CSPE classroom



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Carousel Discussion

Jigsaw discussion

Walking Debate

Four Corners

Role Play

What Jars You?

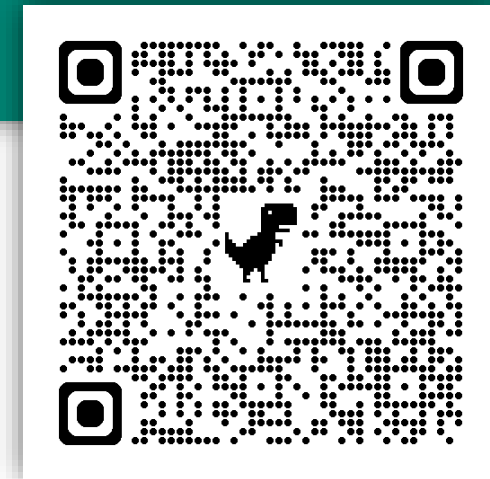
5 Whys

Visual Learning Strategy



# Stories that Move – Toolbox against discrimination

- Seeing and being: reflect on identity and the value of diversity.
- Facing discrimination: explore examples of antisemitism, racism and other forms of discrimination affecting young people.
- Life stories: learn from personal stories across different historical periods.
- Mastering the media: examine how news and social media shape views.
- Taking action: discover what taking action looks like and explore youth initiatives across Europe



# Values and goals in teaching sensitive issues



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- **Topic:** Equality and Discrimination
- **Goal:** To help students become informed, respectful, and responsible citizens who value fairness, challenge injustice, and contribute to a more equal society.
- **Values:** Students become more aware of how their actions effect others. Students learn that they have a voice and can make a difference. Promotes values such as equality, inclusion, justice, and respect for human dignity.



# Workshops



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# Share your learning experience



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# Reflection



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3 things I found interesting from today

2 resources I will use in my CSPE class

1 new approach I will try with my CSPE students

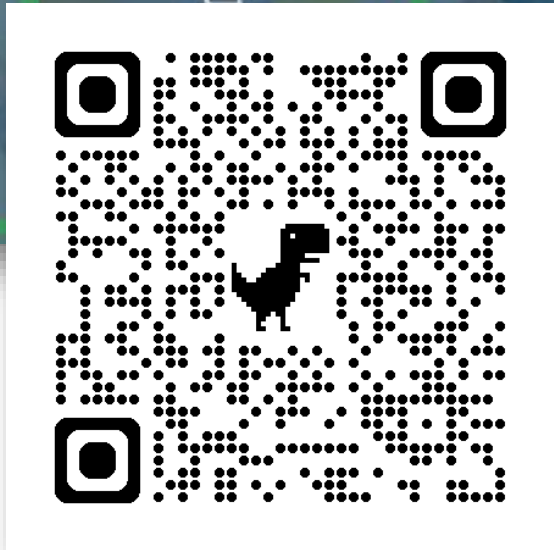


# Further supports



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- Wellbeing mailing list
- Oide website
- School support
- Scoilnet
- Follow on X



Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional Learning of School Leaders and Teachers

# Evaluation



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CSPE PLE 2026: Empowering  
Changemakers



Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim  
Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí  
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Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers

# A Final Note



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