

Glossary

Aboriginal Peoples: the Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups: Indians, Inuit, and Métis

Agenda 21: a comprehensive blueprint for global environmental action for the twenty-first century, drafted by the 172 governments present at the 1992 Earth Summit organized by the United Nations in Rio de Janeiro; often interpreted and implemented at the local level; Chapter 36 deals with education and training

anthropocentric: deriving from the belief that humans hold a special place in nature; being centered primarily on humans and human affairs

Bellagio Principles: guidelines for the practical assessment of progress towards sustainable development, developed by the International Institute for Sustainable Development

bias-balanced: describing materials in which all the facts and points of view are presented in a way that allows objective consideration of an issue

bio-mimicry: a new science that studies nature's models and then imitates or takes inspiration from these designs and processes to solve human problems

community health: healthy communities actively work to improve the health and quality of life of all their residents; the definition of health goes beyond the absence of disease and the traditional medical concept, and addresses underlying factors in quality of life, such as the environment, crime, and literacy

Earth Charter: A document outlining common goals and shared values for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society; the principles of the Earth Charter reflect extensive international consultations conducted over a period of many years; based upon contemporary science, international law, and the insights of philosophy and religion

ecocentric: environment-centred, with aspects or members of the non-human world considered to be valuable in and of themselves; based on a philosophy that claims moral values and rights for both organisms and ecological systems and processes

ecological footprint: the calculation of the area of land and water needed to support an individual, an economy, or a population at a specified standard of living

ecological literacy: an understanding of the relationships between human and natural systems, of the local and global environmental impacts of economic and social systems, and of the means to minimize human impacts on natural systems through design, decision-making, and lifestyle choices

ecological thinking: Alan Berkowicz of the Institute of Ecosystem Studies describes a framework for ecological thinking as composed of seven overlapping kinds of thinking: scientific thinking (evidence-based and critical thinking); systems and hierarchy thinking; temporal thinking (short-term, historical, and evolutionary thinking); spatial thinking (geographical, place-based, and contextual thinking); interdisciplinary thinking; ethical thinking; creative thinking; and empathic thinking

ecosystems thinking: a holistic approach to learning, behaviour or practice that considers the ramifications to ecosystem health—and the consequent effects to human health—of all topics, choices or processes under consideration

embodied energy: the energy used in producing a product

environmental and sustainability education: the transmission, growth, and application of environmental knowledge across all sectors of society

environmental education: a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges; develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges; and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action

environmental literacy: the desired outcome of environmental education programs; environmentally literate individuals understand ecological, social, and political systems, and have the inclination to apply that understanding to any decisions that pose consequences for environmental quality

ESL: English as a Second Language

genuine progress indicator (GPI): an economic measure which starts with the same accounting framework as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but then makes some crucial distinctions: it adds in the economic contributions of household and volunteer work, but subtracts factors such as crime, pollution, and family breakdown (see <http://www.rprogress.org/projects/gpi/>)

holistic: describes a perspective that considers all parts of the body, mind, and spirit as a whole, and treats them as such

industrial ecology: the shifting of industrial process from open loop systems, in which resource and capital investments move through the system to become waste, to a closed loop system where waste becomes input for new processes

integrated learning communities: curriculum restructuring efforts that thematically link or cluster during a given term and enrol a cohort of students; learning communities aim to provide students with greater curricular coherence, and to provide both students and faculty an opportunity for increased intellectual interaction and shared inquiry

life cycle analysis: also known as "cradle to grave analysis," this approach analyzes the environmental impacts of the entire life cycle of a product, from procurement of the raw materials, through its use, to its eventual disposal, reuse, or recycling of its components

LINC: Language Instruction for Newcomer Canadians

living machines: wastewater treatment technologies that use the principles of ecological design and engineering

new Canadians: people not born in Canada who have been here for less than 5 years

participatory democracy: a democracy in which people may participate *directly* in decision making processes rather than *indirectly* through the election of representatives

Professional Learning Program: the Professional Learning Program was established in Ontario when the *Stability and Excellence in Education Act* was enacted in June 2001; it requires all teachers certified in the province to complete a program of professional learning in order to maintain their license to teach in publicly funded schools

precautionary principle: adopted by the UN Conference on the Environment and Development (1992) stating that in order to protect the environment, a precautionary approach should be widely applied; where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage to the environment, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing cost effective measures to prevent environmental degradation

sense of place: a feeling of attachment and belonging to a particular place or environment that has a special character and familiarity

stewardship: holding in trust something for another; environmental stewardship is the concept of responsibly managing all of the earth's resources for the benefit of present and future generations of people, plants, and animals

sustainability: meeting the needs of today without reducing the quality of life for future generations; the synergistic integration of a healthy economy, environmental integrity, and human well-being within viable communities; using, conserving, and enhancing resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased

systems thinking: a holistic and dynamic approach to analysis that focuses on how a system's parts interrelate, and how systems work over time within the context of larger systems; thinking in terms of relationships, connectedness, and context

TESL Ontario: Teachers of English as a Second Language Association of Ontario

tradition: the way of doing things that is built upon past practices that reflect the history, culture, language, and spirituality of people

traditional environmental knowledge (TEK): knowledge that derives from, or is rooted in the traditional way of life of Aboriginal Peoples; the accumulated understanding of the human place in relation to the universe, encompassing spiritual, social, and environmental relationships

