Articles and Questions

Each issue of ***What in the World?*** includes:   
  
1) a PDF file (the complete document) **and**

2) a Word file that contains **only** the articles and questions. This file does **not** contain an Answer Key.

This **Word** file allows students to complete assignments using a computer either at school or at home. Teachers can assign all or parts of the file by email attachment or a school website. The **Word** file also allows teachers to:

• easily modify and format content including changing fonts and text sizes

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See: [www.libreoffice.org/discover/libreoffice/](http://www.libreoffice.org/discover/libreoffice/) [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)

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<https://support.google.com/docs/answer/187189?hl=en&co=GENIE.Platform=Desktop>

**Liberals Win A Roller Coaster Election**



On April 28, Canadians made history at the polls.

In a dramatic, unpredictable election, the Liberals, led by newcomer Mark Carney, won a **minority government**. They earned 170 seats in the newly expanded 343-seat House of Commons. That puts them just two seats short of a **majority government**.

The Conservatives under Pierre Poilievre won 143 seats—their best result in decades.

The **popular vote** results were close for the two major parties. The **Grits** earned 43.7 percent. The **Tories** took 41.3 percent.

As for the smaller challengers, the Bloc Québécois led by Yves‑François Blanchet won 22 seats. The BQ is a **sovereigntist** party that only runs in Quebec. Meanwhile, Jagmeet Singh's New Democratic Party (NDP) won seven seats. And the Green Party returned just one candidate to Ottawa—leader Elizabeth May.

**Whiplash!**

The results were a sharp contrast to what polls predicted just months earlier. At the start of 2025, the Tories were way ahead.

But that changed after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau resigned in January and the Liberals chose Mark Carney to replace him. Mr. Carney is a respected economist and **central banker**. By election night, the Liberals pulled off a stunning comeback.

Why the shift? The Conservatives didn't adapt after Mr. Trudeau resigned. What's more, Tory premiers in Ontario and Nova Scotia clashed with Mr. Poilievre over strategy and messaging. As well, the Liberals gained in Quebec, Ontario, and B.C. Still, the Tories had their best showing in years. They won seats around Toronto, on Vancouver Island, in Windsor, and northern Ontario.

**The big issues**

Canada’s relationship with the United States was a major campaign issue. The reason? U.S. President Donald Trump has angered many Canadians by imposing high tariffs on Canadian imports. He also suggested that Canada that become the 51st state. Mr. Carney vowed to stand up to Mr. Trump.

Rising grocery bills, sky-high housing costs, doctor shortages, public safety, and tax relief were hot topics, too.

**Defeats for leaders**

Surprisingly, both the Conservative and NDP leaders lost their seats. Mr. Poilievre was defeated in Carleton, Ontario. Mr. Singh placed third in Burnaby Central, B.C. He resigned as NDP leader. But Mr. Poilievre will stay on. He pointed out that under his leadership, the Tories won 20 more seats than before. They also increased their popular vote tally by nearly 10 percent. Yet without a seat, Mr. Poilievre can’t sit in the House of Commons. So he will run in a **by-election** in Alberta MP Damien Kurek’s seat. Mr. Kurek will resign.

**A two-party system?**

The two big parties won over 85 percent of the seats. Both surpassed 40 percent of the popular vote. That has many observers wondering if Canada is becoming a two-party system.

Here’s why. Voters on both sides tried to block the other party from winning a majority. Many of them cast strategic ballots for a party or candidate to prevent other less-preferred ones from winning. Over 17 percent of seats changed parties—a huge shift. All 59 seats that switched went to the Liberals or Conservatives.

As a result, by dropping from 24 seats to seven, the NDP lost official party status and much of its influence in Parliament. But the Bloc Québécois said it would support the Liberals if it was in Quebec’s best interest.

**The work ahead**

Mr. Carney met Mr. Trump in early May to discuss tariffs and he declared that Canada was not for sale. At home, he vowed to modernize the economy. He chose his cabinet and will re-open Parliament after King Charles III reads the throne speech while visiting in May. He says he will be tougher on crime and reform the justice system—Tory ideas he is 'borrowing.'

“My government is getting to work, to build big, build bold, and build now,” he said.

**By The Numbers**

Over 19.5 million Canadians voted in the election. Turnout was 68.7 percent, the highest in over 30 years. A record number also voted early.

Some 7.3 million people cast ballots at advance polls and another 1.2 million by special ballot, including military members, those living abroad, and those in remote areas.

**The First-Past-The-Post System: Is It Fair?**

Canada’s election system is called first-past-the-post. Under this model, parties can form the government without winning the popular vote. How? People with the most votes in a riding win—even if they get less than half of the total vote. So if one person gets 40 percent of the vote, another gets 35 percent, and a third gets 25 percent, the candidate with 40 percent wins, even though 60 percent of voters chose someone else.

Other systems aim to better reflect the will of voters. For example, in proportional representation, parties gain seats based on the percentage of votes they receive overall. So if a party gets 30 percent of the national vote, it gets about 30 percent of all the seats. And in ranked-choice voting, voters rank candidates by preference. That way, the winner has broader support. These systems result in more balanced representation.

**by-election:** a local election that happens at a different time from a general election

**central bank:** a public institution responsible for a country’s monetary policy, its currency, and controlling the money supply

**Grit:** historical nickname for a Liberal Party member

**majority government:** when a political party has more than half of the seats in the House of Commons

**minority government:** when a political party has fewer than half of the seats in the House of Commons

**popular vote:** the total number of votes among a populace as an electorate

**sovereigntist:** a person or party supporting the independence of Quebec from Canada

**Tory:** a member or supporter of the Conservative Party

**On The Lines**

1. How many Members of Parliament sit in the House of Commons?

2. Name four of the five largest political parties that ran candidates in the recent federal election.

3. Which party won the most seats in the election? What was this party’s share of the popular vote?

4. How many seats did the other four parties win? What was each party’s share of the popular vote?

5. Which two party leaders lost their seats? Which leader resigned? Which leader will continue?

6. What happened to the popular vote for the three smaller parties? Why did this happen?

7. Who did Mr. Carney meet with in early May? What was the result of this Washington, D.C. meeting?

8. List at least three other important events or tasks that were on the PM’s agenda for May.

**Questions For Further Thought**

1. What reasons can you suggest to explain why the 2025 federal election is called “a roller coaster election” in this article?

2. Voter turnout for the federal election was higher than it has been for over 30 years, although only 68.7% of Canadians cast a ballot. As you see it, why were Canadians motivated to vote in this election? How important do you think it is for all Canadians to vote?

3. Although Pierre Poilievre did not win in his riding, and his party did not form the government, he considers the 2025 federal election to be a success for the Conservative Party. Do you agree or disagree with his point of view? Give reasons to support your response.

4. Would you ever consider a career in politics? Why or why not?

**Questions For Online Exploration**

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

1. Check out these maps showing the outcome of the 2025 federal election:   
**https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/1024/cpsprodpb/7cfd/live/882057f0-2539-11f0-8f57-b7237f6a66e6.png.webp  
https://www.elections.ca/res/cir/maps2/map.asp?map=ERMap\_44&lang=e**

Find your province or territory on one of the maps. Describe the results and compare them to a neighbouring province or territory.

2. Almost 1 million Canadian students voted in a simulated election this spring. See the results of the Student Vote Canada program here: **https://studentvote.ca/canada/the-results**

What are some significant differences between the Student Vote results and the actual election results?

3. Listen to Prime Minister Carney’s victory speech:  
**https://globalnews.ca/video/11154692/canada-election-2025-carney-elected-pm-vows-to-govern-for-all-canadians-in-close-victory/** [2:20]

What message did Mr. Carney have for Canadians who voted for a different leader?

4. Listen to several concession speeches from the other party leaders:   
Pierre Poilievre: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQRBTf5xS1Y** [11:20]  
Yves-François Blanchet: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qhSHtebhfo** [8:52]  
Jagmeet Singh: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soYSDQ2Eepw** [3:43]  
Elizabeth May: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGy4xTspL10** [9:02]

Why is it important for party leaders to make a concession speech after an election?

5. Both Prime Minister Carney and Opposition Leader Pierre Poilievre face challenges in the months ahead. Find out more here: **https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6742528** [1:47]

Which challenge do you think is the most important for each leader?

**Putting It All Together**

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

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. **The legislature where MPs conduct Canada’s business is called the:** a) Senate b) House of Commons  
 c) National Assembly d) White House

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. **What was the most important issue in the recent federal election?** a) tariffs b) public safety and justice  
 c) Canada-U.S. relations d) tax cuts

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Which political party won the fewest seats in the recent election?** a) Green Party b) Conservative Party  
 c) New Democratic Party d) Bloc Québécois

**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?** Very few Canadians voted in advance polls.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. **True** or **False?** The Liberals won a majority government in the recent election.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. **True** or **False?** Jagmeet Singh announced he would step down as party leader.

**C. Fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.**

7. There are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ elected MPs in Ottawa.

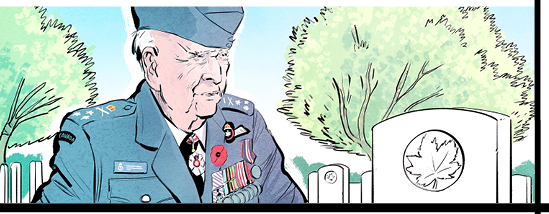
8. Prime Minister Carney met with U.S. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in early May. (2)

9. Pierre Poilievre will run in an Alberta \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

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

10. As you see it, what was the significance of the recent election? Give reasons to support your response.

**Celebrating Canada’s Courage During WWII**

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Eighty years ago, in 1945, as World War II was winding down, Canadian soldiers helped free an entire country—the Netherlands. The Dutch in northwest Europe had suffered under a brutal **Nazi** **occupation** for four gruelling years. People were starving, many cities were destroyed, and despair was a daily reality.

The First Canadian Army was Canada’s main fighting force in northwest Europe. They faced fierce obstacles in the push to **liberate** the Netherlands. They fought strong resistance to deliver desperately needed food and aid to towns and cities. The price was high. Some 7600 Canadians lost their lives. But their sacrifice was not in vain. On May 5, 1945, German forces in the Netherlands surrendered. Three days later, all fighting stopped and the **Allies** declared Victory in Europe   
(V-E Day).

**An emotional return**

The Dutch never forgot the Canadians' courage and losses. A warm connection formed between the two countries has lasted for decades. In early May, 22 Canadian veterans made a moving return to the nation they helped set free. They were part of a Canadian delegation marking the 80th anniversary of the war ending.

Now in their late 90s or older, the veterans were warmly welcomed. Dutch residents lined streets and attended ceremonies in their honour. They waved Canadian flags, decorated their homes with red maple leafs, and took photos with the vets, eager to express their appreciation.

“It’s a sense of wonder,” said former pilot George Brewster. At 102, he was the oldest returning vet. He was deeply moved by the reception after all these years.

**The tide of war**

Liberating the Netherlands was part of a longer conflict. During the war's first phase, Germany held most of western and central Europe. Great Britain and the Commonwealth (including Canada) fought alone.

But in late 1941, the Soviet Union and the U.S. joined the war against the Axis. The Allies began to build up their military resources. On June 6, 1944, U.S., British, and Canadian forces crossed the English Channel and invaded “Fortress Europe.”   
The tide was turning.

Canada played a critical role in the invasion, known as D-Day. Over 14,000 Canadians landed at Juno Beach, one of five main sectors along France’s Normandy coast. As they approached the shore, they faced pounding surf, barbed wire, and enemy fire.

The Canadians advanced further inland on the first day than any other Allied force. By nightfall, 1074 of them had died.

The bravery of young Canadian soldiers changed the course of the war. The Juno landing and the fighting afterwards helped the Allies' armies advance into occupied France.

The Canadians pushed toward Caen, a strategic crossroads. In August, they helped close the Falaise Pocket, trapping 50,000 German soldiers. That collapsed Nazi defenses in Normandy.

Next, the First Canadian Army pushed across northern France and into Belgium. The terrain was difficult, the weather harsh, and the enemy resisted. German soldiers realized their homeland was now threatened.

It was the coldest winter in 50 years. Rain, snow, and icy temperatures turned the low-lying landscape into a muddy **quagmire**. Troops advancing along narrow **dikes** were exposed to German attacks.

The Canadians crossed open causeways under heavy fire. They suffered many **casualties**. Yet they went on to open the port of Antwerp so the Alliescould get supplies as they advanced into Germany. It was a turning point.

Many street battles were difficult and fierce. Often every building and every block was fiercely contested. Many civilians fed and sheltered the Canadians, and risked their own lives to pass on information.

**A lasting legacy**

More than one million Canadians joined the military during WWII. Many were just teenagers who left schools and farms. Some 45,000 died in battle. Rows of graves in foreign lands mark their resting places.

As for those who returned? Tens of thousands were wounded. Some carried physical scars. Others bore invisible wounds. Yet they helped build postwar Canada, starting families, businesses, and communities.

Canada's part in liberating Europe—especially the Netherlands—helped define its identity as a supporter of human rights. In fact, the nation’s **peacekeeping** commitment can be traced to the courage our soldiers showed during the war.

And the friendships formed between Canadians and the Dutch aren’t just about the past. They’re examples of how we can build a better future.

**WWII: A Global Conflict**

World War II began on September 1, 1939 when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. The **Allies** (Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States) fought the **Axis** coalition (Germany, Italy, and Japan).

In June 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union, opening the Eastern Front in Europe. The U.S entered the war after Japan’s surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Germany surrendered in May 1945, and Japan surrendered in September 1945 after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

WWII was the deadliest war in history, resulting in the deaths of an estimated 70 to 85 million people, including many civilians.

**Did You Know**

Every year, the Netherlands sends thousands of tulip bulbs to Canada as thanks for its role in liberating the Netherlands and for sheltering the Dutch royal family in Ottawa during the war.

**Allies:** the WWII military coalition that opposed the Axis

**Axis:** the coalition that started WWII and opposed the Allies

**casualty:** someone injured or killed in an accident or war

**dike:** a dam or high wall built to prevent flooding

**liberate:** to free a country from the control of somebody else

**Nazi:** a member of the fascist party that controlled Germany from 1933 to 1945

**occupation:** when an army or group of people moves into and takes control of a place and the population

**peacekeeping:** to prevent or stop fighting between countries or groups

**quagmire:** an area of soft, wet ground that you sink into

**On The Lines**

1. Which countries were the **Allies** in World War II?

2. Which countries were the **Axis** powers in World War II?

3. When did World War II start? When did it end in Europe? When did it end in Asia?

4. When did the Allied armies invade Fortress Europe? What was the name of this invasion?

5. What was the name of Canada’s main fighting force?

6. Describe the conditions faced by many Dutch civilians under the German occupation.

7. Describe the conditions faced by Canadian soldiers. How many Canadians were killed?

8. Describe how the Dutch people remember and appreciate what Canadian soldiers did in 1944-1945.

9. What did some Canadian veterans recently do? Describe the response that they received.

**Questions for Further Thought**

1. Thousands of Canadian soldiers lost their lives in battle trying to free Europe from Nazi rule in World War II. What do you think helped motivate soldiers to keep fighting in spite of the terrible conditions?

2. If you could speak to one of Canada’s veterans who helped free the Netherlands, what questions would you ask? What else would you want to say to this person?

3. Would you consider a career with the Canadian Forces in the future? Why or why not?

**Questions For Online Exploration**

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

1. Watch this video of Liberation Day celebrations in the Netherlands:  
**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\_iSRi2VMVw** [2:30]

In what ways did participants show their appreciation to Canadian veterans?

2. Find out more about the gift of 100,000 tulip bulbs from Princess Juliana of the Netherlands to Canada: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOEtyN-RWAg&t=194s** [5:15]

Why was a gift of tulips given to Canada? How does this gift continue to remind Canadians of the appreciation of the Dutch people for their liberation?

3. Listen to a 91-year-old Dutch woman share her memories of being liberated by Canadian soldiers in 1945: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6-oMt8PvCU**

What special memories of that day have stayed with her for over 80 years?

4. A group of 21 Canadian WWII veterans returned to the Netherlands for the 80th anniversary of the end of the war. Watch their emotional return: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmivedodXoc** [1:10]

Why might veterans want to return to the Netherlands for this celebration in spite of their advanced age?

5. What do a 101-year-old war veteran and an 18-year-old Dutch student have in common? Find out how they became pen pals and eventually met during this year’s 80th anniversary celebrations:  
**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=040kfU2ifRM** [2:26]

Why do you think the young man stayed in touch with the veteran after his school project was over? How do you think this might have affected the Canadian veteran?

6. Visit the Canadian Armed Forces website to see where Canadian forces are stationed. Choose one of the current operations. Click on it and read about what Canadian soldiers are doing: **https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/list.html** What did you learn?

**Putting It All Together**

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

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Which country did Germany invade to start World War II?**  
 a) Soviet Union b) France  
 c) Poland d) Netherlands

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Which country was an Axis power in World War II?**  
 a) United Kingdom b) Italy  
 c) United States d) France

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Canada’s main fighting force in Europe in 1944 was called:** a) Canadian Expeditionary Corps b) First Canadian Army  
 c) Canadian Second Field Army d) Canadian Marine Corps

**B.** Mark the statements **T** (**True**) or **F** (**Fals**e). 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?** The Allied invasion of Fortress Europe was called D-Day.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. **True** or **False?** 45,000 Canadian soldiers lost their lives in the campaign to liberate the Netherlands.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. **True** or **False?** Japan surrendered before Germany in World War II.

**C. Fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.**

7. Allied Troops landed in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , France on June 6, 1944.

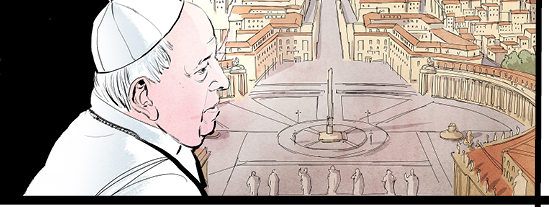
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years have passed since the end of World War II.

9. Twenty-two Canadian \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ returned to the Netherlands to participate in V-E Day ceremonies.

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

10. "***Stories about soldiers’ bravery are powerful reminders that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when they stand up for what’s right.***" What is your understanding of this quote? Support your response with facts from the article.

**The Passing of A Beloved Pontiff**



On Easter Monday, April 21, the world woke to the news that Pope Francis had died. The pope is the leader of the world’s 1.3 billion Catholics. The cause of his death at age 88 was a stroke followed by cardiac arrest.

**Cardinal** Kevin Farrell, who delivered the sad news, spoke of Francis’s deep faith.

“[Pope Francis] taught us to live the values of the **Gospel** with fidelity, courage, and universal love, especially in favour of the poorest and most marginalized,” the cardinal said.

**A last Easter blessing**

The last months of the **pontiff**’s life were marked by declining health. In February, he was hospitalized for 38 days with double pneumonia.

Yet he returned to work, even making a final appearance on Easter Sunday. An aide read his words because he was too weak. But he personally blessed the throngs of the faithful in St. Peter’s Square. “Brothers and sisters, Happy Easter!” he said.

**About Pope Francis**

The late Pope, named Jorge Mario Bergoglio by his Italian parents, was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He entered the **seminary** in his early twenties.

Francis was a Jesuit, a Catholic order dedicated to missionary work and education. His devotion impressed Pope John Paul II, who appointed him a **bishop** in 1992. From then on, his rise in the Church was rapid.

In March 2013, cardinals elected him the 266th pope—the first‑ever Jesuit pope and the first from the Americas.

The new pope chose the name Francis in honour of Saint Francis of Assisi who lived modestly. Francis followed in his footsteps. He chose to live in a small guest house. Other popes had lived in lavish residences.

He had a new style of leadership, too. He wore simple **vestments**, mingled with crowds, and was known for washing prisoners’ feet. He called for a “Church of the poor, for the poor.”

He focused on mercy, inclusion, and social justice. He once asked, “Who am I to judge?” when questioned about his open approach to LGBTQ+ issues.

He backed the fight against climate change, publishing an **encyclical** on the subject. And he called for economic systems that served people rather than profit. He even sought greater accountability for the Church’s decades-long abuse scandals, despite meeting with resistance.

**Taking some stands**

He came to Canada in 2022 to address another issue. The visit followed a meeting at the Vatican with Indigenous delegates from Canada. The group was seeking an apology for the Church’s role in Canada’s Residential Schools, which operated from 1831 to 1996. At least 4000 Indigenous children died and thousands more were abused in these institutions.

He begged forgiveness “for the evil committed,” telling school Survivors and others that “every child [should be] treated with love, honour, and respect.”

Yet some felt Francis’s words of regret didn’t go far enough. And he did preserve some of the Church’s more conservative positions. For example, women still can't be **ordained** and the Church maintains a hard line on women’s reproductive rights. But few doubted his sincerity.

**The world grieves**

On the news of his death, social media lit up with tributes from world leaders and people of all faiths. From Jerusalem to Buenos Aires, vigils marked the loss.

Francis’s body lay in state for three days at St. Peter’s **Basilica**. Some 250,000 people filed past to pray and leave flowers. On April 26, hundreds of thousands more filled St. Peter’s Square for the funeral. Broadcast globally, the Mass included prayers in many languages and the soaring voices of the Sistine Chapel Choir. Heads of state, royalty, and religious leaders from every continent were there. Among them were Canada’s Governor General Mary Simon, U.S. President Donald Trump, and Prince William of the United Kingdom. But migrants and the poor also attended.

After the Mass, 150,000 people watched as the Pope’s coffin was carried to Saint Mary Major. That is the simple basilica where he chose to be buried. He is the first pope in a century not to be interred in St. Peter’s Basilica.

**A new pope is elected**

On May 8, after just a two-day conclave, 69-year-old Robert Francis Prevost of Chicago was elected. The first U.S. pope spent years as a missionary in Peru. His papal name is Leo XIV. He, too, is a humble man who will likely focus on social justice.

“We must… be a Church that builds bridges,” he told crowds in St. Peter’s Square. “Hand in hand with God let us move forward.”

**Did You Know?**

Of the estimated 2.5 billion Christians in the world, more than half are Roman Catholics.

**How The Catholic Church Is Run**

When a pope dies or resigns, the Catholic Church enters a period known as the conclave. The word “conclave” comes from the Latin for “with key” because cardinals are locked inside the Vatican until they choose a new pope. Only cardinals under the age of 80, of whom there are 135, can vote. They have a special Mass, then mark secret ballots. To be elected, a candidate must receive a two-thirds majority. After each round of voting, ballots are burned. Black smoke from the Sistine Chapel chimney means no decision. White smoke? A new pope is chosen.

The body that organizes the conclave is called the Holy See—the central governing, administrative, and spiritual authority of the Catholic Church. It has existed since the earliest days of Christianity and is recognized internationally as a sovereign entity. It can conduct diplomatic relations and sign treaties with nations around the world.

The Vatican, located in Rome, is the physical space where the Holy See operates. With about 1000 residents, it is the smallest independent nation in the world, covering just 49 hectares. As leader of the Roman Catholic Church, the pope heads both the Vatican and the Holy See.

**basilica:** a church that has been given special recognition by the pope for its historical, spiritual, or architectural significance

**bishop:** a person who holds a high position in a Christian church. A bishop is often in charge of a group of churches.

**cardinal:** the highest rank of priest in the Catholic Church

**encyclical:** an official letter from the pope sent to all bishops making a statement about the teachings of the Church

**Gospel:** the lessons taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles

**ordination:** the act or ceremony of making somebody a priest, minister, or rabbi

**pontiff:** another name for the pope

**seminary:** a college that trains priests, ministers, or rabbis

**vestments:** the special clothes worn by priests during church ceremonies

**On The Lines**

1. How many Christians are there in the world? How many Christians are Roman Catholics?

2. Where is the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church located?

3. The leader of the Roman Catholic Church is called the:

4. Name the Catholic leader who recently passed away. How old was he when he died?

5. How long had he held this position?

6. Which country was he from?

7. Why did he choose the name Francis?

8. When did he visit Canada?

9. What was the purpose of his visit?

10. The secret meeting where cardinals vote is called a:

11. Who was elected as the new pope on May 8? What papal name did he choose?

**Questions For Further Thought**

1. The news of Pope Francis’s passing had a huge impact around the world. What reasons can you suggest to explain why hundreds of thousands of people paid tribute to the Pope on social media, in person, or by watching the broadcast of his funeral?

2. The article states: “***Pope Francis chose the name Francis in honour of St. Francis of Assisi who was known to cherish all creation, to live modestly, and to promote peace.***” As you see it, how did Pope Francis’s actions demonstrate these qualities?

3. Pope Francis “***will be remembered as a bridge between tradition and modernity.***” Which modern issues were important to Pope Francis? As you see it, is it important for a pope to be involved with current issues?

4. Pope Francis visited Canada only once, in 2022. As you see it, what was the significance of this visit?

**Questions For Online Exploration**

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

1. Watch the final public appearance of Pope Francis on Easter:   
**https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6730369** [0:57].

What did you observe?

2. Pope Francis was elected to the papacy in 2013:   
**https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/1.6532019** [3:34].

Why were some Catholics surprised by this choice?

3. Find out more about Pope Francis’s apology to Indigenous Peoples in Canada:   
**https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/1.6532019** [3:34].

How did his apology affect the Residential School Survivors at the ceremony?

4. Learn more about how Pope Francis advocated for climate change:   
**https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6732357** [2:09]

Who did the Pope hope to influence with his writing on this topic? As you see it, was he successful in influencing others to care for the planet?

5. View a timeline of the Pope's accomplishments during his 12-year papacy:  
**https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/253852/a-timeline-of-pope-francis-12-years-as-pope**.

Describe one event from the timeline and how it shows mercy, inclusion, or social justice.

6. Learn more about how a new pope is chosen: **https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6730531**[4:07]

What did you learn?

**Putting It All Together**

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

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. **How many Roman Catholics are there in the world?**  
 a) 675 million b) 1.3 billion  
 c) 2.5 billion d) 4.6 billion

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Pope Francis belonged to a Catholic order focused on missionary work and education called the:**  
 a) Jesuits b) Dominicans  
 c) Oblates d) Franciscans

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. **The secret meeting where cardinals vote for a new pope is called a:** a) conclave b) conquest  
 c) contest d) convention

**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?** Pope Francis was from Argentina.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. **True** or **False?** The headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church is the Vatican.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. **True** or **False?** Pope Francis visited Canada last year.

**C. Fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.**

7. There are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ billion Christians in the world.

8. Smoke from burning papal ballots is coloured \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when cardinals select a new pope.

9. Pope Leo XIV is the first pontiff from the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (2)

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

10. As you see it, what impact did Pope Francis have on the Roman Catholic Church and on the world? Give reasons to support your response.

**Fighting Back Against ‘Forever Chemicals’**

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Donnie Gallant lives in Hazelbrook, PEI. For about half a year now, at a cost of $1200 a month, the provincial government has been supplying him and nine other local residents with bottled water.

The reason? **Health Canada** says drinking water should contain less than 30 **nanograms** per litre of certain human-made chemicals called PFAS. Yet some nearby wells contain over 700 nanograms per litre.

**About PFAS**

What are PFAS chemicals and why are they dangerous? The term PFAS is short for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances. First created in the late 1930s, these substances resist heat, grease, and water. That’s why, since the 1950s, they have been used to make a huge range of products—everything from cookware to takeout containers, carpets, firefighting products, and even makeup. Some 9000 PFAS compounds are used in industries and consumer goods.

PFAS are so tough, they’re called forever chemicals. They have a unique structure. Chains of carbon atoms fuse to fluorine atoms. They form what’s called a   
carbon-fluorine bond—one of the strongest bonds in chemistry. This bond isn't easily damaged by heat, sunlight, or biological activity. So PFAS can stay intact for thousands of years.

We use and discard so many products made with PFAS that they end up in landfills. They leach into the soil and enter the food chain. Every day, PFAS are flushed down drains and into oceans, lakes, and rivers. And every day, as furniture, electronics, and other products containing PFAS age and break down, they create PFAS dust, which people inhale or ingest.

Researchers have found PFAS chemicals in the air and in rain; in Great Lakes fish; in makeup, food packaging, and hygiene products; and in school uniforms, rainwear, and kids’ winter gloves.

**A toxic brew**

The big concern? Health Canada warns that PFAS can impact the liver, the kidneys, and the thyroid gland. They interfere with the immune and nervous systems. They can even impact a person’s **metabolism** and body weight.

“They attach to the proteins in our blood and can accumulate in our bodies, particularly in the liver and the kidneys,” said Quebec researcher Dr. Amira Aker. “We can also pass the chemicals to a growing fetus, so even newborn babies have PFAS in their bodies.”

Two types of PFAS are linked to liver disease and unsafe pregnancies. The first is perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). This chemical repels stains, grease, soil, and water. The second, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), is used in cookware, carpets,and fabrics. Both are banned in Canada.

That’s a good first step. But a 2019 study showed that 98.5 percent of Canadians already have some PFAS in their blood.

**Trapping PFAS**

There are ways to protect against PFAS. One solution is granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration. It works by passing water through carbon that traps PFAS particles. Home filtration units use this method to remove PFAS like PFOA and PFOS.

Other methods include ion exchange resins—tiny beads help clean water by attaching onto harmful PFAS. The PFAS have a negative charge and the resin beads have a positive charge. When water flows through, the PFAS sticks to the beads (sort of like magnets) and the clean water keeps going. This approach works well for getting rid of PFAS that other filters might miss.

Then there’s reverse **osmosis**. It pushes water through a membrane that blocks most PFAS. This method works well in private wells or households using under-sink treatment systems.

For land contamination near airports, firefighter training sites, and industrial zones, authorities sometimes eliminate PFAS using soil **excavation** and   
high-temperature **incineration**. But this approach is costly and leaves some PFAS in the environment.

None of these techniques destroy PFAS, however. But that may soon change. Researchers at the University of British Columbia have developed a silica-based material for a water treatment system that actually destroys the chemicals. This system combines a carbon filter with a **catalyst** derived from farm or forest waste. It breaks down PFAS into harmless components.

**On the legal front**

But what’s being done now to control the use of PFAS? Environmental researcher Fe de Leon says that restricting individual PFAS isn’t effective. For example, PFOA was replaced with another PFAS called GenX. Now GenX has also been linked to liver-related health issues.

So last March, the federal government added the entire class of PFAS chemicals to the official list of toxic substances. Only one subset of PFAS was excluded—fluoropolymers, which present a lower health risk. Classifying nearly all PFAS as toxic allows Canada to start restricting their use in products like firefighting foam and for other industrial purposes.

**Safety tips**

Meanwhile, knowing where these chemicals show up can help you make safer choices. Products with PFAS often have “perfluoro” in their ingredients Avoid them if possible. Look for “PFAS-free” labels on clothes, cosmetics, fast food wrappers and so on. Get rid of old or scratched non-stick pans, which can release PFAS. And have your family consider buying a filter that is certified to cut PFAS in drinking water.

**The Teflon Story**

In 1938 DuPont scientist Roy Plunkett discovered one of the first PFAS by accident when he was researching new refrigerants. Nothing would stick to the substance he created and it didn’t react to other chemicals. Dupont used it to make Teflon pans.

**catalyst:** a substance that produces or speeds up a chemical reaction without being affected itself

**excavate:** to make a hole or hollow place in by digging

**Health Canada:** the federal department responsible for national health policy and safety

**incinerate:** to burn (something) completely

**metabolism:** the processes in plants and animals where food is changed into energy or used to make cells and tissues

**nanogram:** a unit of mass equal to one billionth of a gram often used in science to measure very tiny amounts of substances

**osmosis:** the passage of a liquid through a membrane

**On The Lines**

1. What does **PFAS** stand for?

2. When were these ‘forever chemicals’ first discovered? What is their purpose?

3. Why are they called ‘forever chemicals’?

4. How widespread are these forever chemicals in the environment?

5. Why are scientists worried about these chemicals? Explain.

6. List at least two ways people can protect themselves from PFAS chemicals.

7. What is the problem with all current filtration techniques?

8. How has the federal government decided to approach the PFAS problem? Explain.

**Questions For Further Thought**

1. When PFAS were first introduced in the 1930s, they were considered helpful and versatile. As you see it, do the advantages of PFAS outweigh the risks? Give reason to support your response.

2. The article states that: “***98.5 percent of Canadians already have some PFAS in their blood.***” Respond to this fact. What feelings does it evoke and what thoughts does it provoke? Explain.

3. Under the heading Safety Tips, reread the suggestions for how to reduce your exposure to PFAS. Would you consider using any of these tips? Give examples to support your answer.

**Questions For On Line Exploration**

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

1. Find out which household products contain PFAS:  
**https://time.com/6281242/pfas-forever-chemicals-home-beauty-body-products/**

Based on this image, do you think it is possible to avoid PFAS completely? Explain.

2. Find out more about what Canada is doing about “forever chemicals”:  
**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAQBdCxP03U** [2:02]

What are some actions the Canadian government has taken to limit PFAS?

3. Find out which food packaging products contain PFAS and which ones don’t:   
**https://www.ecocenter.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/CEH%20PFAS%20in%20Foodware%20Infographic.pdf**

Name 3 materials that are PFAS free.

4. Are compostable food packaging products better for the environment? Find out if these “environmentally friendly” options contain PFAS:   
**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWkBsWq0pyA**

What did you learn?

5. Learn about what University of British Columbia researchers are developing to remove PFAS from the water supply: **https://globalnews.ca/video/9572316/ubc-develops-water-treatment-system-to-remove-forever-chemicals**

Why are researchers hopeful about this technology?

6. Check out this list of 10 simple things your family can do to reduce your exposure to PFAS:  
**https://cleanwater.org/10-things-you-can-do-about-toxic-pfas-chemicals**

Which tip(s) could be helpful for your family? Explain.

**Putting It All Together**

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

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. **PFAS are often called '**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **chemicals**'  
 a) forbidden b) permanent  
 c) durable d) forever

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. **When did manufacturing companies begin to use PFAS chemicals?**  
 a) 1930s b) 1950s  
 c) 1970s d) 1990s

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. **A unit of mass equal to one billionth of a gram used to measure very tiny amounts is called a:** a) centigram b) nanogram  
 c) milligram d) microgram

**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?** Agriculture Canada is responsible for regulating PFAS chemicals.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. **True** or **False?** PFAS chemicals can impact a baby before it is born.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. **True** or **False?** All PFAS substances have been added to an official toxic substances list.

**C. Fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.**

7. The first PFAS product was the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ frying pan made by Dupont.

8. Carbon-fluorine bonds are some of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ bonds in chemistry.

9. There are various ways to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ drinking water to avoid PFAS chemicals.

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

10. What steps would you recommend that someone who was concerned about PFAS chemicals take to reduce their exposure to these substances? Give reasons to support your response.

**Assessment Rubric**

This rubric may be helpful in providing students with formative, strength-based feedback and/or assessing students’ responses holistically. This easy-to-modify activity is included in the doc file which you can download from:   
**www.lesplan.com/subscribers**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **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 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. |

