

The Canadian Reader

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



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Teachers serving teachers since 1990

2024-2025: Issue 8

Please circulate to:

The Canadian Reader

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

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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 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.

Reading Strategies Assessment

- ☐ Review with students the reading comprehension strategies that they have learned and practiced this year using the **Reading Strategy Review** handout (p. 4). Which strategies have students used most? Which have they found easiest to use? Which have been more difficult? What reasons can students suggest to explain these observations?
- ☐ Choose one article from this issue to use to assess students' understanding of and ability to apply the reading strategies. Ask students to read this story independently. Then, have students use the article to complete the **Reading Strategies Assessment** (p. 5).
- ☐ **Rubric for Reading Strategies Assessment:** Use the rubric below to assess other oral, written, and anecdotal evidence of students' understanding of and ability to apply the following reading comprehension strategies, gathered throughout the year:

Asking Questions/Making Inferences

- 1 – Is not able to form a question about what has been read.
- 3 – Is able to ask simple questions about what has been read and is able to answer 'right there' questions accurately. Can ask/answer some simple 'in my head' questions (can make an inference).
- 5 – Can ask questions that demonstrate deep understanding of the text. Can clearly explain what an inference is and can make inferences that are thoughtful. Questions and inferences are relevant to the topic.

Determining Importance

- 1 – May be able to identify the topic.
- 3 – Can identify the topic and retell important ideas and some details. Can identify some key words.
- 5 – Can identify main ideas and key words, and is able to summarize in own words.

Making Connections

- 1 – Is unable to make connections to the text.
- 3 – Can make both personal connections and connections to background knowledge. Connections are meaningful (relevant to the content).
- 5 – Is able to make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. Can express how the connections have helped enhance understanding.

Transforming/Synthesizing

- 1 – Is not able to identify new thinking. May be able to retell but not rethink the text.
- 3 – Understands that readers sometimes develop new thoughts from reading. Is able to apply some of the reading strategies to the text. New thinking may be shown only with facts.
- 5 – Is able to find simple ways of rethinking the text. Independently uses all of the reading strategies. Uses experiences and text to identify a new perspective or thought that enhances meaning and deepens understanding.

Literacy Focus

Reading Strategy Review



. . . *make connections*. As they read they think about what the text reminds them of. This thinking – or reminding – is called *connecting*.

. . . *ask questions* before, during, and after they read. Sometimes, the answers to these questions can be found right in the story. Sometimes, the answer has to come from you.

. . . *visualize*. As they read, they make pictures or a movie in their head. These pictures or movies are called *visualizing*.

. . . *make inferences*. They fill in, in their heads, what is not written or shown on the page. *Predicting* is one kind of inference.

. . . *determine importance*. They sift and sort information in their heads, making decisions about what information they need to remember and what information they can ignore.

. . . *transform* their thinking. They add their background knowledge, their experience, and their thinking to what they are reading to come up with a new way to think about something.

Sources: Gear, Adrienne, *Nonfiction Reading Power*, Pembroke Publishers, c. 2008; Harvey, Stephanie and Goudvis, Anne, *Strategies That Work*, Stenhouse Publishers, c. 2000; and Hoyt, Linda, Mooney, Margaret, and Parkes, Brenda, *Exploring Informational Texts*, Heinemann, c. 2003.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Article title: _____

Reading Strategies Assessment

1. What is one meaningful connection you can make?

2. Write one 'right there' question that you have.

3. Write one 'in your head' question. Then, answer this question.

4. Write down important points from one section of the article. Then, write a nugget summarizing the most important points.

5. Explain how this article has changed your thinking on this topic.

A Kick in the Right Direction



On April 15, 2025, the Calgary Wild FC faced the Vancouver Rise FC at BC Place.

Canadian soccer star Quinn scored the first goal of the match. It was also the only goal of the match. Vancouver won 1-0.

Quinn's goal made history. It was the first goal ever scored in the Northern Super League (NSL)! The NSL is Canada's brand-new, professional women's soccer league.

A new challenge

Diane Matheson co-founded the NSL. Ms. Matheson knows a thing or two about soccer. She played 206 games for Canada's national soccer team. In 2012, she scored the goal that won Olympic bronze for Canada.

In 2021, Ms. Matheson retired. It was time for a new challenge.

Women's sports have never been more popular. Canada is home to soccer superstars, past and

present. In 2020, the Canadian women's soccer team won Olympic gold! And yet, Canada had no professional soccer league for women.

Ms. Matheson set out to change that.

A team effort

Building the league took years of hard work. It took teamwork, too. Luckily, soccer players are good at that.

Many team owners and investors are athletes. They want to support the new league.

Soccer fans will remember Christine Sinclair. Ms. Sinclair captained the Canadian national team before she retired. Now, she is a co-owner of the Vancouver Rise FC.

FC stands for Football Club. Throughout most of the world, soccer is known as football.



Starting with six

The NSL started with six teams. Vancouver Rise FC and Calgary Wild FC played the first game. The Halifax Tides FC, Montreal Roses FC, AFC Toronto, and Ottawa Rapid FC round out the league.

Ms. Matheson hopes to add more cities in a few years.

There will be 75 matches. Each team will have 25 chances to play. At the end of the season, the top four teams will make the playoffs.

Canadian talent

An NSL team can include up to 25 players. All but eight must be Canadian. The idea is to grow Canadian talent.

Casey Stoney coaches the Canadian Women's National Team. She knows how important a professional league can be. It builds communities and grows the fan base, she says. It lets young players

develop without leaving the country.

"I believe that's essential for the future of our game in Canada," said Ms. Stoney.

The youngest players in the league are Taegan and Keelyn Stewart. The 17-year-old twins will play for Calgary Wild FC. They're excited to finally play for their own country. "We're ready to show Canada what we've got," said Taegan.

A sport for everyone

The NSL may be a women's league, but Ms. Matheson knows it will have a wider reach.

The word 'women' is not part of the league's name. That's no accident. "We didn't put Canada in the title either," said Ms. Matheson. She wants people to know that soccer "is for everyone; this league is for everyone."



As you see it, what is the importance of the NSL?



A Kick in the Right Direction

Comprehension Check

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

_____ 1. Quinn scored the first goal in the Northern Super League.

_____ 2. The Canadian women's soccer team has never won Olympic gold.

_____ 3. Christine Sinclair is the co-owner of the Calgary Wild FC.

_____ 4. There are six teams in the NSL.

_____ 5. At the end of the season, four teams will make the playoffs.

_____ 6. Diana Matheson coaches the Canadian Women's National Team.

A Kick in the Right Direction

Language Focus



A **compound word** is formed when two words are joined to form a new word.



Compound words can be:

Closed – *joined together with no spaces* (e.g., spaceship)

Hyphenated – *joined with a hyphen* (e.g., part-time)

Open – *have a space in between but act as one idea* (e.g., ice cream)

Sort the compound words into the correct group:

playground

self-esteem

runner-up

fire truck

living room

football

toothpaste

check-in

swimming pool

mailbox

long-term

high school

Closed

Hyphenated

Open

What other words from the article can you add to each tag?

A Kick in the Right Direction

Lesson Plan

Before Reading:

- ☐ Using appropriate technology, project images of the NSL crests and key players from each team [see *The Teacher's Corner* in **Internet Connections**]. Facilitate a *Think-Pair-Share* discussion, inviting partners to discuss the images: *What do they notice? What do the crests and players represent? How do the images work together to tell a story?*
- ☐ Create a T-chart, like the following:

Text Features	Predictions
Title: <i>A Kick in the Right Direction</i>	

- ☐ Read the title of the article aloud and add it to the T-chart. Ask partners to use the title to make predictions and build their background knowledge of the article: *What do they think the article is about? Why?* Record their thinking on the chart.
- ☐ Encourage students to connect the title and their thinking back to the images (another text feature): *How does the title connect to the images?* Explain. Repeat the prediction process, revealing each heading, one at a time.
- ☐ Then, ask students to brainstorm questions they have about the article. Record these at the bottom of the chart or in a 3rd column.
- ☐ Finally, inform the class that good readers are active readers, who continually:
 - think about new information as they read;
 - make connections between the text features, what they are learning, and their background knowledge;
 - get curious about what they read and ask themselves questions;
 - build a schema of the story—what's it about and why it's important—which helps them better understand and remember what they read.

[You may find it helpful to create an anchor chart of these reading behaviours for reference in each of the lessons in this issue.]

- ☐ Distribute to each student a copy of *My NSL Schema* (p. 13). Direct them to write their schema—what they already know about this article in the Before Reading box.

During Reading:

- ☐ Encourage students to highlight or underline important ideas about the NSL as they read, being mindful of how their schema is changing, deepening, or being reinforced with new information.

A Kick in the Right Direction

Lesson Plan

After Reading:

- ☐ As a class, revisit the pre-reading chart. Place a “√” next to any prediction that was affirmed in the article and an “A” next to any question they found answers to.
- ☐ Facilitate another *Think-Pair-Share* discussion. Invite partners to share their charts and discuss the most interesting, surprising, and/or important things they learned about the NSL.
- ☐ Then, ask students to add to their schema organizer by summarizing, in point form, what they learned about the NSL from reading, thinking about, and discussing the article.
- ☐ Finally, download, copy, and distribute the soccer ball outline [See *The Teacher’s Corner* in **Internet Connections**]. Encourage students to consider their schema – what they learned about the NSL and its importance – by responding to the following sentences stems and writing their reflections in different sections of the soccer ball:
 - *The NSL is a ‘kick in the right direction’ because...*
 - *This league is important because...*
 - *Now, I know soccer...*
- ☐ **Criteria for Assessment:** A *thoughtful reflection* includes the ‘so what’ of the article—why the NSL is important—and help us understand the reader’s schema—what they learned and now understand about the NSL.

Extension:

- ☐ **Explore the symbolism of the NSL crests:** Students may be interested in learning more about the history and design of the NSL teams’ crests. Each crest was thoughtfully selected; it reflects the values of the team and has connections (historical or geographical) to the region. Divide the class into 6 teams. Assign each class team to an NSL team. Invite students to use the links in **Internet Connections** to conduct research. Provide students with a research organizer to summarize features such as: Team name, Drawing or image of the crest, Important features and their symbolism, Values, Connection to the region, and Other important information.

Internet Connections:

- ☐ Learn more about this news story:
<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6283324/2025/04/16/canada-womens-soccer-northern-super-league/>
<https://canadasoccer.com/news/historic-inaugural-northern-super-league-match-goes-tonight-in-vancouver/>
- ☐ View these TSN news videos about the first NSL match:
<https://www.tsn.ca/soccer/quinn-converts-penalty-kick-vancouver-rise-top-calgary-wild-in-first-ns-l-game-1.2290380>

A Kick in the Right Direction

Lesson Plan

- ☐ Watch some of the NSLS players talk about why the NSL is so important:
<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6712414>
- ☐ Visit the NSL website: <https://www.nsl.ca>
- ☐ Find out more about the crests of the NSL teams:
Montreal Roses FC: <https://canadiansoccerdaily.com/2024/10/09/roses-de-montreal-fc-introduced-as-final-northern-super-league-founding-club/>
Vancouver Rise FC: <https://canadiansoccerdaily.com/2024/08/27/vancouver-rise-fc-launch-as-northern-super-leagues-latest-club-brand/>
Calgary Wild FC: <https://www.calgarywildfc.com/about>
The Halifax Tides FC: <https://www.nsl.ca/news/behind-the-badge-halifax-tides-fc>
AFC Toronto: https://www.ontariosoccer.net/news_article/show/1311560
Ottawa Rapid FC: <https://www.rapidfc.ca/news/introducing-ottawa-rapid-fc>

The Teacher's Corner:

- ☐ Images of the NSL (project the images at the top of the webpage):
<https://canadasoccer.com/news/historic-inaugural-northern-super-league-match-goes-tonight-in-vancouver/>
<https://www.westlandinsurance.ca/news/westland-insurance-partners-with-northern-super-league-for-three-year-sponsorship/>
- ☐ Royalty-free soccer ball outline:
https://www.freepik.com/free-vector/doodle-soccer-ball_1166961.htm#fromView=keyword&page=1&position=0&uuid=12a5e096-6305-40f4-add8-d14726dc56a8&query=Soccer+Ball+Outline

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

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Kick in the Right Direction

My NSL Schema

BEFORE READING: I already know...

AFTER READING: Now, I know...

Map: NSL Franchise Cities

Complete this map assignment to help you better understand the context of the article *A Kick in the Right Direction*.

Label the following, then colour:



Provinces

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Nova Scotia
- Prince Edward Island (PEI)
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland and Labrador

Territories

- Yukon
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut

Other

- United States
- Greenland (Denmark)
- Great Lakes

NSL Cities

- Vancouver
- Calgary
- Toronto
- Ottawa
- Montreal
- Halifax

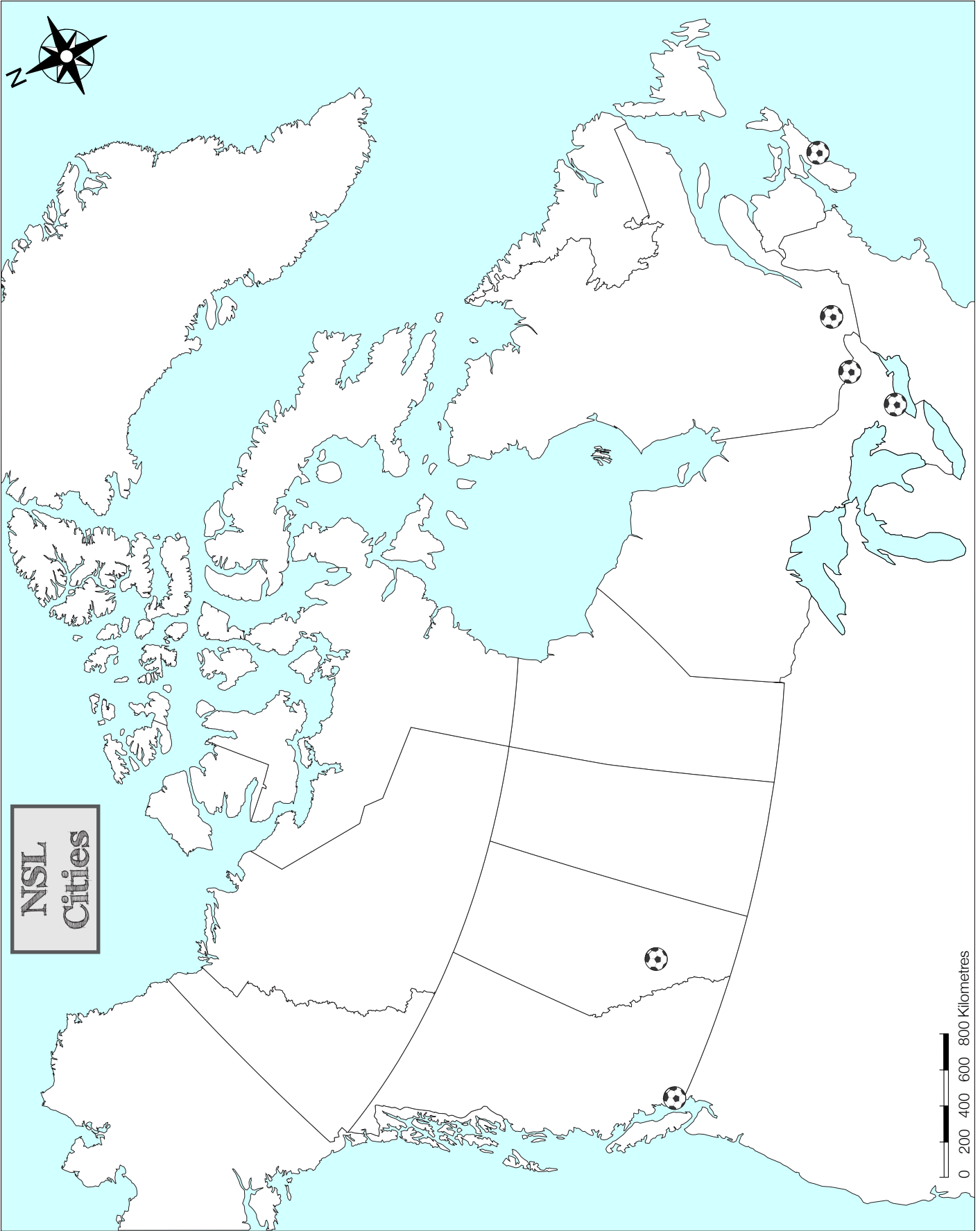
Did You Know . . . ?

You can use the scale at the bottom of a map to calculate distances. How far is it from Vancouver to Toronto as the crow flies? What is the distance between the two closest adjacent NSL cities? Between the two NSL cities that are farthest apart?

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



NSL
Cities



0 200 400 600 800 Kilometres

Election Upheaval



On April 28, Canada held a federal election. The Liberal Party, led by Prime Minister Mark Carney, won.

Voter turnout

Canadians had strong feelings about this election. More than 19.5 million Canadians voted. That's over 68 percent of eligible voters.

It's not a record high. That was set in 1958, when 79.4 percent of voters cast ballots. However, this is the highest turnout since 1993, when 69.6 percent voted.

Remarkable results

This election held some surprises.

For starters, there was more turnover than usual. In 2021, only 7 percent of seats changed hands. This time, 57 out of 343 seats changed hands. That's 17 percent!

Another shock was that some party leaders lost their seats. Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre was not elected in his home riding. Neither was New Democratic Party

(NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh. One of the Green Party co-leaders also lost his seat.

A minority government

Once the votes were counted, the Liberals had 170 seats. That was enough to win. It was not enough for a majority government. For that, they needed 172 seats.

A majority government means one party has more than half the seats in Parliament. They outnumber the other parties. That lets them pass laws easily.

Now we have a minority government. A minority government takes cooperation. The Liberals will not be able to pass laws alone. They need other parties to vote with them.

Gains and losses

The Conservative party won 143 seats. They did not defeat the Liberals, but they made large gains.

Liberal and Conservative gains came at a cost. Canada's other parties lost seats in the election. These include the NDP, the Bloc Québécois and the Green Party.

The NDP went from 24 seats to 7. Dropping below 12 seats cost them official party status. Jagmeet Singh stepped down as leader of the NDP.

The Bloc Québécois ended up with 22 seats. Before the election, they had 35. (This number takes the new riding boundaries into account.) Most of their lost seats went to Liberals. That support made a big difference.

The Green Party previously held 2 seats in Parliament. Now they have one.

Moving forward together

The Liberals had 43.8 percent of the votes. The Conservatives had 41.3 percent. The rest of the votes went elsewhere.

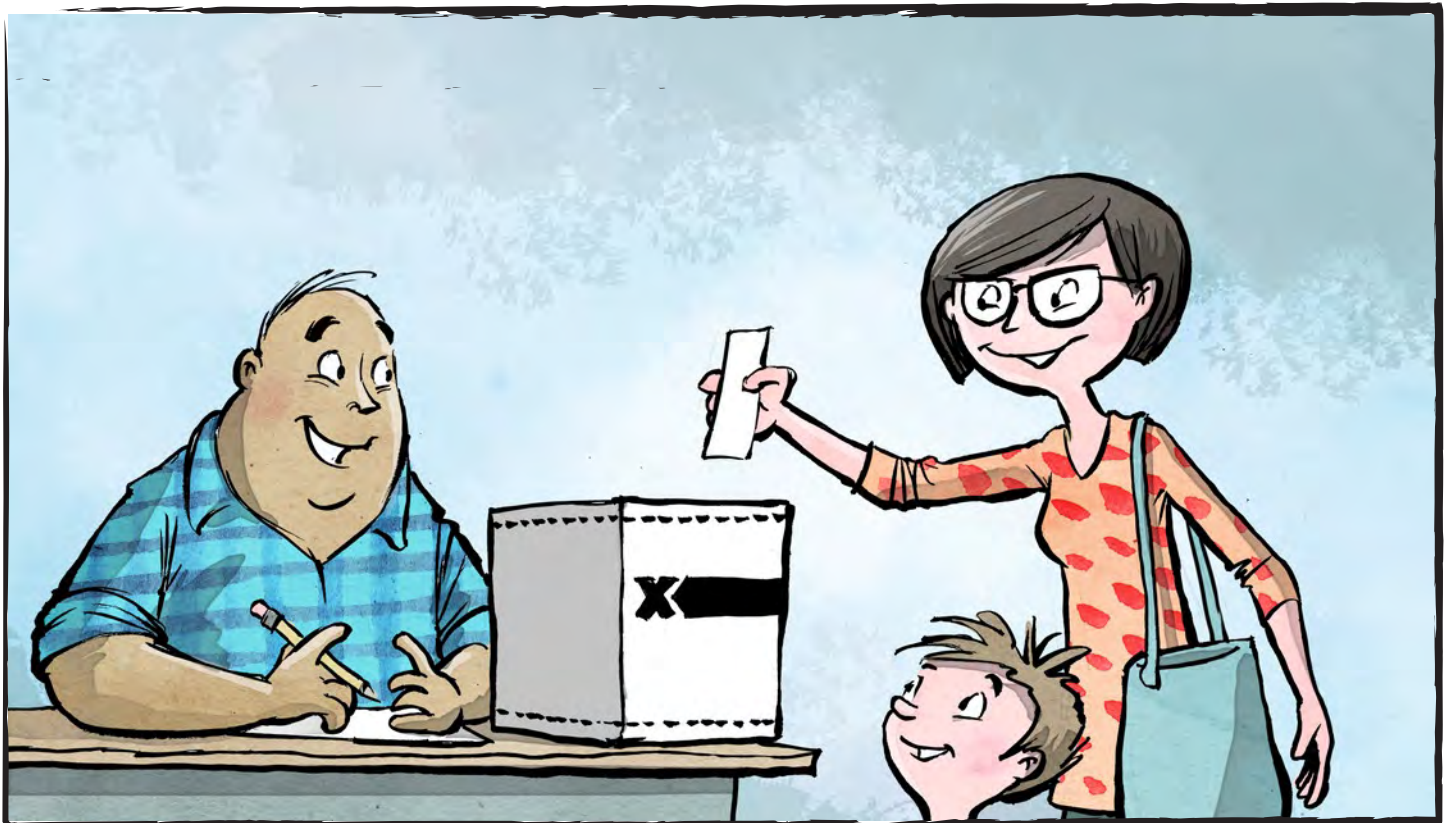
This means many Canadians hoped for a different election result. In his victory speech, Prime Minister Carney acknowledged that. He promised to work for all Canadians. It does not matter how they voted or where they live.

Our prime minister talked about three core values for Canada. Those are humility, ambition, and unity. "Canada is more than a nation," he said. We are not perfect, but we strive to be good. "We do things because they're right, not because they're easy," he added. "We see kindness as a virtue, not a weakness."

He called for us to work together. "Our strength lies in our resolve to work together as a country. It relies on our unity." Vive le Canada!



As you see it, why was this election important?



Election Upheaval

Comprehension Check

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

_____ 1. Who is the leader of the Liberal Party?

- a) Jagmeet Singh.
- b) Pierre Poilievre.
- c) Mark Carney.
- d) Elizabeth May.

_____ 2. What is a majority government?

- a) When a party wins 169 seats in an election.
- b) When one party has more than half the seats in Parliament.
- c) When a party drops below 12 seats.
- d) When a party has at least 43.8 percent of the votes.

_____ 3. What percentage of eligible voters voted in the 2025 federal election?

- a) Over 69.6 percent.
- b) Over 79.4 percent.
- c) Over 68 percent.
- d) Less than 17 percent.

_____ 4. What party lost official party status?

- a) The Green Party.
- b) The Bloc Québécois.
- c) The Conservatives.
- d) The NDP.

_____ 5. What are Mr. Carney's three core values for Canada?

- a) Humility, ambition, and unity.
- b) Strength, resolve, and hard work.
- c) Leadership, hope, and victory.
- d) Kindness, perfection, and goodness.

Election Upheaval

Language Focus

A simple sentence expresses a complete idea. It always has at least one **subject** and one **verb**. The **subject** is the noun or pronoun that carries out an action. A **verb** is a word (or words) that expresses an action.

For example: He (*subject*) voted (*verb*) in the election.

Directions: Circle the verbs and underline the subjects in these simple sentences.

1. On April 28, Canada held a federal election.
2. Canadians voted in the federal election.
3. The officials counted the votes carefully.
4. The Liberals won the election.
5. The NDP lost many seats.
6. Jagmeet Singh stepped down as leader of the NDP.
7. Mr. Carney promises to work hard.
8. He called for us to work together.
9. Candidates campaigned across the country.
10. Journalists reported the results.



How many other simple sentences
can you find in the article?

Lesson Plan

Before Reading:

- ☐ Using appropriate technology, project the Global News infographic showing the results of Canada's 2025 Election [see The Teacher's Corner in **Internet Connections**]. Facilitate a *Think-Pair-Share* discussion, inviting partners to discuss the infographic: *What do they notice? How do the text features of the infographic (e.g., images, colours, numbers, labels, chart) work together to tell a story? What can we learn about the election from this infographic?*
- ☐ Next, distribute to each student, or pair of students, a copy of *Canada's 2025 Election Results in Numbers* (p. 23). Draw their attention to the text features. Ask them to make connections between the title and each of the headings to the text features in the infographic: *How do the title, headings, and infographic work together to tell a story?* [You may wish to systematically work through these connections, one at a time, as a class.]
- ☐ Facilitate another *Think-Pair-Share* discussion, inviting partners to share: *What predictions can they make about what else they might learn about the election from these sources? What questions do they have?*
- ☐ Remind students that active readers use text features, predictions, connections, prior knowledge, and questions to build a schema of what they are reading which helps them understand and remember what they read. [See the Before Reading section of the *A Kick in the Right Direction* article.]

During Reading:

- ☐ Encourage students to highlight important information about Canada's 2025 election results as they read. Direct them to add revealing numbers and key facts to their chart.

After Reading:

- ☐ There are several articles in **Internet Connections** that summarize the election results visually. Project these and draw students' attention to the various ways the data is represented (e.g., bar graphs, pie charts, pictograms, line graphs, charts). Discuss how the graphs summarize information to make it easy to read and quickly learn about the election.
- ☐ Depending on the needs of your class, you may also wish to view the video *Graphs for Kids* in **Internet Connections**. Although focused on primary examples, it clearly explains four common graphs and how to create them.
- ☐ Use a think aloud and the numbers in the Voter Turnout section of the article to model what story the numbers tell and how to decide what type of graph would best tell the story of how voter turnout changed over time. Create a sketch of a graph with the students. Title the graph and add any necessary labels, numbers, or features for clarification.
- ☐ Have pairs of students work together to complete the organizer.

Lesson Plan

- ☐ Next, ask students to individually create a graph for one or more of the election results. Have them add a title and any other features to help the reader understand the election story their graph tells.
- ☐ Post the completed graphs around the room. Organize a *Gallery Walk*.
- ☐ Finally, invite students to complete a written reflection explaining how their schema of the election was deepened, changed or reinforced as they thought about numbers and manipulated information in a visual way.
- ☐ **Criteria for Assessment:** An *informative graph* is accurate; visually represents the numbers in a logical way; uses features such a title, colour and labels for clarity; & is easy to read and understand.

Extensions:

- ☐ **Compare the results of the Federal Election with Student Vote 2025:** As a class, visit the Student Vote Canada website and compare these results to the results of the Canadian election: *What do you notice about the results? What's similar? What's different? Why?*
- ☐ **Reflect on PM Carney's victory speech:** Invite students to select one of the quotes in Prime Minister Carney's victory speech and 'explode it'. [There are three steps to exploding a quote: 1) write the quote in large letters in the center of a piece of paper aligned horizontally (so there is lots of room to mark it up); 2) dissect the quote one word or phrase at a time (e.g. define unfamiliar words, make connections, draw sketches to represent the ideas, add insights or questions); 3) write their understanding of the quote in their own words.] Arrange students so they can share their exploded quotes in small groups.

Internet Connections:

- ☐ Learn more about this news story:
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=med&dir=pre&document=apr2925&lang=e>
- ☐ View the 2025 election results in visual ways:
<https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/elections/federal/2025/results/>
<https://www.ctvnews.ca/federal-election-2025/article/how-did-the-federal-election-change-canadas-representation-in-parliament/>
<https://www.mainstreetresearch.ca/dashboard/canada>
<https://globalnews.ca/news/11095128/canada-election-live-results-2025-vote/>
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn4jd39g8y10>
- ☐ Visit the Student Vote Canada website:
<https://studentvote.ca/canada/the-results/>

The Teacher's Corner:

- ☐ Global news election summary infographic:
<https://globalnews.ca/news/11095128/canada-election-live-results-2025-vote/>

Lesson Plan

- ☐ Ways to Represent Data:
Graphs for Kids | Learn all about basic graphs:
<https://youtu.be/bmY28wdGL9M?si=kAl2KWFuCi1JScBM> [6:35]
- ☐ Mark Carney’s Victory Speech:
<https://youtu.be/9nOAMX2XiDI?si=hbl95XxoTxGzXAHj> [>16:00-16:45]

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

Election Upheaval

Canada's 2025 Election Results in Numbers			
Text Features	Numbers	What story do they tell?	How might I represent the numbers visually?
Voter turnout			
Remarkable results			
A minority government			
Gains and losses			
Moving forward together			

From Hats to Helpers: The Story of the Beaver



This animal has been on a Canadian coin since 1937. In 1851, it appeared on Canada's first stamp. It played a key role in the fur trade. At one time, it was nearly extinct. Fifty years ago, it became a symbol of Canada. Can you name this animal?

If you said the beaver, you're correct!

This hardworking animal is part of Canada's history.

In the 1600s, beaver pelts were in demand in Europe. They were used to make fashionable hats.

The demand for beaver pelts brought Europeans to Canada. It sparked exploration and colonization. This eventually led to Canada becoming a country.

The beaver came to represent Canadian sovereignty. On March 24, 1975, it

became an official symbol of Canada. But the beaver stands for much more.

Wetland wisdom

For the Anishinaabe people, the beaver symbolizes wisdom. They define wisdom as using your natural gifts to help others and the land.

In Anishinaabemowin, the beaver is called Amik. In Cree, it is Amisk.



Beavers help the land by building dams. The dams slow water and make wetlands. Wetlands help plants grow and make safe spaces for animals to live. Wetlands even fight climate change. They trap carbon (CO₂) and stop it from going

into the air. Each year, beaver wetlands hold as much carbon as 100,000 cars produce.

Hairy helpers

Beavers help in other ways, too. After a forest fire, it is the first animal to come back. Beavers rebuild the land so it's safe for other animals to return.

In the winter, many animals share the beaver's dam. Turtles, frogs, and fish hide in the mud to stay warm. Muskrats may come inside too. They share the space, like roommates!

Beaver dams are very strong, like bridges. They can help other animals cross rivers and wetlands.

The industrious beaver

Beavers work hard. There is even an expression, "busy as a beaver." That's why many people say beavers symbolize industriousness. It takes a lot of hard work to shape your environment!

The fur trade nearly wiped out the beaver population. By the late 1800s, beavers were almost extinct. Fortunately, fashion changed. People did not want beaver hats anymore. Once hunting slowed down, beavers made a comeback. Today, the beaver is not even at risk. This is one reason why beavers are seen as symbols of resilience.

The beaver's role in the fur trade makes it a symbol of Canada's natural resources and history.

Beaver dams represent Canada's natural beauty. They remind us to care for nature. We share this land with each other and with Canada's wildlife. Like the beaver, we need to work hard and help others.

Do you think the beaver is a good symbol for Canada? What animal would you choose?



What else do you know about beavers?



Long before European settlers arrived in Canada, Indigenous Peoples used beaver fur to make clothing. The animal's bones were used to make tools. It was also a valuable food source. A substance from its glands could even be used to catch other animals!

From Hats to Helpers: The Story of the Beaver

Comprehension Check

Answer the questions below in complete sentences:

1. What does the beaver represent for the Anishinaabe people?

2. How are wetlands good for nature?

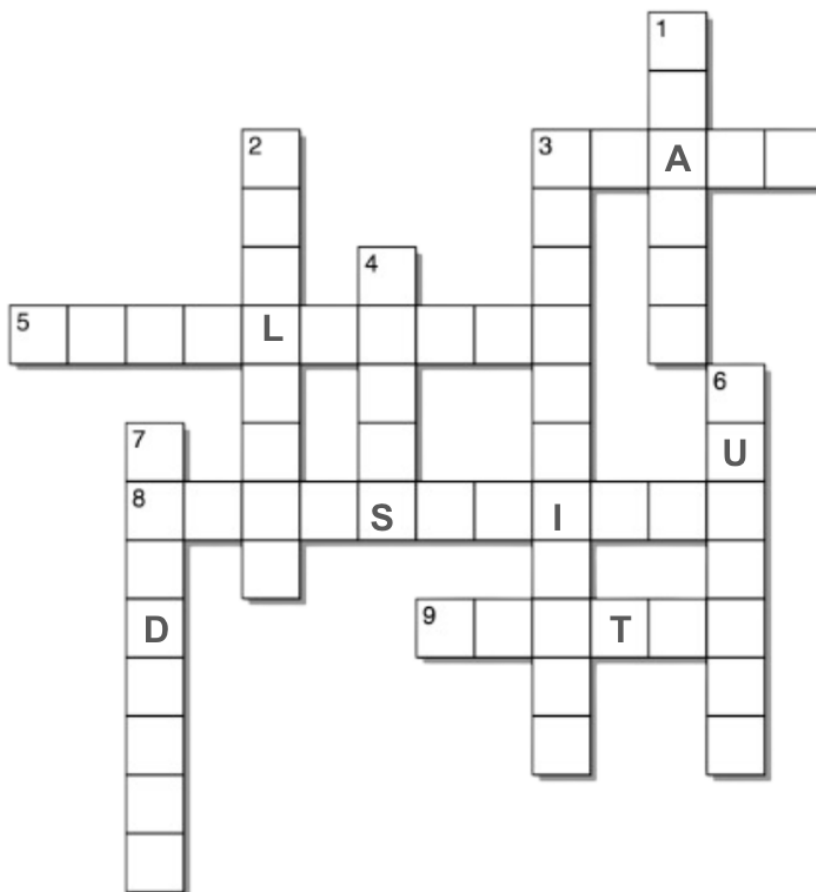
3. Which animals share a dam with beavers?

4. What saying do people use to describe someone who works hard?

5. What activity nearly wiped out the beaver population?

From Hats to Helpers: The Story of the Beaver

Language Focus



Across

3. where the beaver appeared in 1851
5. able to recover quickly from stress
8. always busy
9. the season when animals hide in a dam to stay warm.

Down

1. an expression, "busy as a _____"
2. areas that help plants grow and trap CO₂
3. being free from outside control
4. beaver _____ were used to make hats in Europe
6. a beaver's possible roommate
7. animals and plants that live in nature

From Hats to Helpers: The Story of the Beaver

Lesson Plan

Before Reading:

- Distribute a piece of scrap paper to each student. Invite them to write down their guesses (keeping their guesses to themselves) of which animal you will be providing clues for. Read each sentence in the introduction aloud, one at a time, pausing between sentences. Remind students to be open-minded and willing to change their guess as new clues are revealed. Ask students to share their predictions.
- Facilitate a *Think-Pair-Share* discussion, asking partners to discuss what they know or think they know about beavers and what they wonder or want to know. Record their thinking on a class chart:

Beavers	
What I know or think I know	What I wonder or want to know

- Then, read the title of the article aloud. Invite students to add new ideas to the chart. Repeat the process with each of the headings. Remind them they are building their schema about one of Canada's national symbols. [See the **Before Reading** section of *A Kick in the Right Direction* article for reference to readers' schema.]

During Reading:

- Encourage students to mark the text as they read, using the following symbols:
 - an “!” next to new and important information about the beaver;
 - a “√” next to any known fact that was affirmed in the article;
 - an “A” next to answers to the pre-reading questions.

After Reading:

- Facilitate another *Think-Pair-Share* discussion, asking partners to share and discuss their marked texts. Call on several students to reflect how their schema about beavers was deepened, changed, or reinforced with new information.
- Next, distribute to each student, or pair of students, a copy of *The Story of the Beaver* (p. 31). Direct them to use the information in the article to complete the web, using point form notes to record their thinking.
- When students have finished their research, discuss the criteria of a *good symbol* (e.g., recognizable or easily identified); relevant (reflects the qualities and values of Canadians); timeless (important in the past and present – won't become outdated); meaningful (important to many things in Canada—its history, the land, and people). Then, ask students to star (★) 5-7 facts on their organizer that support the position that the beaver is a good symbol for Canada.
- Finally, have students individually synthesize what they've learned about this national symbol by responding to the following thinking stems:
 - *The beaver is a good symbol for Canada because...*
 - *I used to think...but now I know...*
 - *Beavers show us...*

From Hats to Helpers: The Story of the Beaver

Lesson Plan

- ❑ **Criteria for Assessment:** A *thoughtful conclusion* includes accurate, relevant information; helps us understand the reader's schema—what they learned and now understand about beavers—and shows evidence of using the criteria to support the reader's judgment.

Extension:

- ❑ **Learn more about beavers:** Direct students to the relevant links in **Internet Connections** to conduct further research on beavers. Challenge them to create a *Q & A flap book* or *Q & A foldable flip book* highlighting 5-7 of the most important facts. [See *The Teacher's Corner* in **Internet Connections** for two short 'how to' videos.]
- ❑ **Consider other animals as good symbols for Canada:** Use the board book Canada Animals by Paul Covello as inspiration for learning about 40 other animals that are native to Canada. Allow students to work with a partner or in small groups to research one of the Canadian animals. Then, have groups present an argument with relevant evidence and thoughtful reasons supporting their chosen animal as a good symbol of Canada (or as not a good symbol).

Internet Connections:

- ❑ Learn more about this news story:
<https://globalnews.ca/video/11098391/how-the-beaver-became-canadas-national-symbol-50-years-ago/> [1:54]
<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6693908> [1:31]
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/official-symbols-canada.html#a3>
<https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/the-dam-the-myth-the-legend-50-years-of-the-beaver/>
- ❑ Discover how the beaver helps the environment:
<https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/mb/riding/nature/animals/mammals/castors-beavers>
<https://blog.ontarioparks.ca/the-beaver-architect-of-biodiversity/>
<https://environmentamerica.org/articles/beavers-are-ecosystem-engineers-and-fight-climate-change-too/>
- ❑ Learn about the beaver's role in the fur trade:
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/beaver-pelts>
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/fur-trade>
https://youtu.be/JGoVlgcT6tM?si=U_g03oK6p5nkJI63 [3:46]
- ❑ Find out the importance of the beaver to the Anishinaabe:
<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/the-brilliance-of-the-beaver-learning-from-an-anishnaabe-world-1.5534706>
- ❑ And, to the Ojibwe:
<https://unitingthreefiresagainstviolence.org/the-7-grandfathers-teachin/>

From Hats to Helpers: The Story of the Beaver

Lesson Plan

- Find out more about the beaver:

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/beaver>

<https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/animal-facts-beaver/>

<https://youtu.be/2eVc8VjKWaE?si=krrnS9BrpCB4IaG3K> [4:46]

<https://www.nps.gov/gaar/learn/nature/beaver-family-life.htm>

- See the beaver on Canada's new 2025 nickel:

<https://www.mint.ca/en/shop/coins/2025/tribute-w-mint-mark-beaver-1-oz-fine-silver-coin>

The Teacher's Corner

- *How to make a Q & A flap book (instead of drawing a picture on the front cover, students write their questions):* <https://youtu.be/tUrLPmNAMpo?si=39QeEQEmaJ4AzHkX> [3:01]

- *How to make a foldable flip book (adjust the number of sheets of paper to accommodate the number of questions):* <https://youtu.be/iCrzYi9ETl8?si=OjPY5mUWMK57ZQcq> [2:55]

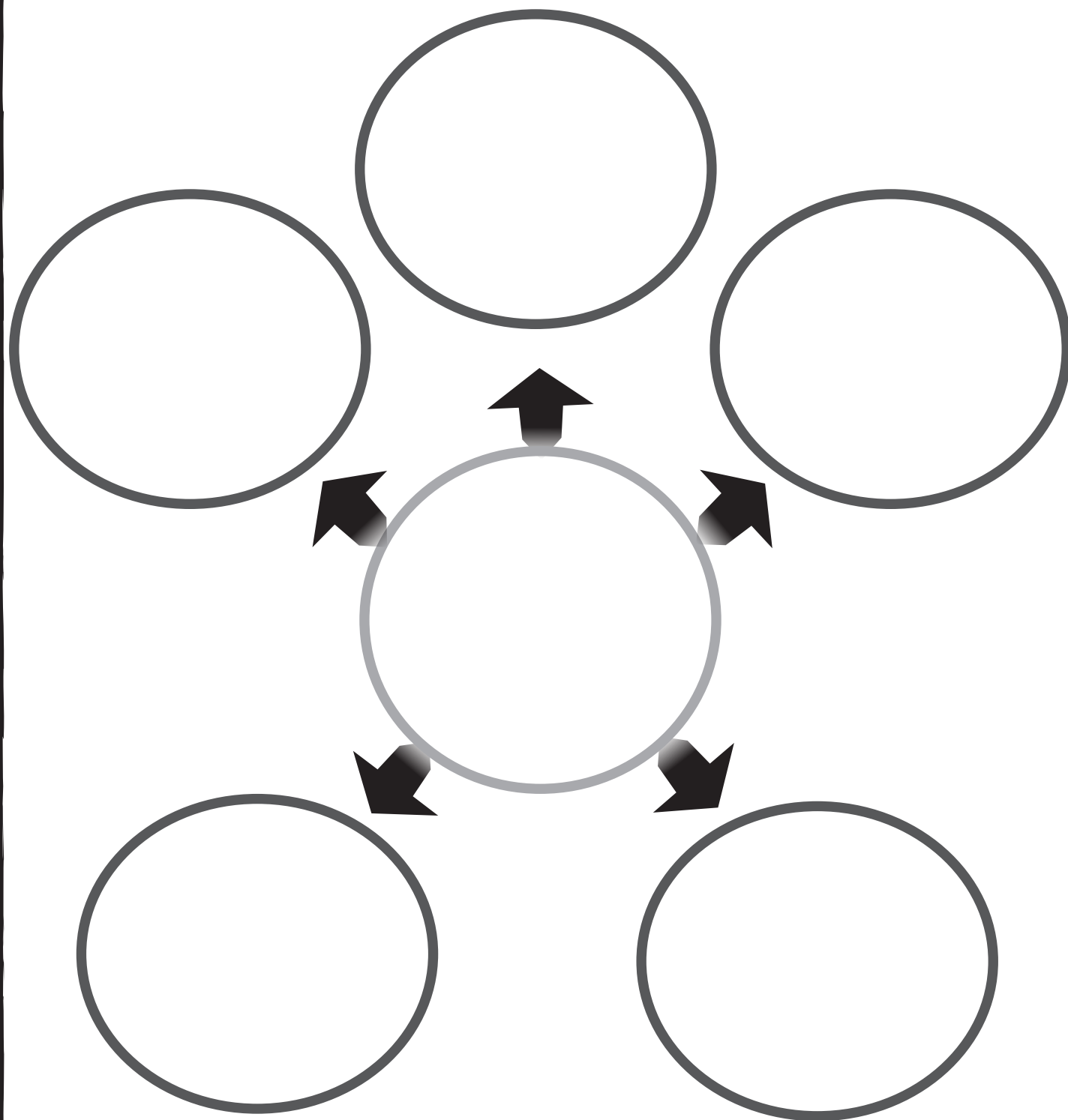
- Canada Animals by Paul Covello: <https://cmreviews.ca/node/195>

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

Name: _____ Date: _____

From Hats to Helpers: The Story of the Beaver

The Story of the Beaver



Each country has its own set of symbols that tell about its people, environment, history and traditions.

A symbol is something that stands for or represents something else.



Canada has nine official symbols. They tell of a country made up of many different peoples. They also reflect the importance of nature in Canada.



Our Coat of Arms was adopted in 1921. It includes symbols of the United Kingdom, France, and Canada.



Our motto is A MARI USQUE AD MARE. This means "From sea to sea." It comes from Psalm 72:8 in the Bible.

The national flag is one of Canada's most-recognized symbols. It is red and white – our nation's official colours – with a stylized eleven-point maple leaf at its centre.



"O Canada" was proclaimed Canada's national anthem on July 1, 1980.



The maple tree tells of the early settlers and the magnificence of our forests. The beaver symbolizes the importance of the fur trade to our history.



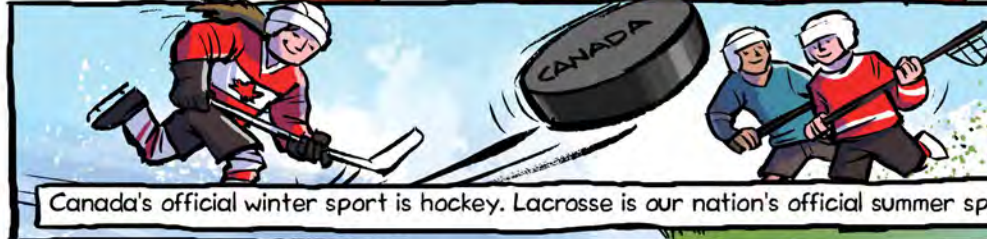
Red and white were chosen as Canada's official colours because these shades have alternated as the national colours of France and England over the course of history.



The Canadian Horse is descended from horses sent to New France by the King of France in 1665. In 2002, it was recognized as the national horse of Canada.



What other symbols do you associate with Canada?



Canada's official winter sport is hockey. Lacrosse is our nation's official summer sport.



Symbols of Canada

Comprehension Check

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

_____ 1. A symbol . . .

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) is very complicated | b) stands for something else |
| c) is an animal | d) stands alone |

_____ 2. Which three countries are represented in our coat of arms?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a) France, the U.K., Quebec | b) Canada, the U.S., France |
| c) the U.K., Canada, France | d) the U.S., Quebec, the U.K. |

_____ 3. How many official symbols does Canada have?

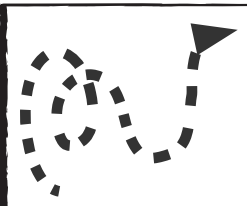
- | | |
|-----------|---------|
| a) six | b) nine |
| c) twelve | d) one |

_____ 4. Which of the following is *not* an official Canadian symbol?

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| a) the polar bear | b) the Maple tree |
| c) the beaver | d) the Canadian horse |

_____ 5. What are Canada's two official sports?

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| a) baseball, lacrosse | b) soccer, hockey |
| c) baseball, hockey | d) none of the above |



What are the symbols for your province or territory?

Answer Key

A Kick in the Right Direction

p. 8: Comprehension Check

1. True; 2. False; 3. False; 4. True; 5. True; 6. False.

p. 9: Language Focus

Closed: playground, mailbox, football, toothpaste.

Hyphenated: long-term, self-esteem, runner-up, check-in.

Open: swimming pool, fire truck, living room.

Examples from the article include: brand-new, co-founded, teamwork, superstars, co-owner, playoffs, fan base.

p. 13: My NSL Schema

Answers will vary.

Election Upheaval

p. 18: Comprehension Check 1.c; 2.b; 3.c; 4.d; 5.a.

p. 19: Language Focus

- (Canada), held; 2. (Canadians), voted;
- (officials), counted; 4. (Liberals), won;
- (NDP), lost; 6. (Jagmeet Singh), stepped down;
- (Mr. Carney), promises; 8. (he), called;
- (candidates), campaigned; 10. (journalists), reported.

p. 23: Canada's 2025 Election in Numbers

Answer Key: Answers will vary but should include some of the following:

Voter turnout: in 2025–19.5 million Canadians voted; 68% of eligible voters; in 1958 – 74% eligible voters; 1993 – 69.6% voted. This tells us that voter turnout was high; people cared about the outcome.

Remarkable results: in 2025–57/343 seats changed hands (17%); in 2021 only 7% changed hands. This tells us that Canadians wanted a change in government.

A minority government: Liberals had 170 seats (a minority) but needed 172 seats to form a majority. This tells us that the Liberals will have to work with other parties to pass laws.

Gains and losses: Conservative Party won 143 seats and made gains from the 2021 election; other parties lost seats; NDP went from 24–7; Bloc Quebecois went from 35–22; Green Party went from 2–1. This tells us that most parties lost seats to the Liberals.

Moving forward together: Liberals had 43.8% of votes; Conservatives had 41.3%; the rest of the votes went to other parties. This means Canadians hoped for a different election result.

The Story of the Beaver

p. 26: Comprehension Check

1. What does the beaver represent for the Anishinaabe people?

For the Anishinaabe people, the beaver represents wisdom.

2. How are wetlands good for nature?

Wetlands help plants grow, give animals a safe home, and fight climate change.

3. Which animals share a dam with beavers?

Turtles, frogs, fish, and muskrats share a dam with beavers.

4. What saying do people use to describe someone who works hard?

The saying people use to describe someone who works hard is “busy as a beaver.”

5. What activity nearly wiped out the beaver population?

The fur trade nearly wiped out the beaver population.

p. 27: Language Focus



p. 31: The Story of the Beaver

Answers will vary but should include some of the following:

How it's part of Canada's history:

demand for beaver pelts drove exploration & colonization of Canada; played a key role in the fur trade

Its importance to Indigenous Peoples:

fur used to make clothing; bones used to make tools; food source; substance from its glands could be used to catch other animals; symbolizes wisdom

How it helps the environment:

their dams slow water & make wetlands (help plants grow; create safe homes for other animals); wetlands trap CO₂ (can hold as much carbon as 100,000 cars produce)

How it helps other animals:

rebuild the land after forest fires making it safe for other animals to return; shares their dams with other animals in the winter (turtles, frogs, fish hide in the mud; muskrats come inside); dams help other animals cross wetlands/rivers

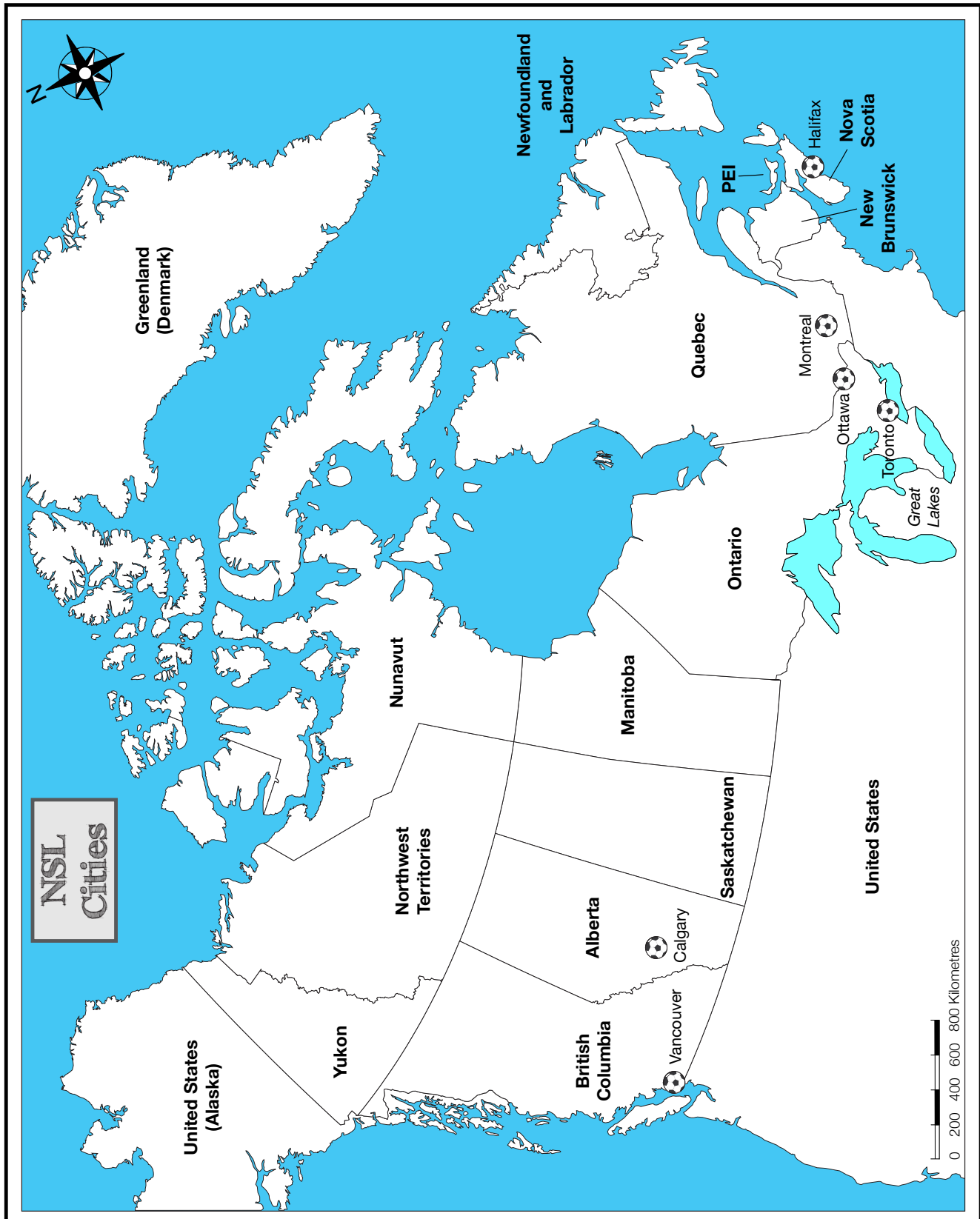
What it symbolizes:

Canada's sovereignty; wisdom (using your natural gifts to help others & the land); industriousness/hard work; resilience (coming back from being endangered); Canada's natural resources; their dams represent Canada's natural beauty

Did You Know? Symbols of Canada

p. 33: Comprehension Check

1. b; 2. c; 3. b; 4. a; 5. d.



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What in the World?

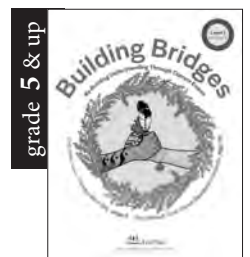
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Level 2

Issue 1: August 23
Issue 2: September 23
Issue 3: October 28
Issue 4: December 2
Issue 5: January 27
Issue 6: March 3
Issue 7: April 7
Issue 8: May 12

Level 1

Issue 1: August 26
Issue 2: September 25
Issue 3: October 30
Issue 4: December 4
Issue 5: January 29
Issue 6: March 5
Issue 7: April 9
Issue 8: May 14

The Canadian Reader

Issue 1: August 27
Issue 2: September 27
Issue 3: November 1
Issue 4: December 6
Issue 5: January 31
Issue 6: March 7
Issue 7: April 11
Issue 8: May 16

Le Monde en Marche

Niveau 2

Numéro 1: 29 août
Numéro 2: 30 septembre
Numéro 3: 4 novembre
Numéro 4: 9 décembre
Numéro 5: 3 février
Numéro 6: 10 mars
Numéro 7: 14 avril
Numéro 8: 19 mai

Niveau 1

Numéro 1: 30 août
Numéro 2: 2 octobre
Numéro 3: 6 novembre
Numéro 4: 11 décembre
Numéro 5: 5 février
Numéro 6: 12 mars
Numéro 7: 16 avril
Numéro 8: 21 mai

Nos Nouvelles

Numéro 1: 30 août
Numéro 2: 4 octobre
Numéro 3: 8 novembre
Numéro 4: 13 décembre
Numéro 5: 7 février
Numéro 6: 14 mars
Numéro 7: 18 avril
Numéro 8: 23 mai

Building Bridges Level 2

Issue 1: August 27
Issue 2: November 11
Issue 3: January 13
Issue 4: March 17
Issue 5: May 19

Building Bridges Level 1

Issue 1: August 30
Issue 2: November 13
Issue 3: January 15
Issue 4: March 19
Issue 5: May 21

Bâtir des ponts Niveau 2

Numéro 1: 6 septembre
Numéro 2: 18 novembre
Numéro 3: 20 janvier
Numéro 4: 24 mars
Numéro 5: 26 mai

Bâtir des ponts Niveau 1

Numéro 1: 9 septembre
Numéro 2: 20 novembre
Numéro 3: 22 janvier
Numéro 4: 26 mars
Numéro 5: 28 mai



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<i>The Canadian Reader</i>	English	Grades 3 and up	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$230	
<i>What in the World?</i> - Level 1	English	Grades 5 and up	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$230	
<i>What in the World?</i> - Level 2	English	Grades 8 and up	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$230	
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<i>Le Monde en Marche</i> - Niveau 2	Français	À partir de la 8 ^e année	<input type="checkbox"/> 115 \$	<input type="checkbox"/> 230 \$	
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ONLINE INTERACTIVE SUBSCRIPTIONS: 2025-2026

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			20 issues (Sept. – Jan.)	40 issues (Sept. – June)	
<i>Currents4Kids</i>	English	Grades 3 and up	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$230	
<i>News4Youth</i> - Levels 1, 2, & 3	English	Grades 5 and up	<input type="checkbox"/> \$220	<input type="checkbox"/> \$440	
<i>Infos-Jeunes</i>	Français	À partir de la 3 ^e année	<input type="checkbox"/> 115 \$	<input type="checkbox"/> 230 \$	
<i>Infos-Ados</i> - Niveaux 1, 2, et 3	Français	À partir de la 5 ^e année	<input type="checkbox"/> 220 \$	<input type="checkbox"/> 440 \$	
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• Indigenous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			\$27 each	
• O Canada - Volume 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			\$30 each	
• O Canada - Volume 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			\$27 each	
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• Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			\$33 each	
• The Environment and Us	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			\$24 each	
What in the World?	English	Français	Level 1	Level 2	Price Per Product	Amount
• Animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$21 each	
• Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$36 each	
• Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$27 each	
• Indigenous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$18 each	
• Legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$21 each	
• O Canada	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$21 each	
• Space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$36 each	
• Technology - Volume 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$24 each	
• Technology - Volume 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$24 each	
					NB, NL, PEI add 15% HST NS add 14% HST ON add 13% HST HST	
					All others add 5% GST GST	
TOTAL						



NB, NL, PEI add 15% HST NS add 14% HST ON add 13% HST HST

All others add 5% GST GST

TOTAL



BILLING OPTIONS

☐ Invoice school ☐ Invoice **Bill To** address

☐ Purchase Order _____

Please charge to: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA

BILL TO (if different from school information)

CONTACT _____

ADDRESS _____

CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRY DATE (MM/YY) _____ CITY _____ PROVINCE/TERRITORY _____ POSTAL CODE _____

CARDHOLDER NAME _____ CVV CODE _____

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