

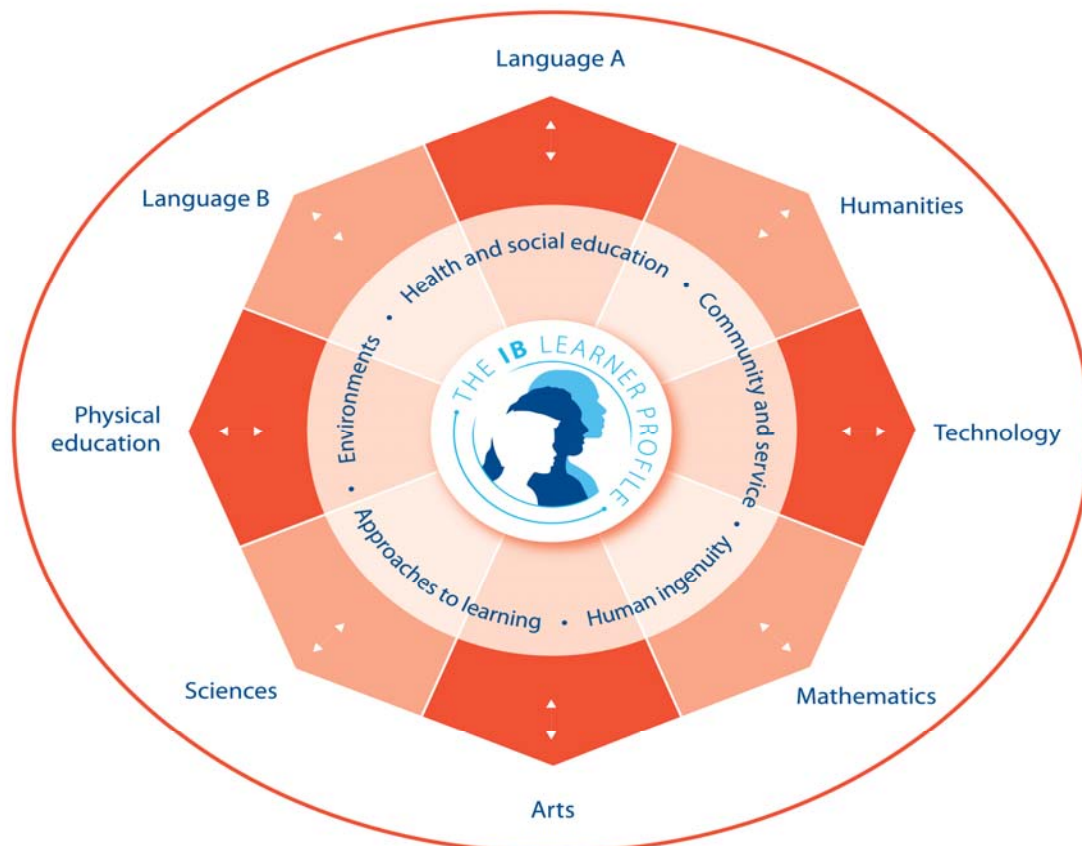
Areas of Interaction

Intellectual achievements are a huge and important part of going to school but to reduce the experience at PSI to passing exams and gaining academic 'certificates' diminishes the richness and value of your education.

If the experience at school is to be a worthwhile one it should prepare the student for the complexities of daily living so our challenge is to provide a holistic view of knowledge, situations and problems by connecting what goes on in the classroom with the realities of today's world. The Areas of Interaction contribute to raising the awareness that is required in this process.

What are they?

- They provide the **contexts** for the fundamental concepts and learner profile, which underpin the philosophy of the programme.
- They provide a framework for **student inquiry** where increased awareness can lead to deeper understanding providing opportunities to both reflect and take action.
- They give a focus to the topic, theme and provide a lens to view the learning. When a student asks the question **why are we studying x or what's the point in doing y**, the Aol can help the teacher explain the focus of the topic or theme in question.
- They can lead students from academic **knowledge to thoughtful action** helping students to develop **positive attitudes** and a sense of personal and social **responsibility**.
- They also **connect** with each other and contribute to an interdisciplinary approach to learning.
- There are five Areas of Interaction; **Approaches to Learning, Community and Service, the Environments, Health and Social Education and Human Ingenuity.**



Approaches to Learning (Jason Ward)

It's the schools duty to require quality work from the students and the best way to achieve this is to nurture the intellectual discipline and habits of mind that will result in critical, coherent and independent thought alongside the capacity to solve problems and take decisions. Approaches to Learning helps students to find out how they learn best and develop confidence so they can begin to take more control over their learning. In order to achieve this goal teachers must model and scaffold the necessary skills and strategies taking into account the needs of each individual learner. It is important that teachers make explicit the generic tools for learning that are applicable to all areas of study in addition to those that are subject-specific skills.

Through approaches to learning (ATL) schools provide students with the tools they require to become effective learners. ATL skills build upon prior student knowledge and a well thought out framework can help students develop the attitudes needed to make learning effective. Approaches to learning skills are present in all units of study and they also support student achievement in the subject-group objectives.

- **Organisational skills**
- **Collaboration**
- **Communication**
- **Information Literacy**
- **Reflection**
- **Thinking skills** including inquiring, applying knowledge and concepts, creating novel solutions and problem solving
- **Transfer**, making connections and inquiring in different contexts
- **Independent and autonomous learning**

Opportunities for reflection,

ATL encourages students to ask the following questions,

How do I learn best?

How do I know?

How do I communicate my understanding?

As the student becomes more aware and develops a greater understanding they will begin to reflect on the following questions,

Where do my values come from?

How do they colour my learning?

How might I challenge or defend them?

Community and Service (Colin Porter)

This starts in the classroom and then extends beyond it, requiring students to participate in the communities where they live. Community and Service is concerned with the **development of the whole person** and not just intellectual achievement. It is embedded within the curriculum to stimulate student awareness which may lead to responsible autonomous action. Teachers play a key role in helping to develop awareness and encouraging the development of positive **attitudes and values**, thereby promoting service activities. Students should develop a personal value system that guides their own lives as thoughtful and active members of local and global communities. All learners should be encouraged to make connections between their intellectual and social development and the benefits that they can bring to the community as well as the benefits that the community can bring to them. In using this area of interaction through and across the disciplines students can discover the social reality of self, others and the community. This area of interaction fosters the affective, creative, ethical and cognitive development of the adolescent. It starts with learning in the classroom and leads to raising **awareness** that may lead to **action** being taken. This area of interaction also supports the fundamental concept of intercultural awareness which aims to encourage empathy and respect that can lead to a **deeper understanding**. Engaging students in **positive action** and contact with other social and cultural environments can enrich them emotionally, socially, morally and culturally. *It is vitally important to remember that the qualities and motives of an act of community and service are considered more important than the act itself or the number of hours devoted to it.*

The student learning outcomes of Community and Service are related to

- **Awareness and understanding**
- **Reflection**
- **Involvement through service**

Opportunities for reflection,

Community and Service encourages students to ask the following questions,

How do we live in relation to each other?

How can I contribute to the community?

How can I help?

As the student becomes more aware and develops a greater understanding they will begin to reflect on the following questions,

What are my values?

How have they been formed?

What action can or should I take?

What are my responsibilities?

Environments (Myles D'Arielle)

The context provided by this area of interaction considers environments to mean the totality of conditions surrounding us. This area of interaction focuses on the place of human beings within a wide range of environments including **natural, built** and **virtual**.

The **natural environment** includes all living and non-living things that occur naturally on earth along with its systems, landscapes and resources.

The **built environment** includes the settings for human activity, ranging from the large scale civic surroundings to personal places such as homes.

The **virtual environment** includes electronic environments, internet environments and the concept of personal space.

The word environment can also refer to a vast array of complex and often controversial green issues. For example, we are confronted by the problems of global deterioration along with its associated economic, political and social problems on a daily basis. Exposure to environmental problems and issues helps students become **aware** of their responsibilities and should lead to positive and **responsible action** for maintaining an environment fit for the future. (*Despite their importance these issues do not define this area of interaction alone*).

The student learning outcomes of Environment are related to,

- **Awareness and understanding**
- **Reflection**
- **Taking action**

Opportunities for reflection,

Environment encourages students to ask the following questions,

What are our environments? How do I affect my environments and how do my environments affect me?

What resources do we have or need?

What are my responsibilities?

As the student becomes more aware and develops a greater understanding they will begin to reflect on the following questions,

What are my values and how have they been formed?

What are my responsibilities?

What are the lifestyle implications of making environmental choices?

What action can I take?

How can I affect my environments in a positive way?

Health and Social (Tim Kilminster)

Health and Social education encompasses a range of issues and how they affect individuals, human development and interactions. It includes an appreciation of these effects in different settings at different times. It also provides students with opportunities to inquire into physical, social and emotional health and intelligence, key aspects of human development that can lead to a complete and balanced lifestyle.

The extent to which young people consider and act on social and health-related issues is influenced by political, social and economic decisions at the community and national level as well as by the actions and support of schools, families and friends. As PSI works to encourage students to make informed and responsible choices, it could involve the whole community, particularly students, in the planning and development of this area of interaction.

The Health and Social Area of Interaction is wide in scope and can be considered at different levels,

- **ourselves in the wider community**
- **ourselves and others**
- **understanding ourselves**
- **looking after ourselves**

In addition to the curricular content the following issues are also considered,

- policies linked to health, safety and the school environment
- the physical and psychosocial environment
- health and support services

Opportunities for reflection,

Health and Social encourages students to ask the following questions,

What do I need to consider so I can make the right choice?

How do I think and act?

How am I changing?

How can I look after myself and others?

As the student becomes more aware and develops a greater understanding they will begin to reflect on the following questions,

What social choices have I already made?

Which health and social issues do I need to consider as I get older?

What are the consequences of making poor choices?

What are my values about personal relationships?

What action can I take?

How should I act?

Human Ingenuity (Susan Hunter)

Human ingenuity is the way in which humans have influenced how we think, work, play, construct and conduct friendships and other relationships, interact with each other, find solutions to problems, cause problems, transform things and rationalise thought. It considers the consequences of human thought and action.

Human history is full of examples of humans as thinkers, inventors and creators from all subject areas. Human ingenuity goes beyond looking solely at individuals and looks at human contributions both in context and as part of an on-going process, seeing them as logical, clever and reasoning, as well as fallible and devious.

Human ingenuity is much more than the presentation of a product or concept as an example of human achievement; it can lead to a reasoned judgment of scientific, ethical, aesthetic and technological transformations and an appreciation of their consequences. This may result in the celebration of this achievement or the recognition of negative consequences (or both).

Human ingenuity should prompt the creative or innovative involvement of the whole school community in presenting a holistic view of human activity, both in the past and in the present. In all subjects students will encounter examples of constructive and destructive activities of human beings.

This area of interaction is open ended and provides opportunities for discussion and further inquiry beyond individual subject borders. It may raise ethical issues such as progress, how development in one culture may be inappropriate to another and the responsibility we need to take for our own progress.

Human ingenuity encourages students to see the relationships between diverse subjects, as it can be used to inquire into a broad range of human activities which include,

- **systems**, laws, methods of government, transport, education, healthcare
- **communication**, statistics, language, mathematical formulae, codes
- **technology**, buildings, machinery, tools
- **thought**, principles, concepts, ideas, opinions, attitudes
- **art**, painting, sculpture, embroidery, theatre, music
- **culture**, fashion, rituals and customs, food

A balanced approach to inquiry within this area of interaction can be achieved by considering subject content from various perspectives; **process, origin, development, impact, context and product**. Research, reflection and analysis are required to make the inquiry cycle useful tool and a relevant learning experience. Students need to become conscious of the processes in which they are engaged or that they have experienced. They also need to consider other people's processes in similar tasks and how they may contribute to the student's own work. This is an important step towards recognising the evolution of thought and the creative process. Students need to recognise the impact of a range of creations from different times in history on themselves and on others; this should include predictions on future developments and their effects.

The student learning outcomes in Human ingenuity are related to,

- **awareness and understanding**
- **reflection**
- **taking action**

Opportunities for reflection,

Human ingenuity encourages students to ask the following questions,

Why and how do we create, develop or change products or solutions?

How do products or solutions change over time?

What are the consequences?

As the student becomes more aware and develops a greater understanding they will begin to reflect on the following questions,

Where does power lie?

By what values were famous thinkers motivated?

What might the future hold?

What is the truth?

What are my challenges and what solutions can I come up with?

How can I make responsible choices based on my understanding?

How do I know what is right?

Where will you experience the Areas of Interaction?

- In the **themes and topics** studied in the classroom. E.g. in year one of the science programme students could learn about pure substances and mixtures in your introduction to chemistry. As part of the laboratory activities, techniques to separate different types of mixtures and the separation of impurities from water could be applied. This would include,
 - a) using simple equipment
 - b) making straight forward observations and measurements
 - c) drawing scientific diagrams(ATL)

The teacher could then lead students to explore issues such as,

- How pure is pure?
- Can the energy costs involved in the production of pure substances be justified?
- Why is a fraction of the world's water directly drinkable?
- How can we produce enough drinkable water to meet our needs?

These questions could be used as a focus for discussion, for written responses or lead into a further topic. They provide an authentic means of looking critically at an increasingly relevant resource problem with ethical dimensions. (*Environments and Human Ingenuity*)

- **In Homeroom**

The homeroom programme provides an opportunity for students to engage with the programme offered at PSI. Homeroom should be used as an opportunity for personal and social development and be driven by student interest. Themes related to looking after oneself through to the nature friendship and relationships can be explored (*Health and Social*). Homeroom can be used to provide a framework to support the MYP's goal of creating independent, internationally minded, lifelong learners (*ATL*). The activities of the student council, the organisation of community events, opportunities to develop service-based learning and to plan school events could involve the areas of interaction as a basis to explore real world issues (*Community and Service with possible links to the other areas/ contexts*). Homeroom can help students to develop positive attitudes and a sense of personal and social responsibility and the areas of interaction can lead students towards thoughtful action through inquiry.

- **In inter-disciplinary teaching and learning opportunities.**

Inter-disciplinary opportunities can be carefully planned and crafted by teachers to celebrate or commemorate special events such as a local festival or a UN day or can be built into the fabric of the school curriculum such as the hypothetical project described below.

For example, students in Grade 7 study how far virtual technology has limited the availability of practical games and whether we need such games? (Technology), The importance of simple machines to daily life (Science) and How far construction and engineering would have impacted on the lives of people in Ancient Rome? (Humanities)

This could lead to unit or guiding questions such as,

How does/ did technology affect our daily lives?

Is technological advancement indispensable? How do people in some parts of the world survive without it?

Are we becoming slaves to technology?

Students could then prepare for a debate on the question,

Do we control technology or does it control us?

(*Human Ingenuity*)

(acknowledgements to Dan Fulga)

- **On the grade level trips or field trips**

On the tenth grade trip to the Crimea the students visited a Tartar Community where they met and spoke to local people, sampled the typical cuisine, heard the folk music from the area and saw a belly dance. The students also listened to the elder generation talk about the great suffering caused in 1944 when Stalin ordered the Tartar people to be deported to Siberia and other areas accusing them of collaboration during the Nazi occupation.

Through the focus on the Tartar Community arise many questions such as,

Why does man inflict so much suffering on his own kind?

How did the Tartar people survive the persecution?

What were the consequences?

Can such an episode be avoided in the future? What lessons can be learnt?

Why should we forgive but not forget?

These **ethical** questions focus on how control of the political **system** can lead to the repression of a people and the **ingenuity** of the oppressed to adapt to their new circumstances. (*Human Ingenuity*)

- **Through the Personal Project in Grade Ten**

The areas of interaction are central to the personal project and must be carefully considered when deciding on the choice of the project.

Approaches to Learning is built into the fabric of the Personal Project which focuses on whether students can work independently over a sustained period.

Explicit References to the areas of interaction can be found in the written criteria used to assess the project.

Criterion A: Planning and Development asks whether the goal of the project is clearly stated and if the student can develop and justify the chosen area of interaction.

Criterion D: Analysis of Information measures the students' ability to analyse information in terms of the personal project's goal and focus on the chosen Area of Interaction. It is therefore important to use the Aol to reflect on the focus of your project.

Criterion F: Analysis of Process and Outcome involves students reflecting on the ways in which the project has been focused on the chosen area of

interaction and how the dimensions of this area has been explored and developed. Further questions can then be suggested as a way of extending the reflection.

How do the Areas of Interaction help to guide teaching and learning?

A Case Study from History focusing on *war as an agent of change*

***How the topic of World War One could be taught from the perspective of the different Areas of Interaction?**

Human Ingenuity: How did the technology of warfare evolve during the First World War, 1914-18?

Why did World War One start with cavalry charges and end with coordinated air to ground attacks?

What weapons were invented and how were they deployed?

How did warfare change between 1914 and 1918?

What were the short and long term consequences?

Health and Social: How far is war a vehicle of social change? (The role of Women in WWI)

Why did women enter remunerated employment during World War One?

What did they do?

What were the benefits for women in the short and longer term?

The historiographical debate on why women were given the vote on equal terms with men in the UK in 1928.

Why didn't women gain the vote in countries like France until 1940? (**Social**)

What medical progress did World War One bring about?

How did the First World War improve surgery? E.g. x-rays, blood transfusions, fighting infection.

What were the longer term consequences of World War One for medical developments? (**Health**)

Community and Service: How far did World War One help to unify society?

To what extent did the war create a more unified society? How was patriotism and even xenophobia used to mobilise domestic populations?

How was propaganda used to unify societies?

What contribution did women make to this process?

How far was the fighting in the trenches responsible for creating a 'unified community spirit'?

How high were desertion rates? What do the figures suggest? **(Community)**

Organise and Present an Assembly to remember those who died in World War One and other wars of the twentieth/ twenty first centuries.

Students could present an assembly to remember and commemorate those people who have sacrificed their lives for their countries in twentieth and twenty first century wars. This could also promote world wide peace and the Poppy Appeal which takes place in November. **(Service)**

Environments: What was the environmental cost of World War One?

What was the impact of trench warfare on the western and eastern fronts on the physical environment?

How did new technologies such as mass shelling and the use of chemical weapons affect the environment?

Getting an MYP unit / guiding question from the above suggestions?

Stage one of the new unit planning process can be summed up as an attempt to integrate the key elements of units of work, the significant concepts (taken from the subject content), the area of interaction focus, the MYP unit question and the summative assessment.

Every MYP unit will be driven by an MYP unit question. It is recommended that teachers design the question around one area of interaction initially.

The sequence of thinking involved in designing MYP unit questions

- **open-ended-** units should be open to support opportunities for student inquiry
- **relevant and engaging-** linked to students' prior knowledge or experience as well as current circumstances; of interest to the students and involving them actively in their own learning
- **challenging and provocative-** extending the prior knowledge and experience of students to increase their competencies and understanding
- **significant-** contributing to an understanding of cross-curricular concepts through the areas of interaction

Going back to the World War One Case Study here are a limited range of suggestions that could be adopted to meet the above criteria. The subject objective was to focus on war as an agent of change.



- **Why isn't every war the war to end all wars?**
- **Is war / fighting always bad?**
- **How does war stimulate change?**

Student Learning Expectations (*Intended Outcomes*)

One of our challenges is to provide student learning outcomes for each Area of Interaction. These are guidelines of what students are expected to learn through the Aol's at different stages of the programme. These outcomes will not be assessed and are not rated on a scale.

How do the Areas of Interaction support student inquiry?

The Aol's are at the heart of inquiry and active learning and can encourage students to take responsible action in a variety of contexts encountered through the curriculum.

For teachers and students, the areas of interaction provide a means to inquire into subject content by questioning, explaining, discovering and doing.

The Inquiry Cycle

Awareness & Understanding

Reflection

Action

When students engage in units of work, by placing the content into context, they will become aware of the connections between subject disciplines and will start to develop an awareness of the dimensions of each of the areas of interaction as well as develop a deeper subject knowledge. This **awareness** will lead to a better **understanding** of the impact of various issues on students themselves and those around them, and of the **responsibilities** they have to themselves, to each other and to the society in general. Using their developing skills of on-going **reflection**, students can continually re-evaluate their involvement in and understanding of the various issues under inquiry.

As students become more aware and acquire a better understanding of the context and of their responsibilities, this could lead to thoughtful and positive **action**. This will differ between students but could involve the following;-

Possible examples of Student Action,

- Feeling empathy towards others
- Making small-scale changes to their behaviour
- Undertaking large and significant projects

- Acting on their own
- Acting collaboratively
- Taking physical action
- Suggesting modifications to an existing system to the benefit of all involved
- Lobbying people in more influential positions to act

Whatever the action, it is expected that students will themselves be changed by the process, and that significant learning will result.

ATL – Student Learning Expectations, the aim of approaches to learning is to enable students to apply a range of skills in different learning situations.

Organisation	<p>Time management, using time wisely in class, keeping to deadlines</p> <p>Self-management, personal goal setting</p>
Collaboration	<p>Working in groups, delegating, taking responsibility, adapting to roles, resolving group conflicts, demonstrating team work.</p> <p>Accepting others, analysing others’ ideas, respecting others’ points of view, using ideas critically.</p> <p>Personal challenges, respecting cultural differences, negotiating goals and limitations with peers and teachers.</p>
Communication	<p>Literacy- including reading strategies, using and interpreting a range of context.</p> <p>Specific terminology- being informed.</p> <p>Use of a variety of media</p> <p>Informing Others, presentation skills using a variety of media.</p>
Information Literacy	<p>Accessing Information, researching from a variety of sources using a range of technologies, identifying primary and secondary sources, selecting and organizing information.</p> <p>Identifying points of view, bias and weaknesses, using primary and secondary sources, making connections between a variety of sources.</p>

	<p>Referencing, use of citing, footnotes and the referencing of sources, respecting the concept of intellectual property rights.</p>
<p>Reflection</p>	<p>Self-Awareness, seeking out positive criticism, reflecting on areas of perceived limitation</p> <p>Self –Evaluation, keeping of learning journals and portfolios, reflecting at different stages of the learning process.</p>
<p>Thinking</p>	<p>Outlining a plan</p> <p>Inquiring, questioning and challenging information and arguments, developing guiding questions, using the inquiry cycle.</p> <p>Applying Knowledge and concepts, logical progression of arguments</p> <p>Identifying problems, deductive reasoning, evaluating solutions to problems</p> <p>Creating novel solutions, the combination of critical and creative strategies, considering a problem from multiple perspectives.</p>
<p>Transfer</p>	<p>Making connections, using knowledge, understanding and skills across subjects to create products or solutions, applying skills and knowledge in unfamiliar situations,</p> <p>Inquiring in different contexts, changing the context of an inquiry to gain various perspectives.</p>
<p>Independent Learning</p>	<p>Acting on advice, making necessary steps to improve,</p> <p>Gaining an awareness of one’s learning style or styles. Taking greater control over the learning process.</p>

Community and Service - This Aol should relate to the local realities of the school and its culture. Community awareness and understanding, reflection and involvement through service are all important.

Student Learning Expectations

<p>Community awareness and understanding of:</p>	<p>The Concept of Community, what does community mean? How are <i>communities</i> different, How are they similar? What makes a community?</p> <p>Individuals in communities, the role of the individual, the needs of the individual, the responsibilities of communities to their members</p> <p>Different Communities, the various forms of community, the needs of different communities, the issues within the communities, organizations within communities.</p>
<p>Reflection on</p>	<p>Attitudes, reflecting upon different social patterns and ways of life, showing initiative.</p> <p>Responsibilities, the ethical implications of activity or inactivity within the community, using personal strengths to enhance communities, identifying personal strengths and limitations.</p>
<p>Involvement through service in terms of:</p>	<p>Community involvement, types of involvement, effects on communities at various levels, personal involvement.</p> <p>Being an active contributor, showing willingness and the skills to respond to the needs of others, coming up with solutions to actively resolve issues within communities.</p>

Health and Social - Students are increasingly in a position where they have to make choices that require critical thinking. The following outcomes need to be considered. An awareness of and understanding of contemporary and historical social issues, reflection on and having opinions on a range of social issues and making considered and responsible choices on a range of social and health issues.

Health and Social

Student Learning Expectations

Awareness and Understanding :	Ourselves in the wider society , issues such as freedom, government, health policies and globalization
Reflection on :	<p>Ourselves and Others , including relationships such as sex and death</p> <p>Understanding Ourselves, issues such as personal management, self-esteem and growing up</p> <p>Looking After Ourselves, personal hygiene, diseases and substance abuse</p>
Making choices in terms of :	<p>Ourselves in the wider society, behaviour and ethics</p> <p>Ourselves and Others, personal values and taking responsibility</p> <p>Understanding Ourselves, self-control or needs and wants</p> <p>Looking After Ourselves, diet and exercise</p>

Environments - Students should develop an awareness and understanding of a range of environments and their qualities. Students should also explore the nature of our environments and the interactions between and interdependencies of various environments. Awareness through investigation, discussion and debate will help students to gain a deeper understanding of the contexts provided by various environments. Students will then come to understand better their responsibilities towards their environments, and will be better placed to take positive and appropriate action. Teachers help students gain an understanding of these concepts and issues at the personal, local and global levels. Reflecting on their actions, students can make clear links with *Human Ingenuity* to help them question the effectiveness of their actions and encourage them to take responsibility to effect positive change. This are can also complement the reflective practices and sense of involvement developed in *Community and Service*.

Environments

Student Learning Expectations

<p>Awareness and Understanding of :</p>	<p>The roles our environments play in the lives and well-being of humankind.</p> <p>The effects of one environment on another.</p> <p>The effects of our actions, attitudes and constructs, such as sustainable development and conservation.</p> <p>Physical, social, political, economic and cultural dimensions.</p> <p>The nature and role of local and international organizations responsible for protecting our natural environments.</p> <p>How organizational policies in one environmental dimension can affect other environments.</p>
<p>Reflection on :</p>	<p>Our responsibilities to our environments.</p> <p>The role of virtual environments in modeling our other environments.</p>
<p>Taking Action on :</p>	<p>A range of issues related to environments</p>

Human Ingenuity - With human ingenuity students can inquire into subject content and reflect on the ingenuity of humans from various perspectives. Teachers should also accept that students will want to explore negative as well as positive traits. A balanced approach to inquiry within this area of interaction can be achieved by considering subject content from various perspectives : process, origin, development, impact, context and product. Research, reflection and analysis are required to make the inquiry cycle a useful tool and a relevant learning experience. Students need to become conscious of the processes in which they are engaged or that they have experienced. They also need to consider other people's processes in similar tasks and how these processes may contribute to the student' own work. This is an important step towards recognising the evolution of thought and of the creative process. Students need to recognise the impact of a range of creations from different times in history on themselves and on others; this should include predictions on future developments and their effects.

Human Ingenuity

Student Learning Expectations

<p>Awareness and understanding of :</p>	<p>The meaning of ingenious,</p> <p>A range of systems, solutions and products.</p> <p>The processes involved in innovation, creation, development and change.</p> <p>The individual desire to create, develop or change things, how systems or products, develop and change over time.</p>
<p>Reflection on :</p>	<p>The impact of innovation and creation on individuals, communities, societies and the world</p> <p>The products of innovation, creation and development in context.</p> <p>How subjects have different ways of thinking.</p> <p>A range of systems, solutions and products</p>
<p>Taking action to :</p>	<p>Create solutions and products to solve <i>your</i> own and others' problems</p> <p>To Think creatively</p>