

The Canadian Reader

Current Canadian events and issues for students in Grades 3 and up



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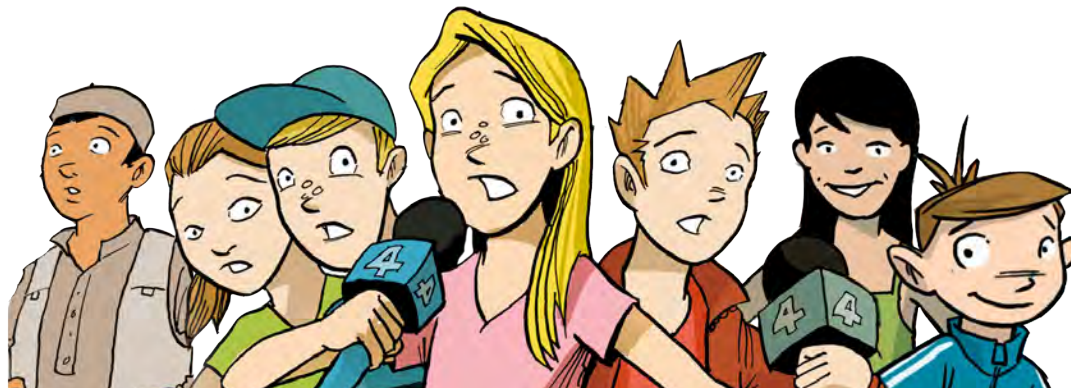
Includes

- A News Story
- Lesson Plan
- Organizer

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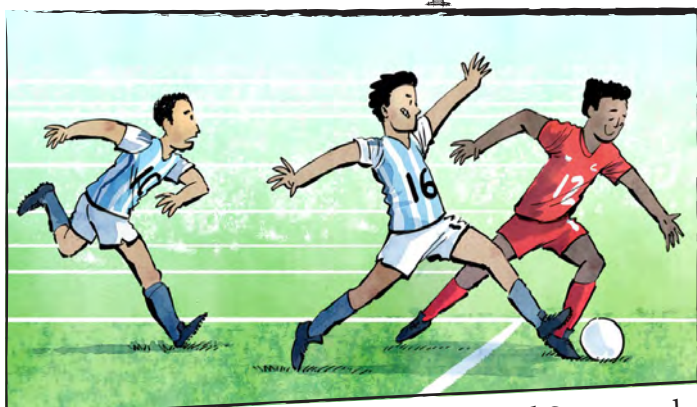
4 Free Article: Tofino Plastic Water Bottles
6 Comprehension Check | 7 Language Focus
8 Lesson Plan

11 Determining Cause and Effect | 12 Map: Southwest B.C.



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FIFA World Cup



Three host countries: Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Forty-eight teams. One hundred and four soccer matches. The biggest FIFA World Cup ever "kicks off" in June . . .

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The New Governor General



On May 5, 2026, Louise Arbour was named as Canada's next governor general (GG). She will be sworn in on June 8, 2026.

Ms. Arbour will be Canada's 31st governor general. She replaces Mary Simon . . .

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With a subscription, you'll receive **eight full issues**.

Each issue combines current **Canadian events and issues** with **geography** to expand students' knowledge of Canada while enhancing their ability to read and understand informational text.

Three **levelled news stories** are accompanied by detailed **literacy-based lesson plans, organizers, and criteria for assessment**, as well as comprehension checks and a language focus.

"Your package will be a part of my classroom for many years to come!!!"

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"I love this publication! It is an excellent complement to my Social Studies curriculum and the activities enable me to cover many provincial outcomes."

- S. Giffin, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

"When I have kids in grade 4/5 wanting to know when the next issue is coming, even in December and June, that's when I know I have an excellent resource."

- A. Eisler, Burnaby, B.C.

The Canadian Reader

Current Canadian events and issues for students in grades 3 and up.

The Canadian Reader is published eight times during the school year in English and in French from September through May by LesPlan Educational Services Ltd.

Subscribe to **The Canadian Reader** at a cost of \$230 per year (\$28.75 per issue), by contacting us at:

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How to use this resource:

The Canadian Reader is a made-in-Canada teaching and learning resource featuring all-Canadian content. It has three main components; use the entire package, or pick and choose the pages that suit your class the best.

1. **Literacy Focus** – This generic lesson plan focuses on seven key non-fiction reading comprehension strategies, presented in the following order:

Issue 1: *Using Text Features*

Issue 2: *Making Connections*

Issue 3: *Visualizing*

Issue 4: *Asking Questions*

Issue 5: *Making Inferences*

Issue 6: *Determining Importance*

Issue 7: *Transforming/Synthesizing*

Issue 8: *Reading Strategies Review and Assessment*

Teachers may introduce and practice each month's strategy using any of the articles in the issue, or save it for another time or text.

2. **Canadian news stories** – Each of the three articles is leveled and accompanied by Comprehension Check questions, a Language Focus, and a literacy-based lesson plan and supporting materials. Teach the lessons as they are presented, or pick and choose the activities and assignments you'd like to explore with your students.

3. **Did You Know? comic** – This comic provides basic information about a current news story or event, or supports one of the articles with background information. It's a great way to engage reluctant readers and build students' background knowledge in a fun and graphic way.

Note: All URLs referenced in **The Canadian Reader** are posted as links on our student website at <http://www.lesplan.com/en/links>. Bookmark this URL on your school's computer network to give students easy access to our recommended sites.

Share **The Canadian Reader** with other staff members in your school, including itinerant, relief, and substitute teachers.

Tofino **NO** Plastic Water Bottles



Tofino sits on the west coast of Vancouver Island. It's famous for its beautiful beaches. Tourists visit the remote location to hike, surf, and enjoy nature.

On April 22, 2026, Tofino celebrated Earth Day in a big way. It banned single-use plastic water bottles. It is the first Canadian municipality to do so.

There are some exceptions to Tofino's bottle ban. The ban applies only to bottles that hold one litre of water or less. Water bottles sold in packages

Plastic is made from fossil fuels like oil and natural gas. These are non-renewable resources.



or flats are allowed. During emergencies the ban will be lifted.

A plastic problem

In Tofino, shoreline cleanups help keep the beaches beautiful. Some of the most common items found during those cleanups? Single-use plastic bottles.

The problem goes beyond Tofino. Vancouver Island's west coast is lined with beaches. Some are easy to get to, some are remote. Since 2015, more than 60,000 plastic bottles have been picked up from those beaches.

The bottles also find their way into the ocean.

Plastic bottles are dangerous to wildlife in many ways. For example, animals can eat sharp pieces of plastic. This can injure or even kill them.

Over time, plastic waste breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces. The smallest are called microplastics.

Microplastics are difficult to see. Even so, they can harm or even poison animals. As bigger animals eat smaller ones, microplastics move up the food chain.

Plastics leak toxins into the water, too. These toxins affect all aquatic life.

Sustainable ways

Dan Law is the mayor of Tofino. He says everyone wants to see less plastic waste. “We see it in the landfill, we see it in the beaches,” he said. “We’re acting not to be first, but because we have to.”

Tofino visitors should bring their own reusable water bottles.

Water bottle refill stations will be found in public facilities. Local businesses can also install them. Tofino is providing “free water refills here” decals. That will let people know where to go.

More than words

Tofino has long been a leader when it comes to the environment. It has already banned other single-use plastic items. These include bags, straws, and utensils. Styrofoam containers are also banned.

“Protecting the health of our coastlines requires more than just words,” says Mayor Law. “It requires a collective shift in how we live and do business.”

What do you think? Should other places follow in Tofino’s footsteps?



Do you agree with the ban?
Why or why not?



Did you know?
Over 5.3 million bottles of water are sold in Canada every day!

Tofino **NO** Plastic Water Bottles

Comprehension Check

Write the letter of the *best* answer in the space beside each question.

- _____ 1. What is Tofino famous for?
- a) Champion surfers. b) Fossil fuels.
c) Beautiful beaches. d) Dangerous wildlife.
- _____ 2. Which water bottles are still allowed under Tofino's ban?
- a) One-litre bottles.
b) No water bottles are allowed at all.
c) Bottles sold in packages.
d) Bottles sold near the beach.
- _____ 3. How many plastic bottles have been picked up from Vancouver Island's west coast since 2015?
- a) More than 60,000. b) Millions.
c) Less than 50,000. d) Around 2000.
- _____ 4. What are microplastics?
- a) A special type of beach rock.
b) Small pieces of broken-down plastic.
c) Plastic pieces used for recycling.
d) Single-use water bottles.
- _____ 5. What can visitors to Tofino do instead of buying plastic water bottles?
- a) Buy glass water bottles. b) Drink only juice.
c) Avoid drinking water. d) Bring their own reusable bottles.

Tofi **NO** Plastic Water Bottles

Language Focus



Match each word from the list below with its correct definition:

ban emergency injure landfill

microplastics municipality remote reusable



sustainable tourists toxins wildlife



1. _____ far away and hard to get to
2. _____ a serious situation that needs quick action
3. _____ tiny pieces of broken-down plastic
4. _____ animals living in nature
5. _____ to hurt or harm
6. _____ harmful chemicals or poisons
7. _____ a place where garbage is buried
8. _____ something that can be used over again
9. _____ able to continue without harming nature
10. _____ a city, town, or area with its own local government
11. _____ to officially stop or not allow something
12. _____ people who travel to visit a place for fun

Lesson Plan

Before Reading:

Literacy Focus: *Cause & effect and inferencing*

- Write the following scenarios (causes) on the board:
 - Leaving garbage at the beach
 - Bringing a reusable bag to the store
 - Leaving water bottles on the field after a game
 - Forgetting your reusable water bottle at home
- Explain that actions often cause something else to happen. The action is called the **cause**, and what happens because of it is called the **effect**.
- Facilitate a *Think-Pair-Share* discussion. Ask students:
 - What effects might happen because of each action?
 - Which effects might happen right away?
 - Which effects might happen over time?
- Record students' ideas.
- Next, introduce the idea that one action can create multiple effects. Some effects may be:
 - *short-term*: happen quickly or solve an immediate problem;
 - *long-term*: happen over time or have lasting impacts;
 - *intended*: have planned or expected results;
 - *unintended*: have unexpected or unplanned results.
- As a class, sort several student responses into these categories. You may wish to model one example together:
 - *Cause*: Athletes leave disposable water bottles on the field after a game or practice.
 - *Short-term effects*: garbage builds up quickly; custodians or volunteers need to clean up the field.
 - *Long-term effects*: plastic waste accumulates over time; more pollution enters the environment; schools or sports organizations may create new rules.
 - *Intended effect*: the bottles provide a convenient way for athletes to stay hydrated.
 - *Unintended effects*: more environmental waste is created; clean-up takes time and money; wildlife may be harmed if bottles are not disposed of properly.
- Emphasize that sometimes readers need to *infer* effects that are not directly stated in the text. Good readers combine facts from the article, what they already know, and logical thinking to make likely conclusions.
- Tell students they will read about a community that noticed a growing problem with plastic waste. As they read, they'll think about the causes that led to Tofino's bottle ban, and the short-term, long-term, intended, and unintended effects the ban may have on people, wildlife, and the environment.

Lesson Plan

During Reading:

- As students read the article, have them highlight important information about Tofino's decision to ban single-use plastic water bottles. Ask them to mark the text:
 - C = causes or reasons why the ban was introduced;
 - E = effects or results of the ban.
- Encourage students to think about which effects are immediate? Which effects may happen over time? Which effects seem intended? Which effects might be unintended?
- Remind students that an event or decision can have more than one cause, one action can create many effects, and some effects may need to be inferred rather than directly stated. For example, this article may not directly say that fewer plastic bottles could help wildlife in the future, but readers can infer this using evidence from the text and their background knowledge.

After Reading:

- Distribute **Determining Cause and Effect** organizer (p. 21) to each student or pair. Review the purpose together: *What are the effects of Tofino's ban on plastic water bottles?*
- Direct students to use the title, section headings, and key facts from the article to identify: *causes* leading to the ban; *short-term* and *long-term effects*; and *intended* and *unintended* consequences.
- You may wish to model the first entry using the introduction.
 - Cause:** *Tofino is famous for its beautiful beaches and natural environment.*
 - Short-term intended effect:** *The area attracts visitors who hike, surf, and enjoy nature.*
 - Long-term unintended effect:** *Large number of visitors may increase pollution and plastic waste, which can harm beaches, waterways, and wildlife habitats.*
- After completing the organizer, ask students to write a short reflection explaining:
What is the most important effect that Tofino's ban on plastic water bottles could have on wildlife, land, waterways, or people?
- Criteria for Assessment:** A powerful response *is informed* (based on evidence from the text), *convincing* (clearly identifies and explains causes and effects), and *thoughtful* (demonstrates thoughtful understanding of the environmental impact of Tofino's decision).

Extensions:

- Conduct a Values Line:** Pose the question: *Should our community follow in Tofino's footsteps?* Invite students to research how plastic waste affects wildlife, waterways, human activities, natural environments, food sources, and communities. Encourage students to consider short-term and long-term consequences and intended and unintended effects. Clear a space in the room, using painter's tape to create a long line. Label one end "Strongly Agree" and the opposite end "Strongly Disagree." Once students are positioned, invite them to discuss their thinking with classmates nearby. Then, ask several students from different places on the line to explain their reasoning. Encourage students to move if discussion changes their thinking.

Lesson Plan

- Learn More About Ocean Plastics Pollution:** Use the links in *Internet Connections* to explore how plastic pollution affects oceans and marine life. Then, direct students to complete a cause-and-effect organizer showing the causes of ocean plastic pollution, immediate and long-term effects, and intended or unintended consequences for marine ecosystems. See the *Teacher's Corner* for suggested organizers.

Internet Connections:

- Read more about this news story:
<https://www.ctvnews.ca/vancouver/article/plastic-water-bottle-ban-in-tofino-bc-a-first-among-canadian-municipalities/>
<https://tofino.ca/tofino-makes-history-on-earth-day-as-canadas-first-municipality-to-ban-single-use-plastic-water-bottles/>
<https://youtu.be/P61v76gwbUw?si=3szvwy57jRccBclr>
- Learn more about plastic pollution in oceans:
<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/hazards/marinedebris/plastics-in-the-ocean.html>
<https://ocean.org/pollution-plastics/>
<https://theoceancleanup.com/ocean-plastic-pollution-explained/>
<https://oceana.ca/en/plastics/>
- See how you can protect the ocean from plastic:
<https://ocean.org/pollution-plastics/plastic-reduction/>

Teacher's Corner:

- Cause and effect organizers:
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Freebie-Editable-Cause-and-Effect-Organizer-2051833>
<https://www.canva.com/templates/s/cause-and-effect/>

Note: All URLs are posted as links at <http://www.lesplan.com/links>

Tofino ~~NO~~ Plastic Water Bottles

Determining Cause and Effect

| | Cause | Short-term intended effect | Long-term unintended effect |
|-------------------|-------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A plastic problem | | | |
| | | | |
| Sustainable ways | | | |
| | | | |
| More than words | | | |
| | | | |

Map: Southwest B.C.

Complete this map assignment to help you better understand the context of the article *TofiNO Plastic Water Bottles*.

Label the following, then colour:

Canadian Cities and Towns

- Abbotsford
- Campbell River
- Nanaimo
- Port Alberni
- Port Hardy
- Powell River
- Squamish
- Tofino
- Ucluelet
- Vancouver
- Victoria
- Whistler

U.S. Cities

- Olympia
- Seattle

Salt Water

- Pacific Ocean
- Queen Charlotte Strait
- Salish Sea
- Strait of Juan de Fuca

Fresh Water

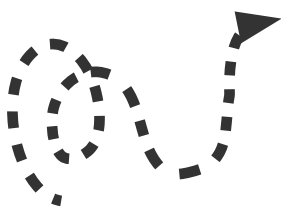
- Fraser River

Province

- British Columbia

Other

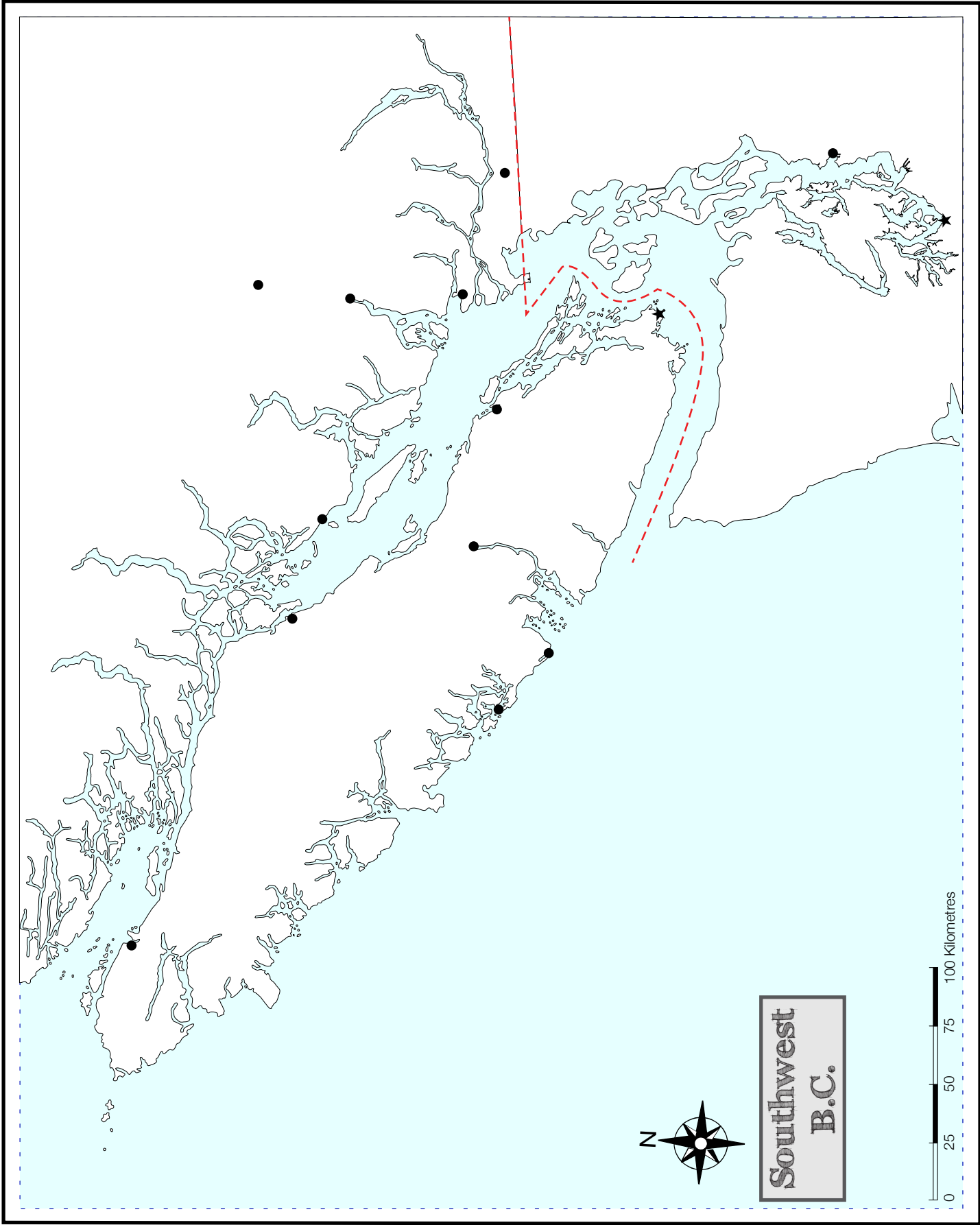
- United States
- Vancouver Island



Did You Know?

You can use the scale at the bottom of a map to calculate distances. How far is it from Vancouver to Tofino as the crow flies? From Tofino to Victoria? From Seattle to Tofino?

A good map is complete, accurate, and visually appealing.



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.

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The Canadian Reader

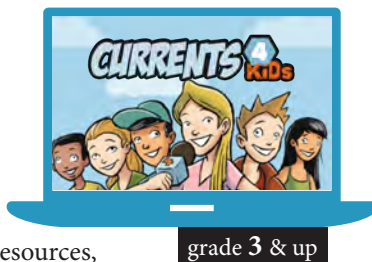
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Students can complete assignments directly in a **Word** file. Teachers can email the file to students or post it on the Internet. The **Word** file also allows teachers to:

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- create a PDF document and use **Adobe Reader's** 'Read Out Loud Mode'
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- 2) Import the entire **Word** file into **LibreOffice** (or another similar program) and then save as a new file.
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- **LibreOffice** is a free alternate to **Microsoft Office** and offers the same functionality. It's easy to install and use. See: www.libreoffice.org

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It is a relief to have a resource that fits with the curriculum and is teacher-friendly (ready to hand out). The added bonus of having the answers to the questions and discussion notes makes my life just a little bit easier.

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D. Faerber, Pembroke, ON

3 Literacy Focus: Reading Strategies Review and Assessment
6 Article: FIFA World Cup Comes to Canada!
14 Article: Tofino Plastic Water Bottles | 22 Map: Southwest B.C.
24 Article: Meet Canada's Next Governor General
32 The King and Canada | 34 Answer Key

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