

WHAT IN THE WORLD?

LEVEL 2 (GRADES 8 AND UP)

Manitoba's Social Media Ban

Free
Sample

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SAMPLE EDITION
2025/2026: ISSUE 8

WHAT IN THE WORLD?

Level 2, 2025/2026: Issue 8

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HAY'SXW'QA!

LesPlan is grateful to the Lkwungen Peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, on whose unceded land we now live, and do our work.

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I have had many parents comment to me about how great they think *What in the World?* is, and they look forward to each month's issue coming home... This is a great resource for a small country school to explore the global issues that affect us all.

K. Camelon, Grade 7/8 teacher

Admaston, ON



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WHAT YOU'RE MISSING



NATIONAL

OPERATION NANOOK-NUNALIVUT



It was a show of strength—and it was meant to be. Between mid-February and mid-April, some 1300 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel and Canadian Rangers took part in Operation NANOOK-NUNALIVUT, a series of exercises in the frozen Arctic and other . . .

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INTERNATIONAL

THE 'BEAUTIFUL GAME' COMES CALLING



On June 12, a referee's whistle will echo through the newly renamed Toronto Stadium to usher in the first-ever Men's FIFA World Cup match on Canadian soil. A sold-out crowd of some 45,000 spectators will cheer loudly as the Canadian Men's National Soccer . . .

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SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

THE BOSS IS BACK IN BANFF



When a large grizzly bear, still groggy from a long winter, ambled into view in Banff National Park, photographer Chris Bloodoff didn't need a second look. He's been watching the same bear for seven years. "It's kind of like almost seeing your old buddy, really," Mr. Bloodoff told . . .

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- S. Giffin, Dartmouth, NS



NATIONAL

MANITOBA EYES NEW SOCIAL MEDIA LAW

– PROPOSAL WOULD BAN TIKTOK AND OTHERS FOR THOSE UNDER 16

BEFORE READING

1. Ask students to find a partner and randomly assign each partner "For" or "Against" before revealing the topic.
2. Next, write the following statement on the board:
"Canada should follow in the footsteps of Manitoba to ban social media and AI for youth under 16."
3. Allow students two minutes to think about their side of the argument and to jot down some point form notes.
4. Tell students that they will each have two minutes to share their ideas, without any interruption from their partner. Begin with the "Fors".
5. Open up the discussion for another two minutes for partners to ask each other questions.
6. Debrief main ideas on both sides of the argument as a class.
7. Have students view the following video that shares arguments from both sides on a social media ban for youth:
<https://ici.radio-canada.ca/rci/en/news/2251336/would-manitobas-social-media-ban-actually-protect-kids> [4:57]
8. Invite students to set a purpose for reading the article (perhaps using one of the unanswered questions from the Before Reading activity), referring to the resource page **Setting A Purpose Before Reading** as needed.



Social media platter

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Social_media_platter.svg



MANITOBA EYES NEW SOCIAL MEDIA LAW

— PROPOSAL WOULD BAN TIKTOK AND OTHERS FOR THOSE UNDER 16



Picture this: you wake up, reach for your phone—and TikTok is gone. Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube—all locked. The reason? The government has just made it illegal for you to use these apps.

That's not a **hypothetical**. That's what Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew announced on April 25. In a move that made headlines, he declared that the prairie province would be the first to prohibit kids under 16 from accessing TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, X, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitch, as well as AI sites like ChatGPT.

Proposals are also under review to limit late-night notifications, scrolling feeds, and targeted ads—features critics say are habit-forming. Manitoba is exploring ways to give parents more control over their kid's social media use, too, with tools that could restrict teens' screen time during certain hours.

KEEPING KIDS SAFE

Those moves could have a real impact. While Manitoba-specific numbers are not available, national data shows cellphone ownership among

teens is extremely high. A study by MediaSmarts found that 81 percent of Canadian youth aged 12 and 13 owned a smartphone, rising to 93 percent among teens aged 14 to 17.

At the start of the 2024-2025 school year, Manitoba already banned cellphone use for all students in Grade 8 and under, while those in high school can't access their phones during instructional time.

Now Manitoba is going further. Why? The short answer: mental health. Mr. Kinew's government argues that social media features such as likes, comments, and **algorithm**-driven feeds keep users scrolling. For teens, whose brains are still developing, that can be addictive. What's more, social media often exposes young people to cyberbullying, misinformation, and unrealistic images of bodies and lifestyles.

In fact, studies from groups like the Canadian Paediatric Society and the **WHO** have linked heavy screen time and social media use to issues such as anxiety, depression, sleep disruption, and low self-esteem in adolescents.

As well, Statistics Canada reported that in 2018, 25 percent of kids between the ages of 12 and 17 were cyberbullied—most commonly online or through texted threats and insults. StatsCan also found that the more time kids spend on their smartphones, the more likely they are to be victimized.

That's a real problem. A 2026 Canadian study commissioned by Rogers Communications found that young people aged 11 to 17 were spending over five hours a day on their phones, far above the two-hour daily recreational screen time guideline recommended by the Canadian Paediatric Society.

ENFORCING THE LAW

Premier Kinew isn't shy about placing blame squarely on the tech giants. He's compared social media to vaping—something that might feel normal but causes real damage.

So he has made clear that the responsibility for enforcement won't fall on kids or parents. The companies themselves—Meta, OpenAI, Snapchat, and others—would be required to use

DEFINITIONS

ALGORITHM: a set of step-by-step instructions a computer follows to solve a problem or make a decision

HYPOTHETICAL: based on an idea or situation that isn't real but is imagined for discussion or thinking

WHO (WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION): a UN agency which coordinates responses to global public health issues and emergencies

age-verification technology to keep underage users off their platforms.

And if they don't comply? The fines could be enormous. Mr. Kinew has hinted at extreme penalties. "They're going to be bigger fines than you've ever seen in Manitoba before," the premier said.

LEARNING FROM AUSTRALIA

There's no start date for the ban, and the full details of how age verification would work haven't been released. So to understand where Manitoba is headed, it helps to look at Australia.

In December 2025, the down-under nation of 27 million became the first to ban social media for users under 16. Social media companies were required to deactivate accounts belonging to underage users and to prevent younger teens from creating new accounts. Those who did not faced fines of up to \$49 million Canadian.

The results were mixed. A month after the law took effect, nearly five million accounts belonging to young Australians were deactivated. But researchers also noticed something else. Many kids simply migrated to platforms that weren't included in the ban or found workarounds—like altering their appearance slightly to fool facial-recognition age checks.

Technology analyst Carmi Levy says this is exactly why Manitoba's plan includes AI chatbots in addition to social media.

"Kids are managing to bypass [the law] in Australia, and I think we would have to expect that the same thing would happen here," Mr. Levy said. But he added that the goal isn't perfection. "The trick is to ensure that the vast majority of kids are targeted, that the majority of kids are given other alternatives to **unmitigated** social

media access and that their safety is maximized."

TEENS RESPOND

Not surprisingly, young people have a lot to say about a law that directly affects them—and the reaction is far from unanimous.

Some teens agree with the proposed law, especially when it comes to AI. But others worry about what gets lost. Lily Wassing, 16, says restricting AI is okay, but cutting off other social media could hurt teens' ability to connect.

One of the most pointed criticisms came from Quinn Bloomfield, 18. He agreed with the goal of protecting kids online but was frustrated by how the decision was made.

"There's just a ban for this group of people who don't have a voice as is," he said. "They can't vote, they don't really have the ability to put their input into what's going on, and this is one more thing that we've just thrust upon them without offering any solutions."

He suggested the province invest in spaces for teens to gather and socialize as part of any online restrictions.

ELSEWHERE IN CANADA

Manitoba may be the first province to announce a ban, but it likely won't be the last to consider it.

British Columbia's attorney general, Niki Sharma, said the province will look at similar measures if Ottawa doesn't act first. For his part, Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe says he plans to consult the public about a potential ban. And Quebec has its own movement pushing for under-16 restrictions.

At the federal level, the Liberal Party recently passed a **non-binding resolution** calling for national age restrictions on social media. Canada

DID YOU KNOW?

Manitoba's population is 1.5 million and there are about 1.4 million cellphone subscriptions in the province. However, that number includes people with multiple devices and business accounts.

The average age in Manitoba is 39.7. Children aged 15 and under make up 18.8 percent of the population or about 270,000.

Manitoba is one of five provinces with more young people (15 to 24) than older individuals (55 to 64). For every potential retiree aged 55 to 64, there are 1.20 Manitobans aged 15 to 24.

tried to safeguard kids from social media before. The Online Harms Act, a law proposed in 2024, required tech companies to better protect children from troubling content. But the bill stalled and didn't become law. The government will likely try again.

A BROADER TREND

The Manitoba legislature could fast track the proposed social media ban law now, but it's more likely to be introduced this fall.

The province is just one of many governments grappling with the same issue: has the harm caused by social media gotten bad enough to justify government intervention?

Various U.S. states believe it has. They've introduced laws requiring parental consent for minors to open accounts. Also, countries like China, France, Denmark, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand have introduced or are considering severe restrictions.

But for now in Canada, Manitoba's teens are the ones who would actually live under this prohibition. How they respond—and whether the ban helps—will have an impact on what the rest of the country does. ★

DEFINITIONS

NON-BINDING RESOLUTION: an official statement that shows what a government thinks or supports, but it does not create a law

UNMITIGATED: not reduced, softened, or made less severe in any way



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the population of Manitoba?

2. What is the average age? What segment of the population is 15 years and under?

3. How many cellphones are in use in Manitoba?

4. How many 12 and 13-year-old kids in Canada have cellphones? How many teens aged 14 to 17 own cellphones?

5. What does the Canadian Paediatric Society recommend is a safe amount of daily screen time for youth? How much time are young people actually spending on their phones?

6. What are the current rules for cellphone use in Manitoba schools?

7. Name the premier of Manitoba. What did he announce in late April?

8. What other restrictions are also being considered?

9. What reasons did the Manitoba government give for these proposed restrictions?

10. How will the new rules be enforced? Explain.



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QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew recently stated: *"I think it's really important for the mental health of young people and just the freedom of young people to be kids while they're growing up."* What is your understanding of this quote? Do you agree or disagree with his perspective? Give reasons to support your ideas.

2. Australia has had a social media ban for youth under 16 in place for about 4 months, the first country to do so. According to experts, many Australian kids are bypassing the law by migrating to platforms that weren't included in the ban. Technology analyst Carmi Levy states: *"The trick is to ensure that the vast majority of kids are targeted, that the majority of kids are given other alternatives to unmitigated social media access."* As you see it, what types of alternatives would help to limit youth exposure to social media? Give examples to support your ideas.

3. Other provinces, territories, and the Canadian government are considering following Manitoba's initiative to prohibit access to certain social media platforms and AI sites. How would you react if this were to happen in Canada? How would such a law change how you communicate with your peers and your daily routines? Give reasons to support your response.



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QUESTIONS FOR ONLINE EXPLORATION

Note: The links below are listed at www.lesplan.com/links for easy access.

1. Learn more about Manitoba’s plan to ban social media for youth:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P767gyGwhnw> [3:41]

What did you learn?

2. Hear from youth in Manitoba about what this proposed ban means for them:

<https://www.cbc.ca/kidsnews/post/watch-manitoba-announces-canadas-1st-social-media-ban-what-teens-think> [0:51]

Do you agree or disagree with their ideas? Explain.

3. Explore some of the challenges in enforcing this ban:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/ai-social-media-youth-ban-experts-9.7178638> [1:54]

What questions do you have?

4. Learn more about Australia’s efforts to ban social media for youth and the progress they’ve made with this initiative:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwyp9d3dddqyo>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/au-social-ban-begins-9.7007357>

<https://www.cnews.fr/france/2026-04-10/interdiction-des-reseaux-sociaux-aux-moins-de-16-ans-en-australie-le-systeme-est>

What can we learn from Australia's example?

5. Learn why social media bans are becoming more common:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8krDm4883JE&list=PLC-psp4a5OpsA9lO_Y-EitCrEwSN4h6bp&ind [30:03]

6. Learn what health organizations say about the potential dangers of social media for youth:

<https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/25-09-2024-teens--screens-and-mental-health>

<https://healthyscreenuse.cps.ca/answers/age-bans>

What did you learn?



INFOGRAPHIC

Australia bans social media for kids

Social media companies in Australia must take “reasonable steps” to ensure that children under the age of 16 cannot engage with their platforms and that all existing accounts in that age range are deleted

BANNED APPS



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM



KICK



REDDIT



SNAPCHAT



THREADS



TIKTOK



TWITCH



X (TWITTER)



YOUTUBE



■ **Dec 10, 2025:** New law – world-first policy popular with parents – begins following government study that concluded **96% of children aged 10-15** used social media and that **seven out of 10** of them had been exposed to bullying and harmful content, such as misogynistic material and pro-suicide themes

■ **Feb 10:** Marks annual **Safer Internet Day**, which sees 180 nations draw attention to issue

ALLOWED APPS



DISCORD



GITHUB



CLASSROOM*



LEGO PLAY



MESSANGER



PINTEREST



ROBLOX



STEAM†



WHATSAPP



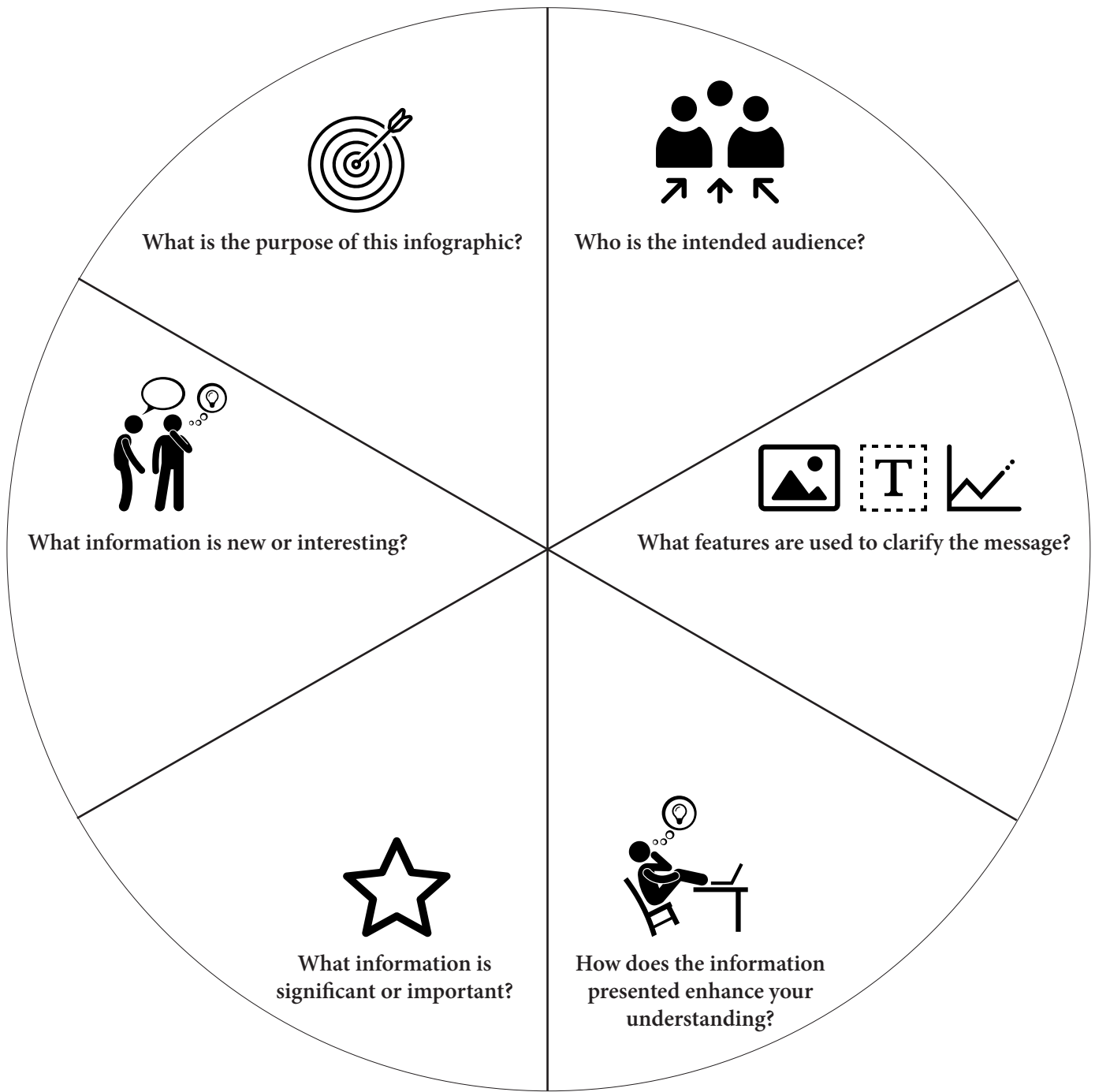
YT KIDS‡

Current as of Nov 21, 2025 – lists open to re-evaluation. *Google Classroom. †Includes Steam Chat.

‡YouTube Kids. Sources: BBC, Australia eSafety Commissioner Picture: Unsplash © GRAPHIC NEWS



ANALYZING AN INFOGRAPHIC



What questions do you still have about the topic presented?



NATIONAL

MANITOBA EYES NEW SOCIAL MEDIA LAW

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EDITORIAL CARTOON



YOUR TASK:

Examine the editorial cartoon. Then, use the questions below to help you decode the cartoon's message. Be specific and include as many details as possible in your answers.

INITIAL READING: What can an initial look reveal?

1. Glance quickly at the cartoon. What is your first impression – your “gut response”?
2. Consider your background knowledge. What do you already know about the context of the cartoon – the time, place or situation? (List key facts.)

CLOSER LOOK: What's happening in the cartoon?

3. Describe what you *see* and *read* in the cartoon.

DRAW CONCLUSIONS: What overall impression can you draw?

4. Identify possible biases. Whose perspective or point of view is expressed in the cartoon?
5. Explain the overall message of the cartoon in a paragraph. (Remember, a good interpretation is *specific* and *detailed*.) ★

Complete this map assignment to better understand the article *Manitoba Eyes New Social Media Ban*.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Obtain the required resources and read **all** the instructions before starting.
2. Colour your map **after** all labelling is completed.
3. Print in pencil only first, then go over the printing in black ink.
4. Work carefully and neatly.

Resources Required: pencil, black pen, pencil crayons, ruler, eraser and an atlas.

Part A Locate and label the following provinces in CAPITAL letters and shade each as indicated:

Saskatchewan (green) Manitoba (orange)

Part B Locate and label the capital city of each province above and underline each city name.

Part C Locate and label the following province, territories and U.S. states in CAPITAL letters and shade each as indicated:

Ontario (red) Northwest Territories (pink)
Nunavut (yellow) Montana (red)
North Dakota (brown) Minnesota (purple)

Part D Locate and label the following Manitoba cities and towns:

Brandon Steinbach
Thompson Portage la Prairie
Winkler The Pas
Churchill

Part E Draw and label the following and shade each river light blue:

Churchill River Nelson River
Saskatchewan River Assiniboine River
Red River

Part F Locate and label the following and shade all fresh water light blue:

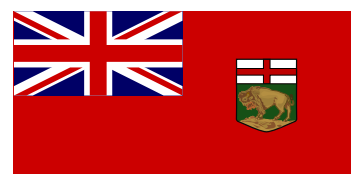
Reindeer Lake Cedar Lake
Lake Winnipegosis Lake Manitoba
Lake Winnipeg Lake of the Woods

Part G Locate and label Hudson Bay and shade all ocean water dark blue.

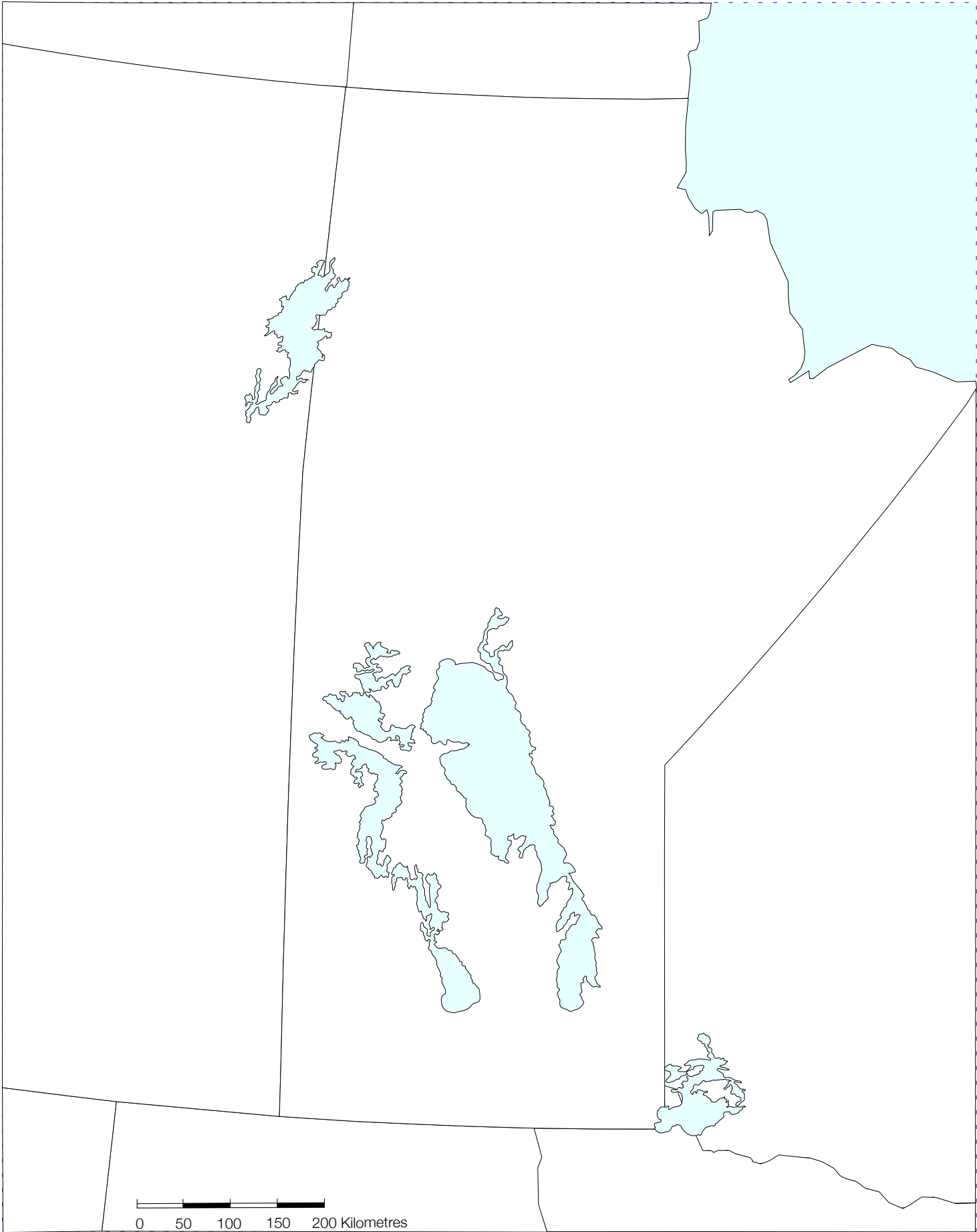
Part H Locate and label the following lines of latitude:

49° N 60° N

Part L Complete your map with a frame, title and compass. ★



Manitoba





MANITOBA EYES NEW SOCIAL MEDIA LAW

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PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

A. Write the letter that corresponds to the best answer on the line beside each question:

_____ 1. Which country was the first to prevent kids from accessing social media?

- a) Texas
- b) New Zealand
- c) Australia
- d) France
- e) Japan

_____ 2. Who is the premier of Manitoba?

- a) Scott Moe
- b) Mark Carney
- c) Richard Wagner
- d) Wab Kinew
- e) Doug Ford

_____ 3. How many Manitoba residents are 15 years old and under?

- a) 270,000
- b) 360,000
- c) 475,000
- d) 640,000
- e) 1.5 million

B. Mark the statements T (True) or F (False). If a statement is True, write one important fact to support it on the line below. If a statement is False, write the words that make it true on the line below.

_____ 4. **True or False?** 81 percent of Canadian youth aged 12 and 13 have a cellphone.

_____ 5. **True or False?** There is a total ban on cellphones in all Manitoba schools.

_____ 6. **True or False?** Manitoba parents and teachers will be responsible for enforcing the new social media ban.

C. Fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.

7. The Canadian Paediatric Society recommends _____ hours of daily screen time for youth.

8. There are _____ million cellphone subscribers in Manitoba.

9. WHO = World _____ Organization.

D. Respond to the following question in paragraph form. (Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.)

10. As you see it, what is the significance of this story? Give reasons to support your response.



SETTING A PURPOSE BEFORE READING

There are a number of reasons we read, and setting a purpose for reading – knowing WHY we are reading – helps us to focus on important information and to better understand and remember what we read. It also helps us decide HOW we will read the text.

We don't read all texts for the same purposes or in the same way. For example, we read an instruction manual for a new Blu-ray player for a different reason than we read a book or a website. How we will read it – the strategies we use – will also differ. We are more likely to skim to find the information we need in a manual. Once we find what we need, we might read the instructions carefully to figure out what to do. Then, we stop reading, put the manual down, and carry out the steps. We may have to reread if we get confused or forget what to do.

This is a very different approach than the one we would use to read a book. When we read a book, we usually read cover-to-cover. We read carefully so we don't miss any details because we want to understand the whole story. Sometimes we make connections or create images in our minds as we read to help us better understand what we are reading. Depending on its length, we may put the book down before we finish reading it but we will start reading where we left off.

Good readers are flexible and responsive. This means that they match their reading strategies to their purpose for reading. What types of text do you read? Why do you read them? What strategies do you use to read each of these texts? The chart below is a summary of the main purposes for reading and what each entails.

Purpose for reading	What it looks like
For enjoyment	Usually student-selected. Allows students to choose a variety of genres and forms. Allows students to pursue what interests them while developing reading skills.
To experience something new	Students make connections between their personal experiences and those of people around the world.
To learn more about themselves and others	Students reflect on what they've read and express opinions and perspectives. Students develop a sense of their personal values and make sense of the world around them.
To gain information	Students use the features of informational texts to gather, analyse and apply what they've learned.
To understand issues	Students develop a sense of perspective. Students pose questions, acknowledge other points of view, critique the opinions presented and support opinions with evidence.
To appreciate writing	Students respond to text in ways other than written answers to apply what they've learned in new contexts.
To appreciate use of media to communicate	Students respond to a variety of media formats (e.g., infographics, political cartoons, videos, etc.) and react to how the format supports the meaning of the message.

* Chart adapted from: A Guide to Effective Literacy Instruction, Grades 4-6, p. 11.



ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

This rubric may be helpful in providing students with formative, strength-based feedback and/or assessing students' responses holistically.

	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending
Supports thinking	Answers or reflections are brief and include obvious facts/details/evidence.	Answers or reflections are general and supported with some relevant facts/details/evidence.	Answers or reflections are clearly supported with specific, relevant facts/details/evidence.	Answers or reflections are insightful and supported with specific, relevant facts/details/evidence.
Shows understanding	Responses show a basic understanding of the text, topic, issue or message.	Responses are thoughtful and show a general understanding of the text, topic, issue or message.	Responses are thoughtful and show a complete understanding of the text, topic, issue or message.	Responses are insightful and show a deep understanding of the text, topic, issue or message. May synthesize ideas or explain the 'so what'.
Thinks critically	Makes straightforward connections or inferences. Focuses on retelling.	Makes logical connections to self (T:S) and/or background knowledge (T:S). Inferences are logical.	Makes meaningful connections to self. Considers ideas between texts (T:T). Inferences are plausible.	Makes powerful connections that go between texts and/or beyond the text (T:W). Inferences are plausible and insightful.

Current Events, Clearly Explained



Students want to know what's happening in their world – but the news can be difficult and time-consuming to teach.

WE HAVE THE SOLUTION. (Four, actually.)

The Canadian Reader

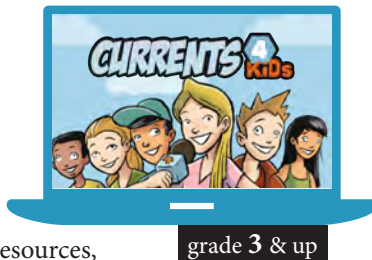
- ✓ PDF/Word resource
- ✓ Clearly written, leveled Canadian current events articles
- ✓ Literacy-based lesson plans
- ✓ Engaging, original illustrations
- ✓ Comics
- ✓ Map assignments



Product details: 8 issues. 38 pages. Available in English and in French for grades 3 and up (1 reading level).

Currents4Kids.com

- ✓ Online and interactive
- ✓ Weekly
- ✓ Auto-graded quizzes
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Product details: 40 issues.

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News4Youth.com

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- ✓ Reader responses
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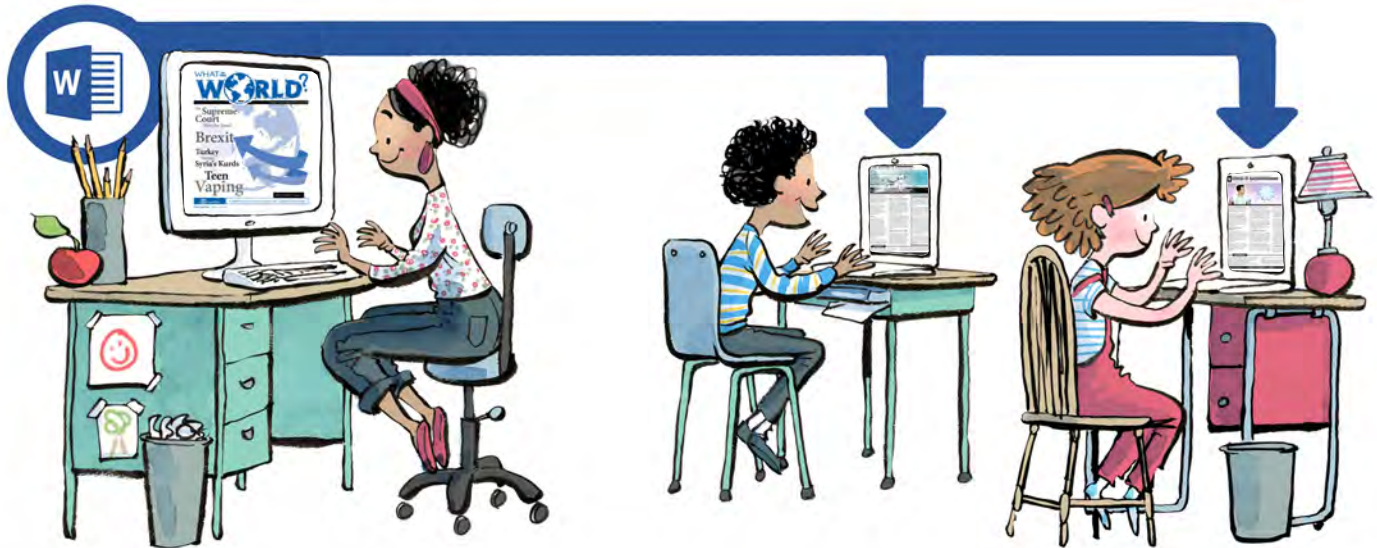
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Students Can Work In Word/Google Docs...



Did you know...

... that each issue of *What In The World?* includes a PDF file (complete document) and a Word file (articles and questions only).

Students can complete assignments directly in the Word file. Teachers can email the file to students or post it on the Internet. The Word file also allows teachers to:

- easily modify and format content including changing **fonts** and **text sizes**
- create a PDF document and use **Adobe Reader's** 'Read Out Loud Mode'
- save paper and copying costs and help protect the environment
- promote and encourage students' computer skills

Data in the Word file

There are **three** ways to access data from a Word file:

- 1) Select the data you wish to **Copy** and then **Paste** it into any word processing program. Use **Select All** to copy the entire document.
- 2) Import the entire **Word** file into **LibreOffice** (or another similar program) and then save as a new file.
- 3) Create a new file in a different format. Use the **Word Save As** command to choose: 1) plain text, 2) rich text format (RTF), 3) Web page (.htm), 4) PDF, etc.

Google Docs and LibreOffice

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