



Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

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SYLLABUS UNDER REVIEW

ABORIGINAL AND INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

ATAR COURSE

Year 11 syllabus

SYLLABUS UNDER REVIEW

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This syllabus is under review as of 2020.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

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Content

Rationale	1
Course outcomes	2
Organisation	3
Structure of the syllabus	3
Progression from the Year 7–10 curriculum	3
Representation of the general capabilities	3
Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities	5
Principles and protocols for curriculum planning	6
Unit 1	7
Unit description	7
Unit content	7
Unit 2	10
Unit description	10
Unit content	10
School-based assessment	13
Grading	14
Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 11	15

Rationale

Aboriginal histories and cultures are fundamental to the development of Australian identity and the formation of contemporary Australian society. The exploration of Aboriginal cultures, past and present and how Aboriginal Peoples interact with other sociocultural groups, provides a logical starting point for the exploration of cultural identity. In this course students explore and investigate the concept of culture, and how cultures interact with one another and with their environment.

Students learn about the diversity of Aboriginal societies and cross-cultural interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, past and present, using a process of social inquiry. They critically explore a wide range of political, social, historical, legal and environmental issues from an intercultural perspective. They analyse Aboriginal Peoples' experiences in contemporary Australian society, using a range of approaches. These include comparative studies, investigating the experiences of both Indigenous communities elsewhere in the world and different cultural communities within Australia. The importance of ethical considerations in the investigation of cultural and social issues is emphasised.

The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course provides for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to explore 'shared histories' and involve themselves in active reconciliation. This course affirms the cultural experience and identity of Aboriginal students. All students have opportunities to learn from, and with, Aboriginal Peoples.

Understanding and valuing cultural diversity are key skills both for citizenship in contemporary multicultural Australia and for participation in an increasingly global community. The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course is intended to equip students with the knowledge, skills and values to be active citizens at the local, national and global levels. These skills are also highly valued in today's workplaces. The ability to work effectively in a culturally diverse environment is important in a wide range of vocational contexts.

Course outcomes

The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course is designed to facilitate achievement of the following outcomes.

Outcome 1 – Investigating cultural interaction

Students use their skills of inquiry to investigate aspects of culture.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- plan an investigation that uses methodology appropriate to the cultural contexts being investigated
- conduct the investigation by selecting and locating sources that provide evidence
- process and synthesise the information to develop interpretations of cultural experiences and views
- apply and communicate interpretations and findings in culturally appropriate ways.

Outcome 2 – Cultural continuity and change

Students understand that cultural continuity and change result from a range of forces.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand the range of different impacts of forces for change on cultural groups
- understand that cultures have different and changing understandings of, and relationships with, the environment
- understand that there are different and changing versions of history and that these inform and influence people's actions.

Outcome 3 – Identity and culture

Students understand that cultures allow individuals and groups to construct multiple, diverse and unique identities, based on their shared understandings of the world.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand that individuals develop identities by interpreting their roles, responsibilities and experiences as members of one or more cultural groups
- understand that members of different cultures have different world views as a result of their beliefs, values, practices and experiences
- understand that cultures are characterised by varying degrees of cohesion and diversity as they seek to maintain a sense of identity.

Outcome 4 – Culture and citizenship

Students understand how they can help to build a just and sustainable society in the context of their own community and a culturally diverse world.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand specific social justice and equity issues in the context of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia
- understand social justice and equity issues within their own community
- understand the skills and practices of citizenship in an intercultural context.

Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus. The cognitive complexity of the syllabus content increases from Year 11 to Year 12.

Structure of the syllabus

The Year 11 syllabus is divided into two units, each of one semester duration, which are typically delivered as a pair. The notional time for each unit is 55 class contact hours.

Unit 1

This unit enables students to explore the relationship Indigenous Peoples in Australia and other countries have with the environment. Within this broad area, students investigate Aboriginal Peoples' knowledge of the past and the present. Students explore how cultures incorporate change while maintaining continuity of tradition with respect to the environment.

Unit 2

This unit enables students to explore the idea of cultural interaction and resilience. They learn that cultural change results from a range of external and internal factors and may be welcomed or resisted. Students explore how individuals and groups show resilience as they seek to maintain their cultural identity.

Each unit includes:

- a unit description – a short description of the focus of the unit
- unit content – the content to be taught and learned.

Progression from the Year 7–10 curriculum

This syllabus continues to develop student learning in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures which occurs in the Year 7 to 10 History and Geography curricula. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures is also a cross-curriculum priority across all year levels.

Representation of the general capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Literacy

Literacy presents those aspects of the Language and Literacy strands of the English curriculum that should also be applied in all other learning areas. While much of the explicit teaching of literacy occurs in the English learning area, it is strengthened, made specific and extended in other learning areas, such as Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies, as students engage in a range of learning activities with significant literacy demands. These literacy-rich situations are a part of learning in all curriculum areas. Paying attention to the literacy demands of the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course ensures that students' literacy development is strengthened so that it supports subject-based learning.

Numeracy

Numeracy is useful in the inquiry process, which requires students to recognise patterns and relationships. Students have opportunities to support their views with data, some of which is numerical in nature. They develop numeracy capability when they analyse, interpret and draw conclusions from statistical information, for example in relation to change over time.

Information and communication technology capability

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability is important in the inquiry process, particularly in relation to investigation, analysis and communication. Students use digital tools and strategies to locate, access, process and analyse information. They use ICT skills and understandings to investigate and identify different perspectives and sources of evidence and to communicate information. Students have opportunities to scrutinise websites and the perspectives they convey, including how and why such sites are constructed, the audiences they serve and their goals. They develop an understanding of the issues involved in the use of ICT when practising ethical scholarship as part of the inquiry process.

Critical and creative thinking

Critical and creative thinking is integral to the inquiry process. There are opportunities for students to delve deeply and broadly into the implications of any missing or questionable information in their investigation of issues. The demands of investigation include the ability to pose questions, interrogate, select and cross-reference sources, and develop interpretations based on an assessment of the evidence and reasoning. Students identify possible weaknesses in their own positions, and analyse, evaluate and synthesise alternative perspectives.

Personal and social capability

Personal and social capability skills are developed and practised in Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies by students enhancing their communication skills and participating in group-work. Students have opportunities to work both collaboratively in teams and also independently as part of their learning and research in the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. Through the study of individuals and groups, students develop their ability to appreciate the perspectives and experiences of others. Students develop increasing social awareness through the study of relationships between individuals and diverse social groups in the modern world.

Ethical understanding

Ethical understanding provides opportunities for students to explore and understand the diverse perspectives and circumstances that shaped the actions and possible motivations of people in the past compared with those of today. Students have opportunities both independently and collaboratively to explore the values, beliefs and principles that were the basis for the judgements and actions of people in the past, and of those of today.

Intercultural understanding

Intercultural understanding is a vital part of learning in the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. Students explore the different beliefs and values of a range of cultural groups and develop an appreciation of the diversity in the modern world. They have opportunities to develop an understanding of the nature, causes and consequences of conflict, dispossession and interdependence. Students develop an understanding of different contemporary perspectives, the historical contexts for those perspectives, their influence on the relationships between different groups within society, and how they contribute to individual and group actions in the contemporary world.

Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities

The cross-curriculum priorities address the contemporary issues which students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the priorities into the teaching and learning program for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. The cross-curriculum priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures priority is integral to the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course. The course celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories as part of the shared history belonging to all Australians.

This course provides the opportunity to examine historical perspectives from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewpoint through investigating key policies and political movements over the last two centuries. Students have the opportunity to develop an awareness of the significant roles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australian society.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia reinforces understanding of the diversity of cultures and peoples living in Australia, fosters social inclusion and cohesion, and allows consideration of a variety of perspectives.

Sustainability

Sustainability addresses the ongoing capacity of Earth to maintain all life. The Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR course examines the beliefs, values and traditions that have influenced the complex interrelations between people and their environment (Country/Land/Water). These beliefs, values and traditions provide the basis for exploring long-term and short-term human impacts or consequences on the natural environment in a range of cultural contexts. This, in turn, forms the basis for developing and articulating values pertaining to ecological sustainability.

Principles and protocols for curriculum planning

Selection of resources

The selection of resources and their use can be culturally sensitive and controversial. When selecting resources, teachers need to:

- consult with local community members about the resources/texts that can or cannot be used and if they may be accessed by some or all students
- analyse the resources using a framework of questions, such as those listed in:
 - *A Resource Guide for Aboriginal Studies and Torres Strait Islander Studies* (1995), Melbourne, Education Services Australia
- use reference resources that guide selection policies about the use of resources, such as:
 - Government of South Australia Department for Education and Child Development – *Evaluating resources with an Aboriginal focus* at www.lmrc.sa.edu.au/default.asp?id+43748&navgrp=634
 - Dunkle, Margaret (1994) *Black in Focus: A Guide to Aboriginality in Literature for Young People*. This resource focuses on giving advice about fictional stories.

Teaching and learning of sensitive topics and controversial issues

Teachers need to plan for sensitive topics and controversial issues by establishing ground rules for themselves and the classroom processes. The practices and protocols for doing this can be found in resources, such as:

- National Trust of Australia (WA): Education and Learning *Teaching Aboriginal History – Values and Sensitivities* (an example for teaching in the Pilbara) at www.valuingheritage.com.au/Year_7_Burrup_Peninsula.html
- *British Columbia Planning Guide and Framework – Development of Aboriginal Learning Resources* at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/

Elders, where possible, need to be recognised and consulted. They must be valued and shown respect at all times.

Unit 1

Unit description

The focus for this unit is the relationship Indigenous Peoples in Australia and other countries have with the environment. Within this broad area, students investigate Aboriginal Peoples' knowledge of the past and the present. They investigate changes in technology, adaptation to the environment and social structures. Students explore how cultures incorporate change while maintaining continuity of tradition with respect to the environment.

Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

Aboriginal perspectives

Cultural perspectives

- variations in perspectives about people, events, experiences, beliefs and values

Place and belonging

- Aboriginal spiritual links with places as told through the Dreamings
- Aboriginal Peoples' diverse adaptations to the environment
- Aboriginal Peoples' impacts on the natural environment
- traditional land and sea management practices, including the uses of fire, fish trapping, food gathering and the evidence for this from shell middens and artwork

Diversity and change

- response of Aboriginal societies to:
 - changing climates
 - changing land use
 - new technology
- adoption of new technology by Aboriginal Peoples, including the introduction of metal for traditional toolmaking
- the use of traditional skills in a new context, including involvement in the pastoral industry, pearling, and sports, such as footraces, boxing

Aboriginal contributions to Australian society

- technological innovation in traditional societies, including unique features of Aboriginal cultures, such as boomerangs and spear throwers, rock art and cave painting, Aboriginal astronomy
- contribution of Aboriginal Peoples' skills and knowledge to Australian economic development, including:
 - the establishment of the Aboriginal arts industry
 - involvement in the tourism industry, such as the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council

- Aboriginal land management practices, including:
 - traditional uses of fire adopted by some land managers today
 - the employment of Indigenous rangers in the Working on Country program

Sustainable societies

Empowering people

- interest groups and decision-making processes involved in land management, such as the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council, and the Working on Country program

Relationships with the environment over time

- the effect on the environment of traditional land use and management practices in other countries, including the use of fire, hunting rights, food gathering, and the role of invention and innovation in changing practices
- the effect of contemporary land use and management practices on the environment, including **at least two** of the following environmental issues:
 - global warming
 - land clearing for farming, mining and urbanisation
 - use of waterways
 - native animal endangerment and extinctions
 - waste management
 - pollution
- the influence of beliefs, values and traditions of cultural groups on attitudes to and decisions about the environment, using **at least two** of the following: Aboriginal Peoples, Maori, Inuit, First Nations of Canada, the Native American tribes of the USA, and/or the Khoikhoi peoples of South Africa
- a case study of the care and protection over time of one significant site in Australia, for example, Uluru, the Burrup Peninsula

Cultural interaction in a pluralist society

- adoption of new practices by First Nations' cultures in order to maintain their identity in the face of change, using **at least two** of the following: Aboriginal Peoples, Maori, Inuit, First Nations of Canada, the Native American Tribes of the USA, and/or the Khoikhoi peoples of South Africa

Social inquiry skills

Research skills

- constructing a set of focus questions to investigate a specific topic/issue
- collecting, recording and organising data/information
- recognising different perspectives presented in a variety of different sources/texts
- drawing conclusions and developing explanations based on research findings
- communicating findings using formats appropriate to purpose, including, written, oral or multimodal presentations

- identifying and practising ethical scholarship when conducting research, including:
 - respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for collecting, acknowledging and communicating information
 - adopting protocols and conventions to communicate in culturally appropriate ways

Self-reflection

- acknowledging the complex and multi-faceted nature of people's relationship to the environment when developing a social inquiry
- recognising different ways of expressing beliefs about environmental practices and sustainability when developing a social inquiry

SYLLABUS UNDER REVIEW

Unit 2

Unit description

The focus for this unit is on cultural interaction and resilience. Students explore how cultural change results from a range of factors and commonly involves interaction between different cultures. They investigate the ways individuals and groups show cultural resilience as they seek to maintain their cultural identity. Students also investigate interactions between cultures with different world views, how they respond to one another, and how they each maintain continuity.

Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

Aboriginal perspectives

Cultural perspectives

- ways to maintain Aboriginal perspectives in the face of change
- comparison of Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives to those of other First Nations peoples who have experienced colonisation, including **at least one** of the following: the Maori, the Dayak people of Borneo, the Inuit, the First Nations of Canada, the Karen people of Burma, the Native American tribes of the USA, the Tibetan people, and/or the Khoikhoi peoples of South Africa

Place and belonging

- importance of kinship in maintaining links to Country
- ways to maintain links to Country over time by Aboriginal Peoples, as evidenced by native title findings and significant sites
- the struggle of Aboriginal Peoples to maintain the family and cultural identity
- struggles for rights, such as ownership and/or access to land and water by Aboriginal and other First Nations peoples, including **at least one** of the following: the Maori in New Zealand; the Inuit in Greenland, Russia and the USA; the First Nations of Canada; the Native American tribes of the USA; and/or the Khoikhoi peoples of South Africa

Diversity and change

- different roles of men and women in maintaining Aboriginal cultures
- an overview of historical experiences in relation to changing government policies regarding Aboriginal Peoples, including the impact of the *Aborigines Act 1905 (WA)*, *Aborigines Protection Amending Act 1915 (NSW)* – Stolen Children, *Native Administration Act 1936* (amendment to the *Aborigines Act 1905*), the Commonwealth right to vote 1962, Referendum 1967, *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* and the symbolic Hand back ceremony 1975, Prime Minister Keating's Redfern Park Speech 1992, *Native Title Act 1993*, *Native Title Amendment Act 1997*, *Bringing Them Home report 1997* – Stolen Generations, *Northern Territory National Emergency Response Act 2007* (the Intervention), and the Apology 2008

- an overview of signs of resilience in the struggle for Aboriginal rights and citizenship, including the Day of Mourning 1938, the Pilbara Strike 1946, the Coolbaroo League 1947, the Freedom Rides 1965, the Wave Hill walk-off 1966–1975, the Tent Embassy 1972, the Mabo Decision 1992, the Wik Decision 1993, and the Bridge Walk for Reconciliation 2000

Aboriginal contributions to Australian society

- changes in attitude to Aboriginal contributions to Australian society
- use by Australian society of Aboriginal cultural expression, including artwork, music, dance, and the tourism industry

Sustainable societies

Empowering people

- the effects of government policies and legislation on First Nations peoples, including language policies, and land and water rights in **at least one** of the following countries: Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, and/or South Africa
- the influence of government policy and legislation on social attitudes across cultures, including the ‘White Australia’ policy, immigration laws, assimilation, self-determination, equal opportunity, and/or anti-discrimination legislation, comparing Australia with **at least one** other country

Relationships with the environment over time

- the importance of First Nations peoples’ links to the land for the survival and maintenance of cultural identity
- environmental and cultural issues concerning the use and management of natural resources, including cattle ranching in South America, land clearance by local farmers in Australia, and/or logging in the Amazon
- conflict of short-term economic decisions with long-term social and environmental needs, including clearing forests in developing countries

Cultural interaction in a pluralist society

- the influence of colonisation or globalisation on the way cultures interact
- the influence of power relations on cultural interactions
- attempts by First Nations and migrant cultures to maintain their distinctive identity in pluralist societies, such as Australia, New Zealand, and/or Canada

Social inquiry skills

Research skills

- constructing a set of focus questions to investigate a specific topic/issue
- collecting, recording and organising data/information
- recognising different perspectives presented in a variety of different sources/texts
- drawing conclusions and developing explanations based on research findings

- communicating findings using formats appropriate to purpose, including, written, oral or multimodal presentations
- identifying and practising ethical scholarship when conducting research, including:
 - respecting variation between cultural groups of processes and protocols for collecting, acknowledging and communicating information
 - adopting protocols and conventions to communicate in culturally appropriate ways

Self-reflection

- exploring the influence of cultural interaction on social attitudes when developing a social inquiry
- identifying evidence through the inquiry process to explain differences in personal beliefs and values between cultures
- identifying the influence of personal and group experiences on research conclusions

SYLLABUS UNDER REVIEW

School-based assessment

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Manual contains essential information on principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that needs to be read in conjunction with this syllabus.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. The table below provides details of the assessment types for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR Year 11 syllabus and the weighting for each assessment type.

Assessment table – Year 11

Type of assessment	Weighting
<p>Social inquiry</p> <p>Students use ethical procedures, appropriate methodology and sources, and show cultural sensitivity and awareness to plan, conduct and communicate a social inquiry.</p> <p>Typically the inquiry proposition is devised by the teacher.</p> <p>Typically the final presentation is an oral format which can include: a debate; a hypothetical; a speech and/or a multimodal presentation.</p> <p>The presentation can be individual or group.</p> <p>Typically one social inquiry is completed for each unit.</p>	20%
<p>Source analysis</p> <p>A number of sources are interpreted, analysed, and evaluated. Questions typically require the use of evidence from the sources when commenting on: message; origin, purpose and context; reliability and contestability of the evidence; perspective; and relevance.</p> <p>The teacher can select the sources and provide the questions, or a student (or group of students) can select a range of sources to respond to questions provided by the teacher.</p> <p>Source materials can include: written texts (an extract from a government paper, a newspaper or journal article; or an extract from a narrative, a poem, a song lyric, a play script, or a letter); graphic materials (a photograph, a map, a graph, a diagram, a cartoon, or a drawing); and/or a film or a television show.</p> <p>At least two source analysis tasks must be administered in class under test conditions.</p>	25%
<p>Extended response (Issue analysis)</p> <p>The format can be a written response to a scaffolded or sectionalised essay question which can contain timelines and diagrams; an oral presentation, such as a debate, hypothetical, re-enactment; and/or a multimodal presentation, such as a museum display, or a PowerPoint.</p> <p>Typically students are required to respond to one or more closed or open questions, or a proposition; or an interpretation and/or evaluation of perspectives.</p> <p>At least two extended response tasks must be administered in class under test conditions.</p>	25%
<p>Examination</p> <p>Typically conducted at the end of each semester and/or unit. In preparation for Unit 3 and Unit 4, the examination should reflect the examination design brief included in the ATAR Year 12 syllabus for this course.</p>	30%

Teachers are required to use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units (or for a single unit where only one is being studied).

The assessment outline must:

- include a set of assessment tasks
- include a general description of each task
- indicate the unit content to be assessed
- indicate a weighting for each task and each assessment type
- include the approximate timing of each task (for example, the week the task is conducted, or the issue and submission dates for an extended task).

In the assessment outline for the pair of units, each assessment type must be included at least twice. In the assessment outline where a single unit is being studied, each assessment type must be included at least once.

The set of assessment tasks must provide a representative sampling of the content for Unit 1 and Unit 2.

Assessment tasks not administered under test/controlled conditions require appropriate validation/authentication processes. For example, student performance for a social inquiry could be validated by a task (such as a structured essay, extended answer or analysis of the sources used in the inquiry) which is completed in class after the final presentation is submitted.

Grading

Schools report student achievement in terms of the following grades:

Grade	Interpretation
A	Excellent achievement
B	High achievement
C	Satisfactory achievement
D	Limited achievement
E	Very low achievement

The teacher prepares a ranked list and assigns the student a grade for the pair of units (or for a unit where only one unit is being studied). The grade is based on the student's overall performance as judged by reference to a set of pre-determined standards. These standards are defined by grade descriptions and annotated work samples. The grade descriptions for the Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies ATAR Year 11 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They can also be accessed, together with annotated work samples, through the Guide to Grades link on the course page of the Authority website at www.scsa.wa.edu.au

To be assigned a grade, a student must have had the opportunity to complete the education program, including the assessment program (unless the school accepts that there are exceptional and justifiable circumstances).

Refer to the WACE Manual for further information about the use of a ranked list in the process of assigning grades.

Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 11

A	Identifies interconnections within and between past and present cultures and their effect on people and their environment.
	Assesses the causes of social justice and equity issues and examines alternative solutions.
	Identifies and selects appropriate sources that allows examination and discussion of viewpoints and supports an argument in a social inquiry.
	Presents findings in culturally sensitive ways, offering explanations and acknowledging sources.
B	Outlines the ways that different perspectives and values about the environment affect practices.
	Identifies the causes of social justice and equity issues and examines some solutions.
	Makes plans, and uses information to describe patterns, draw conclusions and give reasons for a viewpoint in a social inquiry.
	Present findings in culturally sensitive ways, offering some explanations and acknowledging sources.
C	Recognises that different perspectives and values about the environment affect practices.
	Acknowledges some strategies that are needed in order to identify and resolve social justice issues.
	Identifies sources relevant to a social inquiry that reflect different viewpoints.
	Presents findings, showing recognition of the values and needs of audiences.
D	Recognises that people hold different perspectives and values about the environment.
	Identifies some differences in people’s ideas of social justice and equity.
	Collects some data from limited sources for a social inquiry.
	Presents findings as a series of statements with little recognition of the intended audience.
E	Provides a few unsupported statements about people’s views of the environment.
	Lists some social justice or equity issues.
	Collects limited information, which may have little relevance to the social inquiry.
	Attempts to communicate findings.