

## 20–2: Understanding Nationalism

### WRITTEN RESPONSE

#### Assignment I

**Suggested Time: 20-25 minutes**

*Assignment I requires you to use the information below to write a response to the question on page 2.*

### Some options nations consider when shaping their responses to the rest of the world

#### isolationism

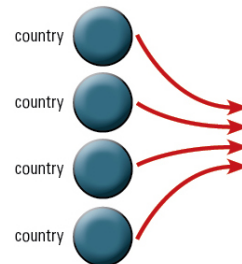


no contact

isolate = to cut off all contact

-ism = a belief system

#### multilateralism



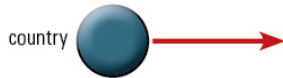
many acting together

multi- = many

lateral = side or part

-ism = a belief system

#### unilateralism



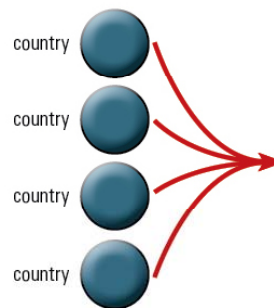
acting by oneself

uni- = one

lateral = side or part

-ism = a belief system

#### supranationalism

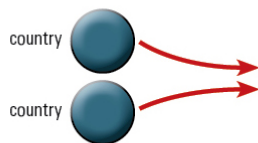


many acting as one

supra- = above

-ism = a belief system

#### bilateralism



two acting together

bi- = two

lateral = side or part

-ism = a belief system

## Assignment I

Which option(s) for responding to the rest of the world do you think best meet Canada's needs?



Write a response in paragraph form in which you **must**

- **identify** the option(s) for response that you think best meet Canada's needs
- **explain** why the option(s) best meet Canada's needs
- c) **support** your response by referring to your understanding of social studies

## Assignment II

**Suggested Time: 40-45 minutes**

*Assignment II requires you to write a response in which you interpret the three sources on page 4 to answer the question below.*

Some nation-states welcome the transition to internationalism, while others reject it.

a) What ideas do the sources communicate to you about the role of government in the world community?

**AND**

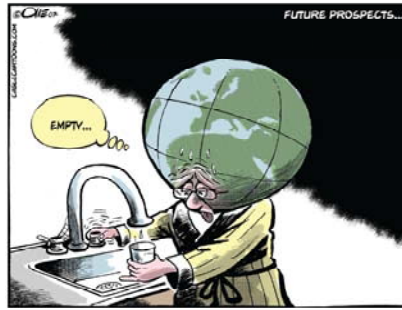
b) Considering the sources, what do you think should be the role of government in the world community?



Write a response in paragraph form in which you **must**

- **interpret** what **each** source tells you about the role of government in the world community
- **explain** your position on what the role of government in the world community should be
- **support** your interpretations and position by referring to the sources and your understanding of social studies

### Source I



### Source II



The Canadian Forces maintains a special Disaster Assistance Response Team. DART members are trained to respond quickly when a disaster occurs anywhere in the world. The badge on this DART member's arm says "Humanitas" — Latin for "humanity."

### Source III



Two officers from the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans show the nets used by the *Estai*, a Spanish fishing trawler. In 1995, Canada created an international uproar by seizing this trawler on the Nose of the Bank — in international waters. The small mesh in this net is illegal because it traps young turbot. Catching these young fish endangers fish stocks.

### Assignment III

**Suggested time: 40-45 minutes**

Your newspaper interviewed three citizens selected at random and asked them to respond to the following question:

#### **How should we respond to a weakening sense of national identity?**

##### **Citizen I**

Nations that are unified and that have a well-defined national identity are the ones that cope the best with the challenges of the 21st century. To succeed, everyone in a nation needs to agree on what's important and where the country is going. This is a competitive, dog-eat-dog world. There has never been a more urgent time to put regional, cultural, religious, and other loyalties aside. Multiculturalism and pluralism appear to work on paper, but to deal with economic crises, political instability, religious fundamentalism, and other growing concerns, the old adage applies: united we stand, divided we fall.

##### **Citizen II**

Nations need to have some sense of national identity or they wouldn't be nations. However, to assume that all other loyalties are irrelevant is foolish. Our strongest allegiance is to the aspect of life that is closest to us. These loyalties include those to our neighborhood, our ethnic group, or our social or religious community. There is no direct threat to Canada when people profess, "I'm an Albertan." Patriotic feelings towards a country do not require homogeneity. Diverse people can, and will, respond when their country needs them.

##### **Citizen III**

Nations are like dinosaurs: they have outlived their usefulness. The globalized world needs supranationalism and a cosmopolitan outlook. As the world is confronted with "problems without passports," the world needs to respond with a "world without borders," where people, products, ideas, and technology can move freely. A weakening national identity is not a concern, but rather the first step towards world citizenship.

### Assignment III

Your task is to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper about the following question:

#### **How should we respond to a weakening sense of national identity?**



Write a letter to the editor in which you **must**

- **explore** the issue of how Canada should respond to a weakening sense of national identity
- **analyze** various points of view on the question
- **identify** your point of view on the question
- **support** your point of view with ideas from your knowledge of social studies

## Assignment I: Possible Student Responses

a) Answers will vary, but could include some of the following points:

- **Isolationism:** Students may support this choice by referring to the freedom it allows countries to act without interference by others, to the isolationist government's ability to focus on its own citizens, or to the ability of a country to keep valuable resources for itself. Isolationism prevents the country from negative exposure to a "planetary police" or global currency, or from having an undesirable global ideology imposed on its citizens.
- **Unilateralism:** Students may support this choice by claiming that it allows countries to maintain their independence and sovereignty, yet make a choice to be involved in international affairs when and how they choose. It could be seen as a logical way to maintain values the country may believe to be important, or an opportunity to show the world its resolve on important issues.
- **Bilateralism:** Students may support this choice by suggesting some of the benefits of working with a partner: more can be achieved and resources and ideas can be pooled to reduce costs. Students might also note the advantages of working only with people who share similar values or ideology.
- **Multilateralism:** Students may support this choice by suggesting that it is an excellent way to address global problems, that it allows all countries to influence or have a voice in international affairs, and that it is cost-effective and promotes global stability. Students may refer to Canada's humanitarian obligations or our ability to influence world policies and become a role model for middle-ranked countries.
- **Supranationalism:** Students may support this choice by presenting it as the most viable way to approach the future, by stating the benefits of allowing all countries to play a role in forming world policies, or by developing the idea that this kind of arrangement will reduce the likelihood of global war or economic collapse. Students may indicate that no single country is more important than the world community.

b) In terms of Canada's needs, students may refer to facts such as that Canada

- shares a continent with the United States
- is a large country that is potentially vulnerable to attack
- has a democratic, parliamentary government
- is a former British colony that has kept ties with Britain
- has a reputation as a peacekeeper
- is a leader amongst middle-ranked countries
- is pluralistic and has a formal multicultural policy
- has a liberal immigration policy

- contributes little to foreign aid
  - has a modest military capability
  - recognizes its humanitarian responsibility
- c) Students could use any number of examples, including (but not limited to) the following:
- Isolationism: 19th century Japan, 19th century Britain, Switzerland, The United States of America
  - Unilateralism: Cold War policies, the anti-nuclear positions of Austria or Japan, America's decision to invade Iraq
  - Bilateralism: Canada–USA Air Quality Agreement, American–Soviet Arms Agreements, NORAD
  - Multilateralism: the Kyoto Protocol, the International Law of the Sea, NATO, the International Criminal Court
  - Supranationalism: the work of the UN and its agencies, the success or problems of the EU, the adoption of a Universal Bill of Rights

### **Assignment II: Possible Student Responses**

- a) Answers will vary, but could include some of the following points:

#### Source I

- implies that the governments of the world have not done a good job protecting vital resources
- suggests that governments need to rectify the issue of the lack of clean drinking water

#### Source II

- recognizes that governments may recognize the need to respond to international crises and disasters
- suggests that governments need to have humanitarian aid available to others in times of crisis

#### Source III

- shows that governments are responsible for law enforcement
- shows that governments may need to take unilateral action to protect their self-interest
- raises concerns about maintaining sovereignty over vital matters

- b) Answers will vary, but could include some of the following points:

- Students may support the position that governments should embrace their role in a world community and participate in as many different organizations and agreements as possible to achieve a high level of international cooperation. They



- may argue that this is necessary to preserve the earth's shrinking resources or that it is morally correct to promote worldwide social justice. Evidence to support this position could include
- the interconnectedness of many global problems
  - the necessity and success of international law
  - the sense that the world is a "global village"
- Students may support a middle-of-the-road position. They could argue that the government should reach out to the world community under some circumstances and shut out the world community in others. In this argument, the government should determine its international priorities according to its own country's best interests. Evidence could include
    - the possibility that Canada might need assistance from other countries at some point down the road
    - the benefit to Canada of creating a politically stable and economically prosperous world community
  - Students may support a very limited international role and argue that, in the highly competitive global environment, governments need to protect their own citizens and promote their own self-interest in international affairs. Evidence could include
    - the idea that Canada has many resources (water, oil) that other countries want, so Canada must ensure its citizens have enough first
    - the cost involved in programs like DART or peacekeeping
    - the need to protect our economic well-being from countries that act in ways counter to our best interests (e.g., Spain's fishing trawlers)

### **Assignment III: Possible Student Responses**

Answers will vary, but could include some of the following points:

- Citizen I is a strong nationalist who sees the weakening sense of national identity as a serious problem that needs to be corrected. This person believes that a country's success and survival depends on the loyalty of citizens who must overcome their plurality and work together. This person wants the government to impose centralized solutions on domestic problems.
- Citizen II has a more moderate view about the importance of national identity. This person realizes that national identity is something we cannot live without, but believes that it shares importance with our other loyalties. This person accepts pluralism and believes that there is strength in diversity.
- Citizen III believes that a weakening sense of national identity is a natural occurrence and precedes the development of a globalized world. This person

believes that nationalist sentiments prevent the world community from progressing and inhibit the development of solutions to urgent global problems.

- Students who write letters in support of maintaining or revitalizing national identity could argue that pluralism and diversity contribute to the weakness of the nation-state because citizens do not always share common goals. Evidence to support the benefits of a strong, single national identity include the economic and political resurgence of Stalinist Russia or Nazi Germany and the success of American “melting pot” concept of citizenship. Evidence against a pluralistic country might include the divisions created by Canada’s attempt to impose conscription in World War II or to deal with minorities perceived as dangerous during the two world wars.
- A moderate letter might argue that national identity is not at risk because citizens have a natural affiliation for their country, so there is no need to constantly question, challenge, or promote it. People who belong to a nation-state will answer its call when needed. An example might include the show of support for national unity during the 1995 Québec referendum.
- Students writing in support of phasing out national identity could argue that the problems of a globalized world require a significant commitment to internationalism. Evidence could include global problems like pollution or global warming. Students might refer to the problems of a supranational organization, such as the UN, and the difficulty of reaching agreement on many issues. They may also argue that it is useless for a government to try to enforce homogeneity when technology, like the Internet or satellite transmissions, is making everyone in the world more cosmopolitan.