

Ethics and Religious Culture

Learning and Evaluation Situation

An Ideal Schoolyard

Elementary Cycle Two

Competency 1
Reflects on ethical questions

Competency 3
Engages in dialogue

Mai 2012

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Note:

The teacher is invited to view the video clip (in French only) illustrating this LES by going to www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/ecr and clicking on “English tab” followed by “Reserved space registration.” A username and password are required.

PRESENTATION OF THE SITUATION

Throughout this learning and evaluation situation (LES), the students become aware that, in a common space like a schoolyard, various values and norms intended to facilitate group life account for the manner in which the space has been laid out. The students are invited to devise a blueprint for an ideal schoolyard by selecting feasible options and describing their potential effects on community life.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS

A blueprint for an ideal schoolyard

Depending on the situation at your school, you could ask your students to design an ideal schoolyard based on the current one. The students would therefore have to consider various changes and transformations likely to produce the intended result. You could also ask your students to come up with a plan for a schoolyard unlike any other. It doesn't matter how they start drawing up the plan; the main thing is that they take into consideration all the people who use the schoolyard, in addition to criteria selected in conjunction with their fellow team members.

EVALUATION

The following can be taken into consideration when evaluating students' work:

ETHICS AND DIALOGUE	CORRESPONDING TASKS
Criterion 1 — Ethical treatment of a situation <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate description of the situation (who, what, how, when, where, and the values and norms involved)	Worksheet 1 (all the questions) Worksheet 2 (all the questions) Worksheet 3 (question 1)
Criterion 2 — Relevant evaluation of options <input type="checkbox"/> Description of effects of the proposed options <input type="checkbox"/> Selection of options that foster community life	Worksheet 4 (all the questions) Worksheet 6 (question 2) The schoolyard blueprint
Criterion 3 — Appropriate practice of dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate interaction	Worksheet 5 (all the questions)

Note:

These indicators can be found in the rubric on page 8. They are the most easily observable indicators for making a judgment on student success in the required task. Teachers may target other criteria and indicators, depending on their use of the LES.

CONNECTIONS WITH THE QUÉBEC EDUCATION PROGRAM

Broad area of learning covered	Health and Well-Being
Cross-curricular competency targeted	Uses creativity <small>*The teacher could target another cross-curricular competency – see the <i>Québec Education Program</i>, ch. 3.</small>
Subject-specific competencies evaluated	<input type="checkbox"/> Reflects on ethical questions <input type="checkbox"/> Engages in dialogue
Targeted subject-specific program content	
<p>Theme and related content in ethics: Requirements of group life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values and norms that guide group life • Conditions conducive or inimical to the well-being of each member <p>Essential knowledge mobilized in ethics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values • Norms • Community life <p><small>*The teacher could target other knowledge to be mobilized, based on the <i>Progression of Learning in Elementary School</i>: [http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/progression/ethiqueCultureReligieuse/index_en.asp]</small></p>	
<p>Content related to the practice of dialogue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms of dialogue: discussion, deliberation • Means for developing a point of view: description, explanation, summary • Means for questioning a point of view: recognizing and questioning judgments and reasoning that make it possible to develop a point of view; procedures likely to hinder dialogue 	

SUGGESTED LEARNING SITUATION

For some people, the schoolyard is a pleasant and relaxing place while, for others, it does not allow for sufficient freedom. Whether a schoolyard is large or small, it belongs to all the students in the school and it is important that it be shared. In most schools, students approach their teachers with suggestions for improving recreational periods, and it often happens that each student's suggestions reflect his or her favourite activities. So while some propose basketball courts and soccer fields for all the students, others consider it more important to add green spaces and set up climbing and sliding structures.

What values and norms should be considered to ensure the well-being of all the different people who use the schoolyard?

OVERVIEW OF TASKS

Length: About 4 hours

PREPARATION – about 60 minutes

Whole class

Present the learning situation and discuss it with the students on the basis of the suggested ethical questions.

Verify what the students know with regard to the concepts of value and norm. Clarify points as needed.

(Worksheet 1 — Values and norms in the schoolyard)

Identify values and norms relating to the organization of a schoolyard.

PERFORMANCE – about 165 minutes

TASK 1

Individually

Describe the existing schoolyard, including its layout, its positive and negative aspects, the rules and guidelines to be observed there, and the values considered most important (sharing, respect and harmony).

(Worksheet 2 — My schoolyard from an ethical perspective)

TASK 2

Individually

Reflect on the characteristics of an ideal schoolyard, noting down various pertinent options.

(Worksheet 3 — My vision of an ideal schoolyard)

In teams

Engage in discussion. Select two values considered to be the most important for all the members of the team. These values will serve as references to help students select the best options for an ideal schoolyard.

Select the design features and rules of conduct for an ideal schoolyard.

(Worksheet 4 — My team's choices)

(Worksheet 5 — Self-evaluation of the dialogue)

TASK 3

Draw up a plan for an ideal schoolyard by taking into account all of those using it and the criteria favoured by the team.

(Worksheet 6 — A plan of an ideal schoolyard)

Describe the options considered and present the plan to the students in the class.

INTEGRATION – about 30 minutes

Whole class

Review what was learned *(Worksheet 7 — Summary of learning)*.

Review, along with the students, the concepts of value, norm and community life.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

PREPARATION

Become familiar with the learning situation.

Identify values and norms relating to the layout and organization of a schoolyard.

About 60 minutes

Whole class

- Give the students an overview of the learning and evaluation situation: the competencies targeted and evaluated, the theme, the work procedures.
- Present the learning situation and begin a dialogue with the students based on one of the following ethical issues:
 - ✓ *Which values and norms should be considered in order to ensure that the schoolyard is conducive to the well-being of all those who use it?*
 - ✓ *When designing a schoolyard, is it possible to meet the needs of all those who use it?*
 - ✓ *Why are there rules for schoolyard use?*
 - ✓ *Is it desirable to prohibit or promote certain types of activities in the schoolyard? Why?*
 - ✓ *Who is responsible for the well-being of the students in the schoolyard? Why?*
- Explain to the students that they are expected to work in teams to design an ideal schoolyard.

Individually

- Ask the students to write down what they know about the concepts of value and norm, as well as their initial thoughts on the question raised in the learning situation, on **Worksheet 1 — Values and norms in the schoolyard**, on page 11.

Whole class

- Share the answers recorded on **Worksheet 1 — Values and norms in the schoolyard**. Emphasize norms (regulations, guidelines, etc.) and values (sharing, respect, harmony, etc.) relating to the dynamics of a schoolyard. *You can consult the **Note on values on norms**, on page 10.*

PERFORMANCE

Study the existing schoolyard from an ethical perspective.

TASK 1

About 30 minutes

Individually

- Have the students become aware of any special features of their existing schoolyard by filling out **Worksheet 2 – My schoolyard from an ethical perspective**, on page 12.
- Invite the students to draw up of a list of the features that describe the existing schoolyard (its layout, the sports and games that take place, the adults and children who use it, the rules and safety features, the ground surface, etc.)

Whole class

- Review the answers recorded on **Worksheet 2**, more specifically those relating to the elements in the existing schoolyard that could be improved (question 6).
- Discuss different ways of offsetting these negative aspects while taking into account various ways of offsetting these negative aspects while taking community life into consideration.
- Make a list of the values mentioned by the students during the study of the existing schoolyard. This exercise will enable them to fill out **Worksheet 3**.

Discuss the characteristics of an ideal schoolyard by proposing relevant options.

Conduct a deliberation to determine the layout and rules of conduct of an ideal schoolyard.

TASK 2

About 60 minutes

Individually

- Ask the students to write down their ideas of what the ideal schoolyard should be like. See **Worksheet 3 — My vision of an ideal schoolyard**, on page 13.

Whole class

- Organize the work teams with the students (teams of 3 or 4).
- Tell the students that they should conduct a dialogue with their team, in order to arrive at a shared vision of what an ideal schoolyard should be like. (If necessary, explain what a dialogue is.)
*To do this, the students can draw on the suggestions they wrote down on **Worksheet 3**.*
- Present **Worksheet 5** to the students — **Self-evaluation of the dialogue**, on page 16, before they engage in group discussion.
- Tell the students that their work will be evaluated based on the following indicator: The application of processes that have helped to make dialogue work:
 - ✓ *Respect for other people's right to speak (raising one's hand, waiting one's turn)*
 - ✓ *The clarity of the ideas expressed (Pleasure is an important value because . . . I prefer Amy's idea because . . .)*
*The teacher can record these observations using the **Observation grid for the practice of dialogue**, on page 9. Other elements could also be observed.*

In teams

- Ask the students to discuss the idea of an ideal schoolyard: values to be considered, examples of rules of conduct to be encouraged and suggestions for layout changes and activities relating to the values selected.
- Invite the students to record the team's decisions on **Worksheet 4 — My team's choices**, on pages 14 and 15.

Individually

- Ask the students to complete **Worksheet 5 — Self-evaluation of the dialogue**, on page 16.

PERFORMANCE (cont.)

Draw up a plan of an ideal schoolyard.

Describe the options considered and their effects on the users of the ideal schoolyard.

Present their schoolyard plan to the students in the class.

TASK 3

About 75 minutes

In teams

- Provide the students with an explanation of **Worksheet 6 — A plan of an ideal schoolyard**, on page 17.
- Ensure that the students have access to the material required to draw up a plan of an ideal schoolyard (posters, Bristol board, paint, felt pens, graph paper, etc.).
- Determine, along with the students, how they will have to present the results of their efforts to the whole class: display of the schoolyard plan, oral presentations, display stands, group discussions, etc.
- Remind the students that their plan of an ideal schoolyard must be accompanied by a brief description of the choices they made as a team. This description can be done orally or in writing.

In brief, the following points should be taken into consideration when carrying out and evaluating the task:

- ✓ *Identification of values and rules that would be relevant for a schoolyard*
- ✓ *Selection of options (choice of layout changes and activities) in accordance with the concept of community life*
- ✓ *Relevant description of the effects that would result from the options being considered (the effects of decisions regarding layout and activities on different users of the schoolyard, on the environment, etc.)*

Individually or whole class

- Enable the students to learn about the various schoolyard layout plans.
- Enable the students to explain their understanding of the different types of schoolyard layouts and the possible effects of these on users.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION: PATHS

For students who find it easier to carry out the task:

- Ask them to make connections to mathematics competencies by making a plan for an ideal schoolyard, in accordance with the conventions of measuring and the project budget.
- Ask them to consider more constraints (e.g. a very small schoolyard) in developing their plan.
- Ask them to make a plan for an ideal schoolyard whose features would reflect three values instead of two.

For students who have more difficulty carrying out a task :

- Give them a layout of the existing schoolyard and ask them to make one or more improvements to it. Ask them to give the reasons for their changes, without placing too much emphasis on the concept of value.
- Ask them to create an ideal schoolyard whose features reflect one value instead of two.
- Ask the students to concentrate only on the needs of Secondary Cycle Two students when designing their ideal schoolyard.
- Provide students with one or two values (like safety or respect for the environment) that they will have to take into consideration to modify the existing schoolyard.
- Provide students with one or two suggestions for improving the schoolyard and ask them to name the underlying values; or ask them to explain why these proposals are consistent with community life.

INTEGRATION

Reflect on what they have learned.

About 30 minutes

Individually

- Enable the students to take stock of what they have learned using **Worksheet 7 — Summary of learning**, on page 18.

Whole class

- Invite the students to apply their new knowledge by asking them to name other places in the community that operate on the basis of values and norms (school bus, library, public pool, concert hall, etc.).

Title of the task: **An Ideal Schoolyard**

Meets the requirements to an outstanding degree.
Meets the requirements in a satisfactory manner.
Meets a minimum number of requirements.
Meets few of the requirements.
Meets none of the requirements.

Criteria	The elements evaluated in this task are checked off below.	Observable Elements	Performance Requirement	5	4	3	2	1
Ethical treatment of a situation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student provides an appropriate description of the situation.	<i>An appropriate description includes:</i> - a presentation of the essential elements of the situation (who, what, how, when, where, and the values and norms involved) - identification of tensions or conflicts of values in the situation - connections between the elements of the situation	5	4	3	2	1
	<input type="checkbox"/>	The student identifies an ethical question related to the situation.	<i>A relevant ethical question enables the student to:</i> - reflect on attitudes, behaviour or concepts pertaining to the ethical problem to be solved or a subject relative to values and norms - identify values and norms that create tension - evaluate, justify or recommend options related to the situation	5	4	3	2	1
	<input type="checkbox"/>	The student compares points of view in an appropriate manner.	<i>An appropriate comparison involves:</i> - relevant connections with the ethical issues involved - a comparison of several essential elements present in at least two points of view related to the ethical issue (values, norms, ideas or reasons) - identifying similarities and differences between these points of view	5	4	3	2	1
	<input type="checkbox"/>	The student identifies references on which points of view are based.	<i>The references identified:</i> - are relevant (related to the ethical issue) - indicate the source of a point of view (e.g. a rule, a law, a charter, an important figure, a proverb, a scientific study, a value)	5	4	3	2	1
Relevant evaluation of options	<input type="checkbox"/>	The student proposes relevant options.	<i>The proposed options:</i> - are related to the ethical issue involved - make it possible to consider the situation from different perspectives - are based on valid resources	5	4	3	2	1
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student provides an appropriate description of the effects of the proposed options.	<i>An appropriate description includes:</i> - possible effects for the individuals involved in the situation, for each option proposed - possible effects on community life, for each option proposed - advantages of the options proposed - disadvantages of the options proposed	5	4	3	2	1
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student selects options that foster community life.	<i>A selection of options is based on:</i> - criteria that take into account the well-being of each individual and of the community - possible effects on each individual and the community	5	4	3	2	1
Appropriate practice of dialogue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student interacts in a way that fosters dialogue.	<i>Appropriate interaction, orally or in writing, can be observed in one or more of the following actions:</i> - correctly using means for developing a point of view (p. 350) - correctly using forms of dialogue (p. 349) - complying with conditions that foster dialogue (p. 349)	5	4	3	2	1
	<input type="checkbox"/>	The student questions points of view in an appropriate manner.	<i>Appropriate questioning, orally or in writing, can be observed in one or more of the following actions:</i> - using relevant resources (related to the subject of dialogue) - distinguishing between essential and secondary elements - identifying and examining processes likely to hinder dialogue (p. 353) - identifying and examining judgments that express a point of view (p. 352)	5	4	3	2	1

Teacher's comments:

Result:

Strong points: _____ STUDENT'S REFLECTIONS _____ Points in need of improvement: _____

Notes on values and norms

As they proceed through the Ethics and Religious Culture program, students will work on the concepts of value and norm. The Concepts section on page 334 of the Québec Education Program defines these concepts. In the context of this LES, they could be approached in the following manner.

Value: Reflection on sharing a common space like a schoolyard will require that students consider various values underlying the rules that govern behaviour in it. Students will also have to consider the needs of all those who use the schoolyard. The school's educational project can be a relevant reference point to present to students. It generally contains values that inform rules, procedures and types of activity for the schoolyard.

Examples of values: respect, happiness, health, education, freedom, cooperation, mutual assistance, sharing, safety, ecology.

Norm: As they reflect on the guidelines governing behaviour in the schoolyard, the first thing that students will think of will probably be a list of rules. But these are not the only norms to be considered. For example, it could be said that it is necessary to have fun and be happy during recess periods because this fosters students' academic success. Such a norm does not constitute a formal rule but represents a requirement to be considered when drawing up a plan for an ideal schoolyard. The following simple indications can be used to explain to students what a norm is:

- ✓ A norm indicates what must be done. It is a model to which one refers.
- ✓ A norm can be a rule (in school, at home, at the park).
- ✓ A norm can be an unwritten rule known by most people.
- ✓ Norms guide human behaviour.

Students will discover that some norms associated with the ideal schoolyard stem from social and cultural conventions without necessarily being part of a code of conduct or any other officially recognized document, such as an educational project. Some play areas could be determined, therefore, in accordance with customs specific to a school's student population. For example, a school could decide to set aside a space in the schoolyard where students could resolve conflicts with the help of a mediator. Another school might want to create a space for aerobic dancercise organized by Grade 6 students. Such an activity would enable certain students to let off steam. Certain physical constraints could also influence the norms to be adopted. A schoolyard located right next to a major street / thoroughfare will not reflect the same standards as one located beside a vacant lot.

Worksheet 1 – Values and norms in the schoolyard

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. In your own words, define what is meant by the word **value** and give an example.

2. In your own words, define what is meant by the word **norm** and give an example.

3. What values and norms should be taken into consideration to ensure that a schoolyard is conducive to the well-being of the various people who use it?

Worksheet 2 – My schoolyard from an ethical perspective

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Who uses your schoolyard?

2. What games and sports can you play there?

3. What are the main rules you must follow in your current schoolyard?

4. Name one value reflected in the organization of your schoolyard.

5. Name several positive and negative aspects of your schoolyard.

6. Identify an aspect of your schoolyard that would need to be improved for the benefit of all. Explain why.

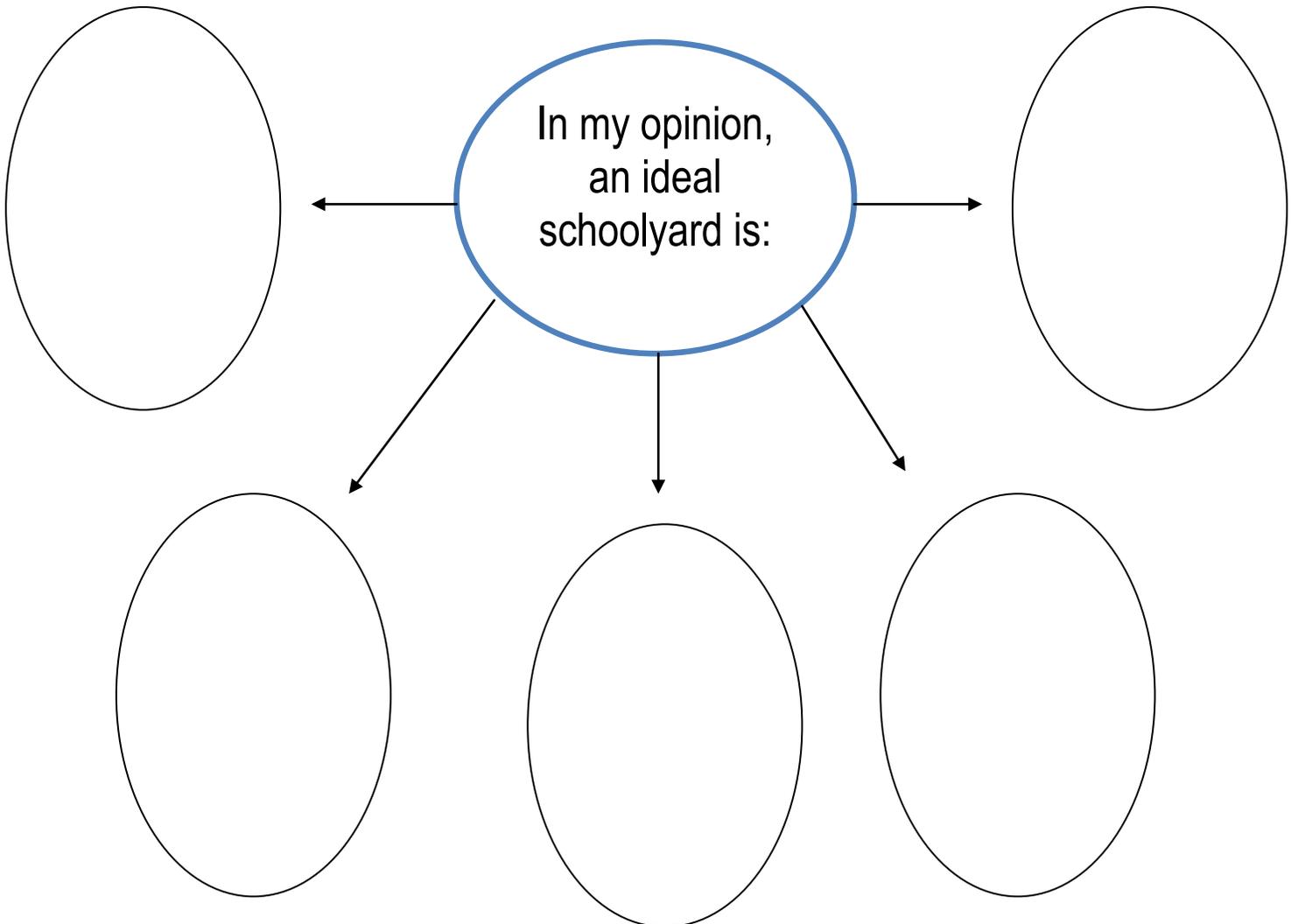
Worksheet 3 – My vision of an ideal schoolyard

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Name two values that could serve as guidelines when drawing up plans for an ideal schoolyard.

2. Fill in the following diagram with key words or short sentences.



Worksheet 4 – My team’s choices

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Listen to the members of your team and give a summary of each one’s ideas.

Name:	Name:	Name:
Suggested values for an ideal schoolyard: → →	Suggested values for an ideal schoolyard: → →	Suggested values for an ideal schoolyard: → →
Main reasons:	Main reasons:	Main reasons:

2. Discuss with your team members the two values you consider the most important in carrying out your plan for an ideal schoolyard.

Note suggestions for rules of conduct, designs for the ideal schoolyard and activities conducive to community life, while respecting the values you chose as a member of your team.

For example, if your team opted to create an ideal schoolyard by taking into account the value of the environment, you might suggest putting recycling bags in the schoolyard, forbidding students to climb trees and instituting a shrub planting program.

Worksheet 4 – My team’s choices (cont.)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Identify the first value selected by the team:

Examples of rules of conduct relating to this value:

Suggestions for changes and activities relating to this value:

Identify the second value selected by the team:

Examples of rules of conduct relating to this value:

Suggestions for changes and activities relating to this value:

Worksheet 5 – Self-evaluation of the dialogue

Name: _____ Date: _____

Take some time to reflect on your use of dialogue.
Enter “yes,” “no” or “more or less” after each statement.

- 1. I explained my ideas clearly.**
(e.g. *Happiness is an important value because . . .*
I prefer Jane’s idea because . . .)

- 2. I was attentive to other people’s points of view.**
(e.g. I looked at the person who was speaking, listened attentively until he or she had finished, and asked questions if needed.)

- 3. I let each person have his or her turn to speak.**
(e.g. *I raised my hand when I wanted to speak in large group meetings and I waited for my turn to speak.*)

Next time, to improve my dialogue with others, I would like to make the following changes:

→ _____

→ _____

Worksheet 6 – A plan of an ideal schoolyard

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Decide, along with the members of your team, the tasks that need to be carried out in order to implement your plan for an ideal schoolyard.

Who?	Does what?	Required materials

2. When drawing up your plan for an ideal schoolyard, it is important to:

- ✓ Name the values and rules of conduct selected.
- ✓ Describe the design changes and activities considered.
- ✓ Describe the effects of your decisions on the various users of the schoolyard.
- ✓ Explain how your decisions foster group harmony.

You could present your descriptions as follows:

Rule of conduct selected:

This rule is based on the following value(s):

Here is one way in which users of the schoolyard may be affected:

Suggestion for a design change or activity:

This suggestion is based on the following value(s):

Here is (are) one (several) way(s) in which users of the schoolyard may be affected:

Our plan for an ideal schoolyard fosters group harmony because:

Worksheet 7 – Summary of learning

Name: _____ Date: _____

🔗 Review of what I learned

One of the things I learned with respect to the concepts of **value** and **norm** is:

One of the things I learned about the **effects** produced by decisions pertaining to schoolyard design:

🔗 Review of my work as a member of my team

Which actions or attitudes could I apply the next time I engage in dialogue with my classmates? Explain why these actions or attitudes would be conducive to dialogue.

How did I contribute positively to the work of my team?

SUGGESTED READING LIST

Aillaud, Cindy Lou. *Recess at 20 Below*. Portland: Alaska Northwest Books, 2005.
(ISBN- 13: 978-0882406046)

Discusses how children can enjoy outdoor recess activities even in 20 below weather in an Alaskan town.

Brown, Tricia. *Someone Special, Just Like You*. Steelville, MO: San Val Publishing, 1995.
(ISBN-13: 978-0613496575)

A photo essay that depicts how children with special needs are capable of doing many of the things that all children have fun doing.

Dwight, Laura. *We Can Do It!* Long Island City, New York: Star Bright Books, 2005.
(ISBN-13: 978-1595720337)

Recounts the daily activities of children with special needs at home and at school.

Helmer, Marilyn. *Recess Riddles*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2004. (ISBN-13: 978-1553375784)

Riddles that express the fun time that can be had during recess.

Hewitt, Sally. *An Eco-School*. Series, Taking Part. London, UK: Franklin Watts Ltd, 2006.
(ISBN: 978-0749666606)

Incorporates eco-friendly ideas into school yard planning.

Hewitt, Sally. *Your Local Environment*. Series, Green Team. St. Catherines, ON: Crabtree Publishing, 2008.
(ISBN-13: 978-0778741077)

How to care about the environment in school, at home and in the community.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *King of the Playground*. Texas: Aladdin, 1994. (ISBN-13: 978-0689718021)

A story about how to resolve conflicts in the playground.

O'Neill, Alexis. *The Recess Queen*. Toronto: Scholastic Press, 2002. (ISBN-13: 978-0439206372)

Resolving schoolyard conflict through play.

Pancella, Peggy. *Playground Safety (Be Safe!)*. Chicago, IL: Heinemann Education Books, 2005.
(ISBN: 978-1403449436)

Includes safety tips and rules for the schoolyard.

Speed Shaskan, Trisha. *Fair Game*. Mankato, MN: Picture Window Books, 2009. (ISBN-13: 978-1404842335)

A story about fair play on the basketball court.

Teacher Resources

Bailey, Guy. *The Ultimate Playground and Recess Game Book*. Vancouver: Educators Press, 2001. (ISBN-13: 978-0966972726)
170 games, activities, and sports for the playground.

Danks Sharon Gamson. *Asphalt to Ecosystems: Design Ideas for Schoolyard Transformation*. Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2009. (ISBN-13: 978-0-9766054-8-5)
A guide for creating school playgrounds that are environment-friendly.

Kirkland, Jane. *No Student Left Indoors: Creating a Field Guide to Your Schoolyard*. Stillwater Publishing, 2007. (ISBN-13: 978-0970975454)
Describes how to create a class project that involves putting together a guide to the schoolyard.

Luvmour, Josette and Luvmour, Ba. *Everyone Wins!: Cooperative Games and Activities*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 2007. (ISBN-13: 978-0865715875)
Over 150 games to build cooperation and teach conflict resolution in the schoolyard.

Moore, Robin C. & Wong, Herbert H. *Natural Learning: The life history of an environmental schoolyard*, Berkeley, CA: MIG Communications, 1997. (ISBN-13: 978-0944661246)
Describes a ten-year project to turn a schoolyard into a natural environment.

Tai, Lolly, Haque, Mary Tsylor, McLellan, Gina K. & Knight, Erin Jordan. *Designing Outdoor Environments for Children: Landscaping School Yards, Gardens and Playgrounds*. New York: McGraw-Hill Professional, 2006. (ISBN-13: 978-0071459358)
Case studies of how concrete yards were turned into natural landscapes for children to play and learn.

Waters, Alice. *Edible Schoolyard – A Universal Idea*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2008. (ISBN-13: 978-0811862806)
How to create a vegetable garden in a school setting.