



AN INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

By: Braden Wylie

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1. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM IS

Environmental Racism Defined



A form of systemic racism whereby marginalized Black, Indigenous or communities with people of colour (BIPOC) are disproportionately burdened with health hazards through policies and practices that force them to live in proximity to unsafe environments or climates.

WHO IT AFFECTS



Environmental Racism is a global issue that affects peoples' health, natural environments, and cultures. When toxic waste locations such as sewage works, mines, landfills, power stations, major roads and emitters of airborne particulate matter are placed near BIPOC communities, people suffer.

WHY TEACH IT

Importance of Environmental Racism

Environmental Racism is a topic that should be taught in Ontario Schools as the issue impacts various communities in Canada, and is deeply tied to the marginalization of people. It is our duty as educators to cover these topics as they educate students about issues requiring immediate awareness and attention.

READ MORE/RESOURCES TO START

Resources (links)

[Environmental Racism in Canada](#)
[It's Time for Canada to Address Environmental Racism](#)

[What is Environmental Racism?](#)

2. Required Context



In order for educators and students to understand what Environmental Racism is and who it affects, context is required

Historical Context

Environmental Racism can be traced far back in history, but is most notably tied to implications coming from eras of colonialism and racial segregation.

Some Notable Contexts for Study

Colonialism - Indigenous and Native American

Racial Segregation - Black Populations in U.S. & Canada

Specific Regions Affected: Alaska, Nova Scotia, Ontario, British Columbia

Important Terms

Environmental Racism - A form of systemic racism whereby marginalized communities of colour are disproportionately burdened with health hazards through policies and practices that force them to live in proximity to unsafe environments or climates.

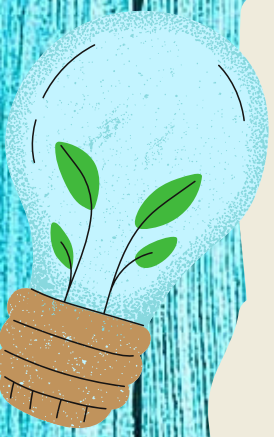
Marginalization - treatment of a person, group, or concept as insignificant

Relationship to the Land - a relationship to land gives some people their identity and a sense of belonging

Perspective - a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something

Colonialism - the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically

Grassroots Movement - movement that uses the people in a given district, region, or community as the basis for a political or economic movement (collective)



Resources & Lesson Plans





3. RESOURCES & LESSON PLANS

INTRODUCTORY LESSONS

Lessons to Start (links)



1. [Analyzing Environmental Racism \(LfJ\)](#)
2. [Environmental Racism \(U of Delaware\)](#)
3. [Environmental Justice Lesson Plans \(BCTF\)](#)
4. [Environmental Racism Assessment \(CBC\)](#)

IDEAS FOR MAPPING & GEOGRAPHY



TOXIC FACILITY SITING IN NOVA SCOTIA

Many regions affected by Environmental Racism have not yet been mapped, leaving opportunities for teachers to practice mapping sites of Environmental Racism with their students

CASE STUDY: GRASSY NARROWS



Grassy Narrows First Nation of Northwestern Ontario has been plagued by levels of mercury in their water, fish, and bloodstreams, with appallingly lacklustre government responses for nearly 50 years. From 1962 to 1970, a now-defunct Dryden paper mill poured 10 tonnes of mercury into the Wabigoon-English River system. Though the situation here has been long-known, Government response in cleaning up the mess, highlights another case of Environmental Racism in Canada toward marginalized Indigenous peoples.

RESOURCES TO USE FOR CASE STUDY



[The Story of Environmental Racism in Ontario](#)

[Youth of Grassy Narrows Video](#)

[Mercury Poisoning Among Grassy Narrows First Nation](#)

[Mercury Treatment Centre Agreement](#)

APPLICABLE COURSES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CONSIDERATION





4. APPLICABLE COURSES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CONSIDERATION

Commonalities

APPLICABLE COURSES (ONTARIO)

Grades 9-12



History (CHC2, CHH3, CHI4)
First Nations, Métis & Inuit Studies (NAC1, NBE3, NDA3, NBV3)
Science (SNC1, SNC2, SBI3, SBI4)
Geography (CGC1, CGD3)
Math (MDM4)

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM IN NOVA SCOTIA



Resources:

[The Enrich Project](#)

[There's Something in the Water](#)

[TSITW: A Panel on Environmental Racism in NS](#)

INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES

Resources



[Taking a Stand Against Environmental Injustice \(U.S. Documentary\).](#)

[Vice News Articles on Environmental Racism & Injustice](#)

CROSS CURRICULAR EXTENSIONS

Lesson Ideas for Subjects



History - Colonial History, Contemporary Issues
FNMI Studies - Injustice, Marginalization
Science - Biology, Pollution, Ecosystems
Geography - Mapping Toxic Waste Sites
Math - Statistics, Graphing Toxicity



STEPS TOWARD CHANGE

WHAT EDUCATORS CAN DO

"Teaching about Environmental Racism in Canada enhances youth and public awareness about issues that significantly and disproportionately impact Indigenous and racialized communities in Canada. The outcomes of Environmental Racism include ongoing and overlapping forms of discrimination, infringement on human rights and the right to life of other species, and negligence towards the consequences of our economic and waste systems. Solutions for environmental racism require collaboration between communities, governments and industries—but solutions start with better environmental education for all" - [Dr. Heather McGregor](#)



INITIATIVES TOWARD CHANGE

Resources (links)

[Indigenous Led Initiatives for Climate Change](#)
[7 Young Activists Working at the Intersection of Environmental & Racial Justice](#)