Analysis of newspaper/magazine news about socio-scientific issues (Teachers)

Subject

Analysis of journal and/or magazine news about controversial issues related to Science, Technology, Society and Environment (STS-E).

Objectives

The objective of this task is to facilitate comprehension of the tensions that surround scientific enterprise, technology and society.

Competences

Development of substantive knowledge – whenever the student has to identify scientific and technological knowledge conveyed by the news.

Development of epistemological knowledge – whenever the student has to discuss issues related to the environment and to argue about the potentialities as well as limitations of scientific enterprise and its relationship to technology, society and environment.

Development of reasoning competencies – whenever the student has to select information, analyse and interpret it and argue his/ her ideas with the others.

Development of communicational competencies – whenever the student has to present his/ her ideas to the others and to discuss it with the others.

Construction of a reflexive and critical attitude in relation to the ethical and moral consequences of the scientific and technological development.

Task description

1. Students should work in small groups. Teacher should have an important role at stimulating and managing the discussion and the presentation of the final conclusions made by the different groups of students.

2. Each group should have available three newspaper or magazine news about controversial issues related to Science, Technology, Society and Environment. Either the students will collect the news or the teacher will made them available to the students. It is not necessary that all articles make visible all mentioned relationships. For instance, some news may stress the relationship between Science and Technology, others may stress the relationship between Science and the Environment and still others may stress the relationship between Science and Society.

3. Next, we suggest some questions that students might take into consideration when analysing the articles:

   a) What is the controversial issue raised by the article?

   b) What are the different points of views involved in the controversial issue?

   c) Which individuals/ groups defend which points of views?

   d) What are the conflicting values?

   e) What kind of information might be useful for making a decision concerning each different point of views?

   f) What kind of image of science each new put in evidence?

   g) Which might be the impact of the image of Science in the news on the readers' ideas about science?

4. Lastly, each group should present its analysis to all the class. All students should participate in the overall class discussion.

Population

12-18 years old

Curriculum context

All science's curriculum

Kind of activity

Text analysis + discussion

Anticipated time

3 hours at school