

**20–1: Exploring Nationalism**  
**WRITTEN RESPONSE**

**Assignment I**

**Suggested time: 30 to 45 minutes**

*Examine the following sources and complete Assignment I.*

**Assignment I**

**Examine each source.**

**Write a paragraph in which you do the following:**

a) **Interpret** each source, **explain** the perspective(s) presented, and **discuss** the source's links to ideas about nationalism.

**AND**

b) **Identify** and **explain** one or more relationships between the sources.

**Source I**

Nationalism, reflecting the urge of self-determination, concerns the aspirations of a people, who believe themselves to be united, to rule themselves and not be controlled by others. The kindred ideas of nationalism and self-determination both act as forces for convergence or divergence.

— Louis L. Snyder, *Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, 1990

## Source II



## Source III

A new confidence has taken hold among Canadians and with it a new form of nationalism is flowering. This is not the exclusionary economic nationalism of old — not the “we must close the shutters against American influence” kind — nor is it the exclusionary ethnic form of nationalism so often evident in other places around the world.

Rather, Canada is indeed blazing the trail of 21st-century nations: globally engaged, socially liberal, culturally diverse. After years of struggling for an international identity, Canada has found a unique voice in the chorus of nations.

— Edward Greenspon, from *The New Canada*, 2004

## Assignment I: Possible Student Responses

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

### Source I

- contends that nationalism and the desire for independence go hand in hand.
- suggests that nationalism can help build nation-states, or it can break them up.

### Source II

- suggests that nationalism is like a fatal disease.
- indicates that nationalism has caused the deaths of many people through warfare.

### Source III

- states that Canada is a role model for a new type of nationalism that is not about excluding other countries for economic reasons or excluding other people for ethnic reasons.
- this new nationalism embraces diversity and internationalism.
- suggests that this new, more outward-focused nationalism is a positive change for the future.

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

- The three sources focus on nationalism and agree that some forms of nationalism are exclusionary and harmful.
- Source III describes how nationalism can evolve to a more positive form, whereas Source II has a darker message, stating that nationalism is responsible for many deaths.
- Sources II and III remind us that the “old” nationalism involved mistrust or hatred of anyone on the “outside.” Source I suggests that nationalism, in creating bonds between people (“us”), means other people will be excluded (“them”).
- Source I seems to agree with Source II, that nationalism may have a high cost. Source I suggests that nationalism leads to the desire to come together as a state or become independent of a state. Both desires likely have the result shown in Source II.

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**Assignment II**

**Suggested time: 90 to 105 minutes**

*Examine the following source and complete Assignment II.*

**Source**

The time for unilateral action is long past. If the international community cannot find immediate collective measures to address global issues, we will all pay the ultimate price.

**Assignment II**

**To what extent should we embrace the perspective(s) reflected in the source?**

**Write an essay in which you**

- a) **Analyze** the source and **demonstrate** an understanding of the perspective(s) it reflects.
- b) **Establish** and **argue** a position in response to the assignment question.
- c) **Support** your position and arguments using evidence from your knowledge and understanding of social studies.

## Assignment II: Possible Student Responses

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

- a) The source describes a world in crisis and maintains that international approaches must replace unilateral ones or everyone will perish.
- b) Students might choose to support or oppose the position taken in the source. If they support the position, they will likely argue that internationalism is the most viable way to combat the serious problems threatening humankind. They might name some of these problems (e.g., global warming, epidemics) and discuss how they are “problems without passports.” They may choose to denounce nationalism by claiming that nationalism helped create many of the problems the world currently faces (i.e., terrorism, warfare).

Other students might oppose the position in the source, arguing that internationalism is an unattainable ideal at this time. They may argue that because internationalism violates national sovereignty and restricts countries’ freedom to act in their best interest, it will never take priority over people’s emotional ties to local community and nation. Students might suggest that a basic part of human nature involves self-interest and that until people see their own welfare at stake in a global issue, they will not act. Students might also suggest that a “one size fits all” solution for global problems will not work — nations must have the ability to address global problems in ways that suit local circumstances.

A third argument might be to argue that a combination of nationalism and internationalism is the only realistic way to resolve global problems.

- c) Students could use any number of examples, including (but not limited to) the following:
  - o Pro-internationalist examples could include a discussion of successful UN actions (e.g., peacekeeping efforts during the Suez Canal crisis, eradication of smallpox).
  - o They may cite examples of international law (e.g., prosecution of people accused of crimes against humanity) and international treaties or agreements (e.g., Ottawa Convention, Kyoto Accord).
  - o They may refer to successful economic integration achieved through the EU, NAFTA, or the WTO.
  - o Other examples could include the response to pandemics, collective action against terrorism, military cooperation, and foreign aid during the Southeast Asia tsunami.

The ineffectiveness of unilateral action could be supported with a discussion of Canada’s unsuccessful attempts to protect the Grand Banks, the inability of Canada

alone to solve the problem of acid rain over the Great Lakes, and the difficulty of disarming one nation if its rivals are building weapons (e.g., Cold War arms race).

Students could argue against internationalism, citing examples like the reluctance of the US to sign international agreements such as the Kyoto Accord, the failure of trade sanctions against Mussolini, or the inability of the League of Nations to stop Japanese aggression in China. Students could also argue that applying the same international rules to all nations unfairly disadvantages developing nations (e.g., debt and the World Bank, environmental controls).

Pro-nationalism examples could include a discussion of how nationalism and identity are entwined. This discussion would likely focus on human nature and whether people will ever disregard local identities in favour of competing international ones. If students suggest that people can never make international identities their primary concern, then any response to global problems must include appeals to national identities and priorities.