

# History and Citizenship 5: The History of HIV and AIDS

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## Course

History and Citizenship Cycle 1

## Unit/Social Phenomenon/Theme

A Social Phenomenon of the Present

## Lesson and Focus

The History of HIV and AIDS

## Trigger Warning

Content, discussion and research relating to serophobia, homophobia, racism and addiction.

## Aim/Rationale

Students will gain an understanding of how HIV and AIDS are transmitted and how it can be averted. Students will also adopt respectful attitudes toward various sexual orientations and identities. Students will discuss the history of HIV and AIDS and various governmental and grassroots reactions to it, what an ideal government might do to prevent the spread of the virus.

### Competencies

1. Examines social phenomena from a historical perspective.
2. Interprets social phenomena using the historical method.
3. Constructs their consciousness of citizenship through the study of history.

## Materials

- Projector
- Computer
- Internet Access
- Speakers
- White/Blackboard

## Central Concepts

Freedom, Censorship, Democratization, Discrimination, Equality, Repression, Rights, Segregation, Society, Change, Continuity, Democracy, Diversity, Stakes, Territory

## Hook

Ask students what they know about HIV and AIDS, including its history and how it is transmitted. Start lists on a projector or board for each of these topics. Directly address and correct any obvious misconceptions students may have.

## Development/Teaching Methods

- 1. Learn more about HIV and AIDS and its history**
  - Hand out or project or have students look up CBC's "the global epidemic" "Understanding the Global AIDS epidemic" (Nov. 24, 2009)  
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/understanding-the-global-aids-epidemic-1.853362>  
Summary of the virus and its history. Have students read it. Discuss the summary and add any new points to what is already projected.
- 2. Background information on the perception of HIV and AIDS in the mid '80s (15-20 min)**
  - Tell students that they will be looking into how HIV and AIDS were perceived when it became a public worry and discussing the role of the 1985 Canadian Government in HIV and AIDS prevention. Talk about how it might be important to 'perceive' HIV and AIDS in the present day
- 3. Show the first 4 minutes and 35 seconds of "Are AIDS Victims a Danger to Society" in CBC's digital archives, being sure to point out the date that it was first aired (Oct 17, 1985):**  
<http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/are-aids-victims-a-danger-to-society>
  - Briefly discuss this clip in relation to what the class already knew about the transmission of HIV/AIDS and its history.
- 4. Show the first 7 minutes and 30 seconds of "Part 7: Setbacks" from the PBS series "The Age of AIDS":**  
<https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-age-aids-part-i/> (starting at 1:26:08)
  - Briefly compare the government responses of the US and the UK to the public outcry and worries and government intervention featured in the CBC clip.

## Culmination

1. **Class discussion on the role of government in HIV and AIDS prevention (15-20 min)**
  - Outline various possible prevention initiatives, including grassroots organisations that the government can choose to support or not, laws that the government could enact, and potential government-run programs.
  - Questions for consideration:
    - How should the government react to beliefs such as those in the CBC film?
    - What does the word serophobia mean and how might it affect people?
    - What are some ways for people to prevent the transmission of HIV?
    - Do you believe that providing clean needles encourages drug use?

## Performance Objectives

By the end of this lesson:

- Students will have a general background on the perception of HIV and AIDS in the mid 80s
- Students will have exercised critical thinking skills in reflecting on current perceptions of HIV and AIDS
- Students will have a general understanding of the transmission of HIV and AIDS
- Students will be able to outline HIV and AIDS prevention initiatives.

## Assessment Ideas

- 1) Have students research specific topics within the global response to HIV and AIDS in groups and have them make presentations or short videos on the subject.
  - Possible topics for the groups to research include the history of AIDS research, government and grassroots reactions to the so-called “gay plague” in Canada and the US, the Red Cross tainted blood scandal and the reaction to it, needle exchanges, movements for safer sex, continuing or contemporary issues related to HIV and AIDS, and the various initiatives in Africa, which could be divided by country, prevention strategy, type of educational campaign, or the distribution of preventative materials.



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