



Language Arts 9, Social Studies 9


	Developing Self-Esteem	Living Respectfully
Resolving Conflict Peacefully	Respecting Diversity	Preventing Prejudice


## Borders-Where Do We Belong?

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### Lesson or Unit Plan Objective

This lesson challenges students to think about and then share their ideas on stereotyping and how it may affect the way that people are treated. This lesson is based on the short story “Borders,” by Thomas King (see Supplementary Resources). The study of this story will stimulate discussion about peacefully resolving conflicts. It will also allow for an analysis of the position of aboriginal Canadians in present-day society.

 **Time** Two 55–minute classes

 **Materials** (list materials, handout titles and overhead titles) Texts and websites are listed under Supplementary Resources  
Student Journals

### Getting Started

#### Knowledge Now

Brainstorm with students the assumptions that face teenagers today. (e.g., stores limiting three teenagers in the store at a time). Continue the discussion by asking questions such as, how are teens stereotyped by others in our society? How does your age, the way you dress and so on affect someone’s perception of you?

After the discussions, students could write a brief paragraph on how it feels to have someone assume something about them that is invalid. This can also be a journal topic.

Briefly discuss the historical place of native Canadians in our culture. Once the Europeans began settling Canada, natives were marginalized and placed on reservations. Many native children were sent to residential schools away from their extended families, which are so important to the native culture and native identity. Native territories were carved up and native history ignored. Continue the discussion by asking questions such as, what are some of the difficulties faced by natives today? Do native or Aboriginal people feel as though they belong to the culture as a whole?

Study a map of southern Alberta/Northern US and have students locate Lethbridge, Pincher Creek, Cardston and Salt Lake City on this map to provide a context for the story.

## Engaging Interest

Discuss stereotyping in general. This could be done as a think-pair-share. How are teens the victim of stereotypes? What about older people? What assumptions do students make about senior citizens?

Brainstorm with students the process of crossing a border. What is the procedure? Why is this procedure followed?

## Learning Activities

1. After the discussion above, read the story “Borders” to the class up to the middle of page 51.
2. Stop and have students write predictions of what could happen as the characters reach the border.
3. Finish reading the story.
4. Students will create two journal entries: one from the mother’s perspective the other from the border guard’s perspective.
5. As a class, discuss the conflict in the story. Why does it arise? How is it resolved?
6. Class discussion: Given that the Americans have now passed legislation saying anyone wanting to enter the USA MUST have a passport, what will the implications be for our characters? Do you think they will go and apply for a passport? Why or not?
7. Assignment: Create a plot diagram, indicating initial incident, rising action, climax and denouement.
8. Form groups of two students and ask them to list situations around the world that have had positive or negative solutions

## Assessment/Analysis

### Informal assessment

In pairs, students brainstorm other ways the conflict in the story could have ended. What were the possible outcomes? Have them share their ideas in a whole class setting.

### Formal Assessment

Students will be assessed through their journal entries and the plot diagram submitted for marking.

### Final Assignment

Students write a letter, in business letter format, to either the American or Canadian government about the incident at the border. Students can take on the role of the story’s narrator, his mother, or any one of the other people who were involved in, or who witnessed the stand-off. How did this person feel about the treatment of the protagonists in the story? Does he or she agree with government demanding that natives state a nationality? If they disagree, do they have any suggestions of ways to handle the situation in which the protagonists find themselves?

## Application

Students, in groups of four, plan and role play a situation that could have positive or negative resolutions, e.g. wearing hats in school, students in 7-11, option classes, school clothing rules. Have students come up with alternative endings.

After the class presentations, discuss with the class how and when you know that it is time to take a stand on an issue.

## Activities for Extension and/or Integration

- This language arts lesson could be planned to coincide with the Grade 9 social studies curriculum when discussions arise comparing and contrasting American and Canadian culture.
- This lesson can be used in conjunction with the Grade 8 social studies curriculum when the topic of our native culture is addressed.
- The new Grade 7 Social Studies curriculum addresses Aboriginal perspectives. This could be used in a Grade 7 social studies, Grade 7 language arts or Humanities class.
- I have followed up this Grade 9 language arts lesson to practise business letter writing. Students may choose any one of the characters and write a letter in business letter format to the government about the conflict and its resolution.
- Another writing assignment would be for students to write an editorial about the incident.
- This story is a great introduction to a media awareness unit.

## Subject and Level Learner Outcomes for Subject and Level

### Language Arts

- 2.1 Use textual cues and prominent organizational patterns
- 2.1 Analyze and explain connections
- 2.1 Use comprehension strategies
- 2.2 Respond personally and critically to the text
- 1.1 Express ideas
- 2.3 Examine the use of a variety of techniques
- 2.1 Construct and confirm meaning
- 2.3 Understand forms and techniques
- 3.1 Create and follow a plan

### Social Studies

Addresses issues in the new Grade 7 social studies curriculum.

Connecting prior knowledge from Grade 8 social studies curriculum (Canada and Native Studies) to the study of the USA in Grade 9.

## Safe and Caring Topics and Concepts

### Living Respectfully

- Understanding Conflict, Peace, Justice and Violence

### Developing Self-Esteem

- Listening with Empathy to Understand the Other Person's Point of View
- Respecting and Celebrating Our Unique Identities

### Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice

- Respecting Different Points of View Builds Community and Helps to Prevent or Resolve Conflict.
- Stereotypes Limit Our Perception and Understanding of Other People
- Stereotyping Leads to Prejudice, Discrimination and Conflict
- Respecting Human Rights
- Analyzing How Prejudice Can Lead to Conflict and Violence
- Recognizing and Appreciating Contributions Made by Culturally Distinctive Groups Builds Respect for Diversity

## Resolving Conflict Peacefully

- Resolving Conflicts Through Negotiation

### Teaching Strategies

	Cooperative Learning	Inquiry Learning	Direct Instruction
<b>Go to</b> www.sacsc.ca/strategies for strategy descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Think-Pair-Share</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture</li></ul>

Generalization and Transfer	Peer Teaching	Empathy/Affective Education	General Teaching Activities/Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Role playing</li><li>• Tableaux</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Journaling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group discussion</li></ul>

### Supplementary Resources

*Atlas of World Geography*. Rand McNally and Company.

King, 1999. "Borders." In Gage *Crossroads 9*, ed D Salianni and N Morine, 46–56. Toronto: Gage Educational.