

## Starting Points

A new type of educator resource is now available on CurioCity. Starting Points are designed to provide suggestions for how to use CurioCity content in the classroom to engage students with science and technology topics.



Some aspects of Starting Points are available to the general public, some require log-in, and some require you be a volunteer or educator.

The Starting Point section is prepared by Education Services, but if you have suggestions for related content or questions, please submit them along with your draft article (see page 10). Visit the [Starting Points page](#) to see examples of articles and videos with Starting Points.

Starting points is divided into several sections:

Available to the public (does not require log in):

- **Connecting to Content on CurioCity** provides links to related articles on CurioCity
- **Connecting to Careers on CurioCity** provides links to related career profiles on CurioCity

Available with log in:

- **Connecting and Relating** invites readers to look at the issues in the content in personal terms, directly connecting the content to their own lives. For example, in an article on drones, **Connecting and Relating** asks, would you trust your life to a machine that operates without human control? Why or why not?

Available to educators and volunteers:

- **Engaging with the Content** provides questions for provoking conversation in the classroom that move beyond the content in the article, video, or backgrounder. These questions are organized into four categories: **Relating Science and Technology to Society and the Environment**; **Exploring Concepts**; **Nature of Science/Nature of Technology**; and **Media Literacy**.
- **Recommended Learning Strategies** have been prepared by educators and are based on sound pedagogy.
- **Additional Resources** provides links to additional educator resources available on CurioCity, including [action projects](#) and case studies.

**Example Starting Points for Ebola Article** (assembled by Education Services staff at Let's Talk Science based on your suggestions for related content and educational priorities).

### Connecting to Content on CurioCity

- This article is part of the Biotechnology theme

- Will MERS be another SARS? What have we learned? (Article – 2013)
- Travel Health: What To Consider when Planning the Perfect Vacation! (Article – 2012)
- Disastrous diseases (Article – 2011)
- Mad-Cow Disease (Article – 2007)
- Butterflies & Bats Reveal Clues about Spread of Infectious Disease (Video – 2:31 min.)
- The Journey of Clinical Trials (Video – 3:51 min.)
- Viruses (Backgrounder – 2014)
- Immunity and Vaccination (Backgrounder – 2014)
- Canadian Innovations in Pharmaceuticals (Timeline)

### **Connecting to Careers on CurioCity**

- Program Manager - Fighting Infectious Diseases in Africa (Career profile)
- Career Option: Biomedical Engineer (Career profile)
- Helping to treat diseases, one medicine at a time (Career profile)

### **Connecting and Relating**

- What are your feelings about the Ebola outbreak and would you feel differently if this outbreak were occurring in Canada? Explain.
- Has the media coverage of the Ebola outbreak in Africa raised any questions that you would like answered?
- Would the Ebola outbreak cause you to rethink your international travel plans?
  - See more at:  
<http://www.explorecuriocity.org/Content.aspx?ContentID=3003#sthash.YrPqng1A.dpuf>

### **Engaging with the Content:**

- Relating Science and Technology to Society and the Environment
- What factors (social, cultural, environmental, etc.) are contributing to the spread and severity of the impact of the current Ebola virus outbreak in Africa?
- What are the challenges of getting medical professionals and other support service personnel to work in the outbreak crisis zones?
- It has been almost 40 years since the Ebola virus has been known by the scientific community. During that time little or no progress has been made to develop a vaccine or cure. Why do you think this has been the case?

### **Exploring Concepts**

- Why is the Ebola virus challenging to control?
- What type of information do public health organizations commonly report on infectious disease outbreaks?
- What is an experimental drug? What makes the vaccine donated by Canada an experimental drug?

### **Nature of Science/Nature of Technology**

- What motivates or impedes research and development of vaccines and treatments for rare diseases like Ebola?
- What are the pros and cons of Canada's donation of the 1000 doses of an experimental vaccine to prevent Ebola virus? Consider the pros and cons to Canada, as well as to the research facility and researchers who are developing have developed the vaccine.
- Is the unprecedented move by the World Health Association to allow experimental therapies in the fight against Ebola virus a good decision? Why or why not?

### **Media Literacy**

- Which media sources do you feel have presented the most accurate reporting of the Ebola outbreak?
- Can media reports provide adequate, comprehensive information about the Ebola virus outbreak situation without causing fear, apprehension or panic in the general public? Why or why not?
- Do the media have a responsibility to ensure their coverage of infectious disease outbreaks does not create widespread fear and apprehension in the public? Explain.

### **Recommended Learning Strategies:**

- Conduct a Key Ideas Round Robin learning strategy to identify the important ideas in the article, using the create-your-own Key Ideas Round Robin Template [.doc] [.pdf].
- Use a Pros & Cons Organizer and learning strategy to explore the Nature of Science question, "What are the pros and cons of Canada's donation of an experimental vaccine to combat the Ebola virus?", with a create-your-own pros and cons organizer template [.doc] [.pdf].
  - See more at:  
<http://www.explorecuriosity.org/Content.aspx?ContentID=3003#sthash.YrPqng1A.dpuf>