

TEACHING
AND LEARNING
STRATEGIES

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

This teacher's resource includes a variety of teaching and learning strategies designed to provide you with many opportunities to engage students in the curriculum and to support them as they develop, communicate, and apply their knowledge and understanding of issues involving nationalism and as they hone the skills identified in the skills and processes section of the curriculum. In the process, they will become successful, thoughtful, interested, and active learners and critical thinkers.

CRITICAL THINKING

Various educators have defined critical thinking in various ways. In *Thoughtful Teachers, Thoughtful Learners: A Guide to Helping Adolescents Think Critically*, for example, Norman Unrau defined it as “a process of reasoned reflection on the meaning of claims about what to believe or what to do.” The issue questions in *Exploring Nationalism* reflect an approach that encourages critical thinking by presenting situations and responses to situations that foster the building of new understandings.

Key to critical thinking is establishing criteria that can be used to make critical judgments. The prologue to *Exploring Nationalism* reinforces the concept of critical thinking and provides activities that encourage students to use criteria as they make judgments in response to the issue questions and the issues raised by the inquiry questions. The activities in the student resource are specifically designed to provide students with many opportunities to engage in the process of critical reflection by analyzing and evaluating claims and by developing their own reasoned judgments in response to these claims — and in response to the issue questions.

INTEGRATING LITERACY INTO THE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

Teachers in secondary schools are often, by both education and preference, subject specialists. As a result, the idea of teaching literacy strategies in a content subject raises a number of questions.

- If I must also teach literacy skills, how will I cover the course content and encourage students to develop their critical thinking and social studies skills?
- Will including literacy instruction compromise my teaching of important social studies concepts?
- How am I going to engage students in the social studies requirements if I spend all kinds of time targeting literacy skills?

But content learning requires literacy; in fact, the social studies curriculum is well-suited to help students develop a range of important literacy skills that extend well beyond simple notions of reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing.

For students to engage with and apply important social studies content, they must become active readers, viewers, speakers, writers, representers, listeners, and thinkers. Teachers of social studies can promote students' learning by scaffolding content instruction on foundational, subject-relevant literacy skills. Literacy instruction in social studies, then, is not an “add-on”; rather, it is a framework that students can build on to engage in authentic, powerful critical thinking.

The following suggestions promote literacy-rich learning:

- **Introduce one strategy at a time.** The skill-development process included in *Exploring Nationalism* encourages this by focusing on one key social studies skill in each chapter. Once this skill is introduced, students have many opportunities to practise it.

- **Model specific strategies.** Do not expect all students to be able to apply a strategy that they have not seen at work. Make your own thinking explicit. To teach students how to identify bias in a research source, for example, show them an example and model aloud the thinking strategies you would use to raise questions about the author's point of view.
- **Provide many and varied opportunities for practice.** Do not abandon a strategy once students have learned it. Review and repeat relevant strategies to promote students' engagement and to scaffold new learning.
- **Provide continuous feedback.** Ask students to share their thinking with a partner. This kind of "accountable talk" promotes thinking and consolidates learning, so provide frequent opportunities for small-group or whole-class discussions or quick teacher–student conferences to ensure that students receive continuous feedback and that you have opportunities to check their understanding.
- **Don't assume prior learning.** Students arrive in your classroom with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Though they may know many things that you are unfamiliar with, they may not know things that you take for granted. Tools such as anticipation guides, KWL charts, and brainstorming can help students fill in gaps for themselves and provide you with crucial information.

CREATING STRATEGIC READERS IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

Because reading is a thinking activity, social studies teachers can enhance students' understanding of content, concepts, and approaches by promoting strategic reading in the classroom. Five strategies that promote students' engagement in and comprehension of text are

- making connections
- questioning
- inferring and visualizing
- determining important information
- synthesizing

By using these strategies during a lesson, students will get regular practice in simple strategies that will help them learn content, practise skills, and develop habits of mind that deepen their comprehension and promote their understanding of issues.

Previewing the Textbook

Do not assume that students arrive in your classroom knowing how textbooks work. Even older students can have gaps in their knowledge of textbook features. Whenever students begin to work with a new textbook, or whenever they are likely to encounter new textual features, building relevant knowledge and skill-development components into lessons is a sound idea.

Most textbooks share common features, such as a title, a table of contents, headings and sub-headings, margin features, a glossary, and an index. By drawing students' attention to these features, you can ensure that they know where to look for information as they read.

A chart like the following can serve as a graphic organizer for students' comments.

Textbook Feature	Strengths	Challenges	My Rating
			1 2 3 4 5

Various print features also help convey information and emphasize the writer's intended message. These features include charts, illustrations, diagrams, photographs, graphs, captions, maps, and type features (e.g., boldface type, type size and weight, italics).

Print features can be taught as part of a lesson that involves previewing the textbook, but these features can also be taught in the context of the skills needed to understand key concepts in a textbook. You can promote awareness of these strategies by checking regularly to ensure that students are using them during lessons and by modelling strategies through explicit instruction or "think-alouds."

Using a Think-Aloud to Teach Features of Print

Pause during the lesson to draw students' attention to a relevant feature of the text, such as boldface type, and describe aloud the thought processes that might be used by a strategic reader. Here is an example:

"When I skim and scan this page, three words jump out at me. For some reason, the writers of this textbook decided to highlight these words in boldface type. So, right away, I know that these words must be important. I'll pay particular attention to these words when I read the passage, checking that I understand their meaning and that I know why they're important to my understanding of this section of the textbook."

Using the Preview Strategy to Teach Features of Print

A preview strategy similar to the one used to teach the features of a textbook can be used to teach print features. In *Exploring Nationalism*, for example, a number of print features appear on the introductory spread of each related issue. You can select one or two spreads that are particularly rich in print features and ask students to examine them and fill in a chart like the following.

Print Feature	Why is it used?	How does it help me to understand the writer's message?
Bulleted list		

Teaching Text Structure

Text structure refers to the organizational framework used by a writer. A scientific report, for example, often uses a cause-and-effect structure. A diary often uses chronological sequence, while a memoir might use an episodic structure to organize several events involving various people at different times and in different places. Common text structures include chronological sequence, comparison and contrast, concept and definition, description, episodic, generalization and principle, process, and cause and effect. Longer works often use a number of text structures at different points.

When students understand text structure, they are more likely to be able to locate specific information, make relevant predictions, and comprehend what they read. Students can also use what they have read to help them organize their own writing.

Using Graphic Organizers to Teach Text Structure

Graphic organizers help make text structures visible to students. As they read, instruct students to jot notes on an appropriate graphic organizer. A Venn diagram, for example, can be used to demonstrate a structure that involves comparing and contrasting, while a flow chart or timeline can be used to illustrate a chronological structure.

Building Vocabulary

Students frequently encounter unfamiliar words and terms in content subjects. When conducting a tour through any textbook, always include a visit to the glossary and draw students' attention to features that promote learning. The boldface type in *Exploring Nationalism* supports the teaching of important conceptual vocabulary.

Other strategies that support vocabulary development include

- brainstorming — Working in pairs or small groups, students recall what they know or think they know about key words, terms, concepts, and phrases. They check their predictions during the learning period and then make revisions to consolidate their learning.
- prediction charts — While students are reading, they use context clues to infer the meaning of key words or phrases (e.g., the word “assimilation” on page 61 of *Exploring Nationalism*). Using a T-chart or notepaper divided into two columns, students write the word or phrase and predict its meaning. After reading, students compare their predictions with definitions.
- drawing a concept — Students sketch a concept taught in class to activate their visual memory and make their thinking explicit. The meaning of a noun phrase like “peer pressure” (p. 163, *Exploring Nationalism*) might be expressed visually as a sketch of people pressing down on an individual.
- graphic organizers — Many kinds of graphic organizers can support vocabulary development. A simple word-definition chart provides a built-in personal glossary for students and can be developed as the related issue progresses. More complex organizers, such as concept maps, build key vocabulary at the same time as they develop important concepts. Many graphic organizers are used in *Exploring Nationalism* to support the development of literacy strategies. In addition, *Dinah Zike's Foldables* (Glencoe/McGraw-Hill) is an excellent source of interactive organizers.

Concept Walls and Word Walls

A concept wall or word wall is an organized collection of words and phrases displayed prominently in the classroom so that it can be easily read by all students. These walls support vocabulary and concept development by ensuring that key concepts are highlighted and by providing continuing cues to students as they work through a unit of study or other defined learning period. These walls change often. Once students show that they have mastered the concepts, definitions, and vocabulary posted, it is time to start a new wall.

Concept walls and word walls can take many different forms, depending on the purpose of the collection. They may include

- key vocabulary for a forthcoming related issue or chapter — If the concepts or words are posted in advance, they can be taught directly as a pre-reading strategy. For a particular chapter, this kind of wall might include all the concepts and words highlighted in boldface.
- a cumulative vocabulary collection — This might begin with a short list of key words or concepts. New words or concepts can be added as they are identified as important to students' knowledge of content and understanding of issues.
- key concepts — These might be included on a chart that begins with a list of foundational concepts and terms relevant to a particular area of study. New words and concepts can be added, and the chart can be reorganized as the unit develops. In some cases, a mind map can provide the framework for the developing wall.
- words that present spelling challenges.
- definitions — These can be built using, for example, construction paper folded like a greeting card. In print that is big enough for all students to read, write the word on the front of the card and the definition inside. Students can read the definition by opening the card.

Making Connections

Making connections is a key comprehension skill. Students must connect prior knowledge to new learning, familiar text to a new one, classroom learning to real-life applications. A number of strategies help students do this.

- Personal response prompts — Ask students to pause during reading and give them prompts to help them reflect orally or in writing: “This reminds me of . . .” or “This event makes me feel as if . . .” The narrative of *Exploring Nationalism* includes many opportunities to do this.
- Comparisons with other sections of the textbook — The CheckBack and CheckForward margin feature, for example, either reminds students of something they have already read or refers them to something they will read in a later chapter.
- Now-and-then charts — Comparing current events with past events provides highly engaging learning opportunities. You might, for example, help students make connections by comparing ethnic Tibetans’ struggle for self-determination with that of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The struggle of Aboriginal peoples is explored in Chapter 8, and students may enjoy comparing what is happening in Canada with what they learned earlier about the situation in Tibet.

Activating Prior Knowledge

Students’ previous knowledge plays a key role in their ability to build new learning. A variety of strategies can be used to help them activate this knowledge.

- Two-column charts — Instruct students to create two columns in their notebook or to fold a sheet of paper lengthwise. In the left column, tell them to write quotations or facts drawn from the textbook or to note a visual, such as a photograph. In the right column, students record their responses to the item listed in the left column.

Quotation, Fact, or Visual from the Textbook	This reminds me of . . .

- KWL charts — These charts help students make connections by thinking about what they already know about a subject. They also help engage students in their own learning by helping them keep track of information as they read.

K	W	L
What do I already KNOW or think I know about this topic?	What do I WANT to know or think I need to know?	What have I LEARNED about this topic?

- Think-pair-share — This simple oral strategy asks students to think on their own about what they already know or think they know about a topic, then share their thinking with a partner. The partners then share their thinking with groups of four, six, or eight or with the whole class. Students collectively accumulate previous knowledge about an issue or a topic and develop and refine their thinking. Think-pair-share is also frequently used as an after-reading strategy to consolidate learning. At the end of this process, the partners share and refine their ideas and responses.

- Oral responses — Encouraging whole-class or small-group discussions before studying a new topic can activate students' existing knowledge and experience and provide helpful planning information for teachers.

Making Inferences

Making inferences is a complex skill that requires students to read between the lines. During reading, students must construct meaning by making inferences in a variety of contexts (e.g., when “reading” photographs, maps, legends, advertisements, posters, political cartoons, and other visuals, as well as documents). To make inferences, readers must activate their previous knowledge, ask questions, make predictions, make connections between implicit and explicit messages, and draw conclusions.

You can help students improve their inference-making skills by

- modelling making inferences — Make a point of regularly selecting photographs or political cartoons from *Exploring Nationalism* and think aloud to model the processes you use to draw meaning from visuals.
- teaching students to identify key words and phrases that suggest the author's attitude or intent — This strategy is particularly important when reading for bias.
- pointing out text structures, such as cause and effect — Then ask students what questions they would ask the author and encourage them to make logical connections.
- questioning — Making inferences requires a questioning stance on the part of the reader. Effective questions engage the brain and develop thinking habits of mind.

Directed Reading-Thinking Activity

A directed reading-thinking activity, or DRTA, is a focused reading strategy that helps encourage students to take risks by making predictions about a passage and to monitor their own understanding by confirming or rejecting their predictions.

Choose a reading passage and ask students to scan the margin features. Then read aloud the title or subtitle and ask students to predict what they are likely to find out when they read the passage. Elicit as many predictions as possible and note these on the chalkboard.

Tell students to read to a predetermined point in the passage (e.g., the end of the first paragraph or the end of the first two sentences). The chunk selected should include just enough information to enable students to confirm or reject previous predictions. When they reach the predetermined point, pause to discuss what they found out and to check their predictions. Then use the following questions to encourage them to make more predictions before they read to the next predetermined point:

- What do you think you are going to find out next?
- How did you figure this out?

When students finish reading the selected passage, discuss the reading as a whole, talking about the content and their predictions, as well as questions that remain unanswered. If students have trouble making predictions, think aloud to model how you would figure out your own predictions.

DRTAs scaffold the reading process for students and break up longer passages into manageable chunks. They also promote active reading, because students must examine their predictions and draw conclusions or make judgments at various points during the process. Though it is important to pause to check students' predictions, do this only as often as you think necessary. Too many pauses can cause the process to bog down; the reading becomes choppy rather than reinforcing.

Determining Important Information

When presented with text, students frequently have trouble separating important information from supporting details, supplementary facts, or even irrelevant information. Teachers can help students read for comprehension by explicitly teaching strategies that help students determine the important information in a passage.

Strategies that help students develop their ability to determine important information include

- setting a purpose for reading — Always help students set a purpose for reading before they begin to read. An important question, such as the inquiry questions that introduce the chapter sections in *Exploring Nationalism*, or a problem or puzzle can encourage students to think and make predictions about the reading to come.
- assessing previous knowledge — Cue students to ask themselves, “What do I already know — or think I know — about this topic or issue? Have I learned about anything like this before? Based on my previous knowledge, what can I predict?” Taking time to help students make connections to their previous knowledge of a topic can significantly improve their learning.
- using skimming and scanning — Students can use skimming and scanning as a pre-reading strategy to help improve their concentration during reading and to target important information in the text.
- using 5Ws+H questions — Encourage students to ask the 5Ws+H questions (who? what? when? why? where? how?) to help them to identify the main idea and supporting details of a selection.
- annotating the text — Encourage students to use sticky notes or bookmarks created from strips of paper to indicate important ideas, new or confusing words, and specific details.
- using focused talk — When students have brief, focused opportunities to talk to others during learning sessions, they can check their understanding, pose questions, and consolidate learning safely and efficiently. Build in think-pair-share activities or small-group discussion strategies to support continuing content learning.
- using visual cues — For visual learners in particular, the opportunity to sketch or visualize a concept promotes comprehension. Like opportunities to talk in class, opportunities to sketch or visualize an event can be quick, efficient, and effective.

Most Important–Less Important Information Chart

A most important–less important information chart is a simple graphic organizer that helps students read for meaning, take notes, and summarize their thinking.

Select and use pre-reading strategies as you would normally. Then tell students to draw a chart like the one shown or to fold a sheet of paper lengthwise to make the chart.

Most Important Information	Less Important Information
My summary statement . . . 	

As students read a selected passage, encourage them to pause periodically to record the most important information in the left column and the information they consider less important in the right column. You may wish to check students' understanding and help them consolidate their learning by asking questions or initiating a think-pair-share activity that involves comparing their assessment with a partner.

Once students have completed the reading assignment, instruct them to summarize the main idea in a single sentence. Ask students to share their summary statements to check for understanding and to consolidate key concepts.

This strategy can be used regularly to help students take notes and to support tasks such as writing a summary paragraph or news report.

Because many students have trouble separating key ideas from less important details, you may wish to encourage them to work in pairs until they have had plenty of opportunities to practise this strategy. Chunking the text for reading helps students focus on smaller segments. Guide students through a passage by asking them to pause and check with a partner after reading each chunk.

Synthesizing

Synthesis is a highly complex comprehension strategy that requires readers to merge various sources of information to construct a coherent whole. When readers synthesize, they draw on their background knowledge at the same time as they ask questions, make inferences, predict, integrate, generalize, and draw conclusions to create new knowledge. Each related-issue challenge in *Exploring Nationalism* requires students to respond to the related-issue question as they synthesize what they have learned.

Teachers can support synthesis by using strategies that include

- chunking reading and writing assignments and pausing regularly to encourage students to check and confirm their learning and ask questions
- systematically using before, during, and after strategies for all new learning tasks
- scaffolding students' learning by using organizational tools such as graphic organizers, most important–less important charts, and 5Ws+H charts
- modelling synthesis by thinking aloud as you create a guided sample (e.g., modelling the thinking process you would use when writing an informed opinion)
- providing repeated opportunities for students to summarize their learning in a variety of ways (e.g., think-pair-share activities, mind maps, visual representations, graffiti walls, writing in role, comparison-and-contrast charts, written personal responses)

Exit Slips

Exit slips are an easy, entertaining way to help students summarize their learning. You can also use exit slips to check students' understanding and identify areas of confusion or difficulty that might require further instruction.

At the end of a lesson, give each student an index card. On one side of the card, students write a response to the prompt “The big idea I learned from today’s lesson is . . .” On the other side of the card, students write a response to the prompt “One question I have about the text is . . . because . . .”

Exit slips like the following can also be used in a variety of creative ways to prompt students to pose questions or to identify issues or concerns.

I read . . .	I think . . .
Therefore . . .	
Name _____ Date _____	

Name _____ Date _____
One big idea I learned from today's lesson is . . .
One question I still have is . . .

CREATING STRATEGIC WRITERS IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

Organization in writing is a sophisticated skill that must be learned over time. Teachers can help students develop important organizational skills through explicit instruction and by providing students with opportunities to practise skills, by planning collaborative learning opportunities, and by offering continuous feedback. A few simple strategies, used regularly in the social studies classroom, can support students' comprehension and improve their writing skills.

Outline Notes and Structured Note Taking

To teach outline note taking, select a passage from the pages that formed part of the day's lesson. On the chalkboard or an overhead transparency, use the subheadings on the page to build a framework of points that identify the main ideas. Then ask students to complete the chart by adding points under the main idea. They must express each point in a maximum of five words.

Limiting the number of words students can use helps prevent verbatim copying of passages and ensures that students exercise critical thinking skills to identify the main points.

Here is an example, drawn from a passage on page 238 of *Exploring Nationalism*.

- Main idea: **Questioning the Role of Peacekeeping**
- *Rwanda: Hutus vs. Tutsis*
 - *peacekeeping force too small*
 - *Roméo Dallaire's warnings ignored*
 - *800 000+ people killed*

Structured note taking involves using graphic organizers. When you begin using this strategy with students, model the use of various graphic organizers, one at a time, giving students many opportunities to practise. Eventually, students will be able to match the appropriate graphic organizer to tasks and work independently.

Read the passage of text selected for instruction. Select a graphic organizer that matches the learning purpose and model the organizer's use. Then, as the theme progresses, provide students with opportunities to practise in groups, in pairs, and on their own. Graphic organizers often used for structured notes include most important–less important information charts, compare-and-contrast charts, Venn diagrams, mind maps, word webs, cause-and-effect charts, and sequence-of-events charts. A timeline also makes an excellent framework for taking structured notes.

Writing a Summary Paragraph

Summary writing requires students to integrate a number of reading and writing strategies. They need plenty of practice summarizing information and expressing their knowledge clearly and concisely. Students who struggle with either reading or writing need extra time, opportunities, and support to develop these important skills.

Summarizing helps students understand content, develop important study skills, and learn strategies they can use to conduct research and explore topics of relevance and personal interest.

You can help students develop summarizing skills by

- modelling, in read- and think-aloud sessions or during shared reading, the strategies you use to identify the main idea of a passage and the key supporting details
- using graphic organizers (e.g., most important–less important information charts, Venn diagrams, mind maps)
- using text-annotation strategies (e.g., bookmarks, sticky notes) to identify key ideas and supporting details
- explicitly demonstrating how a summary paragraph works
- engaging students in informal speaking activities that ask them to retell their learning to a partner or small group

Writing a Supported Opinion Piece

Writing an effective supported opinion piece requires students to exercise a high level of critical and reflective thinking, take a clear position on a topic, synthesize and organize information, and construct a clear, coherent position statement that makes sense and convinces a specific audience.

To argue persuasively, students must usually consider an issue from various points of view and perspectives. They must be able to separate opinion statements from statements of fact and structure an extended piece of writing according to its purpose and audience. In addition, they must make clear transitions between ideas and anticipate possible counter-arguments. Developing these sophisticated skills takes a great deal of practice and considerable support.

Writing a clear, convincing, well-supported opinion statement can be challenging for any writer — and it can be particularly daunting for struggling students. Repeatedly practising various opinion-forming and opinion-communicating skills supports comprehension and critical thinking in important ways.

Strategies that help students develop their opinion-writing skills include

- using two-column opinion–proof charts — Students fold a page lengthwise or draw a line down the middle of a page to make two columns. In the left column, students write opinion statements. In the right, they jot facts that support their opinion. These facts may be drawn from reading a passage, viewing a video or web site, or any other classroom learning activity.
- using fact–opinion charts — Using either notepaper or a folded graphic organizer, students can practise identifying fact and opinion statements they encounter while reading or viewing.
- using think-alouds to model how you would analyze an opinion paragraph (see p. 64).

- including oral activities such as think-pair-share and structured debates to help students think through their opinions and search for facts that support or refute their thinking.

Using Point-Proof-Comment Charts

A point-proof-comment chart is a structured guide that helps students plan and organize a supported opinion piece. Students begin by recording a point that they believe supports — or challenges — their opinion. They then record a proof used to support the point, and their comment on the validity and authority of the proof. An example is shown on page 189 of *Exploring Nationalism* and provided as Reproducible M.

Writing for Research

Conducting research and communicating the results are challenging tasks for many students. Students can become frustrated when they can't find information — or they can be overwhelmed by too much information. Students often have trouble putting things into their own words, and research sources are often written at a level that is beyond the reading skills of many adolescents.

Nevertheless, research writing also offers opportunities for students to pursue topics they have selected themselves and to become experts on an aspect of the course content. You can help students become more effective researchers by using strategies such as modelling and thinking aloud and by providing plenty of feedback and guided practice.

Writing a research essay is only one way students can communicate research-based learning. Other research-based products include reports, summaries, presentations, opinion paragraphs, graphs and charts, mind maps, learning logs, explanations, brochures, flow charts, diagrams, story boards, and speeches.

Preparing Research

Developing research skills requires access to models and opportunities to practise. You can model research skills by using think-alouds or a shared writing lesson that explicitly models the steps students can take to locate and record information.

Reproducible A, *Ten Steps to Preparing Research*, can be distributed to students to help you guide them through a step-by-step procedure that divides the process into manageable chunks.

Evaluating Web Sites

The World Wide Web offers student researchers a wealth of interesting and valuable information. But unlike libraries and research institutions, people who create web sites need no particular qualifications or expertise. As a result, students need additional help when they are working with web-based resources. Helping students develop a critical approach to web-based information is an important role for teachers of social studies.

Teach students to ask the following key questions when they locate web-based resources:

- authority — Who created the web site? What are the person's credentials? Is biographical information included? Is the person connected with a university, research institution, government site, or reputable historical organization?
- currency — When was the page last updated? How current is the information?
- support — Are there links to other sites on the same topic? Are these links connected to reputable organizations? Does the information match what you see in your textbook? Is it supported by other sources on the same topic?
- purpose and audience — To whom is this web site directed? Does the web site communicate a certain political opinion? Does the site seem biased in any way? How do you know?
- accessibility — Is the site easy to use? Do all the links work? Is the language clear? Is the layout logical?

Checking for Bias

Many students have limited experience in considering issues from varying points of view and perspectives. Television and other media, for example, do not always provide a balanced view, and talk shows frequently highlight conflict rather than debate. As a result, students may have difficulty understanding bias in writing and how it works.

To foster students' ability to think critically and reflectively, you can provide explicit instruction in argument and counter-argument. Strategies that encourage students to become aware of bias include

- concept-attainment charts that use words and phrases related to feeling and thinking. Here is an example.

Feeling	Thinking
waste of money foreigners crazy fanatics	less efficient new immigrants extremists

- pro-and-con charts — Provide a two-column chart or foldable graphic organizer. Encourage students to think through the pros and cons of an action or issue and record the pros in one column and the cons in the other, then to share their thinking with a partner or group.
- critical literacy questions for reading and writing — Use questions like the following to help students develop important critical thinking skills as they read and write:
 - What do you know about the author?
 - How did the author obtain the information contained in the passage? Are the sources reliable?
 - What is the author's purpose in writing? What does the author stand to gain?
 - Who is the audience? What does the author want the audience to do?
 - How are various groups of people (e.g., men, women, Aboriginal groups, immigrants, religious groups, governments) represented in the passage?
 - If the "story" in this passage were told from another point of view, how might it change?
 - How does the information in this passage compare with other things you have read on the same topic? Where could you get information for comparison?
 - Is anyone's side of the story omitted? Why?
 - Does the author use emotional words or phrases, or does the author use thinking words and phrases?
 - How do you feel when you read this text? If you were on the other side of the argument, how would you feel? Why?

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Differentiated instruction is an approach to teaching that differentiates among and accommodates the preferred learning styles of students and provides opportunities for students to use the learning styles that best suit their needs. A summary of some major learning styles is included on the following chart.

Some Major Learning Styles	
Style	Characteristics
Auditory	Students learn by listening
Interpersonal	Students learn by interacting with others
Intrapersonal	Students learn by working alone
Kinesthetic	Students learn by touching, moving, and manipulating objects
Linguistic	Students learn by using language
Logical-mathematical	Students learn by reasoning and using numbers
Visual-spatial	Students learn by responding to images

Individual learning styles are the first variable to assess when meeting a new class. Learning styles are not a reflection of students' ability, and most students are able to learn in a variety of ways, though they also have a preferred style.

Though most teachers already differentiate instruction by taking into account students' strengths and weaknesses when preparing and presenting lessons, developing and giving out assignments, and assessing and evaluating work, each lesson presented in this teacher's resource includes a section titled "Differentiating Instruction." This section offers suggestions for differentiating instruction in the social studies classroom.

Differentiation can be achieved in a number of ways — by modifying content, process, and product.

Content

You can differentiate based on content by assigning material that appeals to students' interests. Every chapter of *Exploring Nationalism* presents many activities, explorations, and questions. On pages 53 to 55 of Chapter 2, for example, students are asked to assess various historical influences, relate these factors to the present, gather information and draw conclusions from a statistical map, connect the statistics to a historical event, assess an event from differing points of view and perspectives, make predictions, and summarize their learning.

Rather than ask all students to complete all these activities, you might encourage them to choose those that they are more interested in. Because the activities in *Exploring Nationalism* are organized so that all the required skills and processes are covered many times over (see the curriculum congruence chart on pp. 30–59), selecting by interest will enhance students' motivation but will not jeopardize their chances of achieving success.

Product

Asking students to develop different learning products is another way of differentiating instruction. A student who learns best through language, for example, may work most successfully on products that involve listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These products may include journals, diaries, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, and puzzles. A student who learns best kinesthetically might develop products such as games, charades, skits, and dances. A visual learner may excel at assignments that involve creating products such as posters, mosaics, models, and videos.

Process

Differentiating by process involves using different means to achieve similar goals. You might, for example, change the complexity of questions to match students' strengths and enable those with varying abilities to participate at their own level. High-level questions ask students to evaluate and synthesize, middle-level questions involve some analysis and application, while lower-level questions ask questions such as how, what, and where.

Other Strategies for Supporting Students with Diverse Needs

In addition to diverse learning styles, students may also arrive in your classroom with other needs. The following chart summarizes basic teaching tips for accommodating the needs of a variety of students.

Strategies for Supporting the Diverse Needs of Students	
Students . . .	Tips for Instruction
<p>Who Speak English as a Second Language Recent immigrants may speak English as a second language or not at all. In addition, the customs and behaviour of people in the majority culture may be confusing and create conflicts for some of these students. Cultural values may inhibit some ESL students from participating fully in class activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that a student's ability to speak English does not reflect his or her academic ability. • Talk to knowledgeable colleagues or members of the student's community to gain an understanding of how the student's cultural needs will affect your social studies classroom. • Try to incorporate the student's cultural experiences into your instruction. • Include information about different cultures in your teaching. Avoid cultural stereotypes. • Encourage students to share cultural information and perspectives.
<p>Who Have Behaviour Disorders Students with behaviour disorders deviate from certain standards or expectations of behaviour. These students may also be gifted or have a learning disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clearly structured environment with regard to scheduling, rules, room arrangement, and safety. • Clearly outline objectives and how you will help these students attain these objectives. • Seek input from these students about their strengths, weaknesses, and goals. • Reinforce appropriate behaviour and model it for students. • Do not expect immediate success. Work for long-term improvement • Balance individual needs with the needs of the class.

<p>Who Are Gifted</p> <p>Although no formal definition exists, these students can be described as having above-average ability, task commitment, and creativity. Gifted students rank in the top five per cent of their class. They usually finish work more quickly than other students and are capable of divergent thinking. They can also become bored and disruptive or struggle to respect less gifted students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make arrangements for students to finish selected subjects early and work on independent projects. • Encourage students to express themselves in art forms such as drawing, creative writing, and acting. • Ask “what if” questions to develop high-level thinking skills. • Establish an environment that is safe for risk taking and creative thinking. • Emphasize concepts, theories, ideas, relationships, and generalizations. • Do not assume that these students will make good tutors for others; however, encourage the interaction if the student expresses an interest.
<p>Who Have Learning Disabilities</p> <p>All students with a learning disability have an academic problem in one or more areas, such as academic learning, language, perception, social-emotional adjustment, memory, or attention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support and structure with clearly specified rules, assignments, and duties. • Establish learning situations that lead to success. • Use games and drills to help maintain students’ interest and provide frequent practice in necessary skills. • Allow students to record answers on tape and allow extra time to complete tests and assignments. • Provide outlines or tape lecture material. • Pair students with peer helpers and provide class time for the pairs to interact. • Be prepared to work with family members or outside tutors to promote academic achievement.
<p>Who Are Physically Challenged</p> <p>Students who are physically challenged fall into two main categories — those with orthopedic impairments and those with other health impairments. Students whose use of one or more limbs is severely restricted will likely be using orthopedic supports, such as wheelchairs, crutches, or braces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openly discuss with the student any uncertainties you have about when to offer aid. • Ensure that you and at least one other student know how to deal with any devices that may be complicated. • Ask parents or therapists and the student what special devices or procedures are needed and whether any special safety precautions need to be taken. • Ensure that the entire class knows how to recognize and deal with an emergency, even if this simply means knowing who to call. • Allow physically disabled students to do everything their peers do, including participating in field trips, special events, and projects, to the extent that it is possible and beneficial for that student. • Help students and adults who are not disabled understand students with physical disabilities.

<p>Who Are Visually Impaired Students who are visually impaired have partial or total loss of sight. Individuals with visual impairments are not significantly different from their sighted peers in ability range and personality, though full or partial blindness may affect cognitive, motor, and social development, especially if early intervention is lacking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with all students, help the student become independent. Some assignments may need to be modified. • Help classmates learn how to serve as guides. • Limit unnecessary noise in the classroom. • Encourage these students to use their sense of touch. Provide tactile models whenever possible. • Describe people — and events — as they occur in the classroom. • Provide taped lectures and reading assignments. • Team the student with a sighted peer when necessary.
<p>Who Are Hearing Impaired Students who are hearing impaired have partial or total loss of hearing. Individuals with hearing impairments are not significantly different from their hearing peers in ability range and personality, though the chronic condition of deafness may affect cognitive, motor, and social development if early intervention is lacking. Speech development may also be affected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat these students where they can see your lip movement easily and avoid visual distractions. • Avoid standing with your back to a window or a light source. • Use an overhead projector so you can maintain eye contact while writing. • Seat these students where they can see speakers. • Write all assignments on the chalkboard or hand out written instructions. • If the student has an interpreter, both the student and interpreter should select the most favourable seating arrangements.

ACTIVITY STRATEGIES

The teaching and learning strategies that follow are especially useful in social studies classrooms and can be adapted for a wide variety of uses. Many of them are incorporated into the section of this teacher's resource titled "Suggested Teaching Activities."

CO-OPERATIVE GROUP LEARNING

Co-operative group learning helps students develop many skills that are useful both in school and beyond the classroom. Co-operative group learning introduces and reinforces skills such as the ability to work responsibly to achieve common goals within a specified period. It also develops students' organizational and leadership skills and promotes academic, personal, and social growth, as well as positive cross-cultural relations.

The structure of co-operative groups enables students to work together, contribute to the group, and learn from others in the group. This interdependence builds a supportive and cohesive environment in which students actively work together. Heterogeneous groups include students of various ethnicities, backgrounds, genders, needs, interests, abilities, and personalities. As a result, group members will bring to tasks a variety of talents and ways of perceiving problems, issues, and solutions. This mirrors the real world, where students encounter and must appreciate and accommodate many different people.

Within a co-operative group, students become accountable and take on responsibilities to both themselves and the group. As a result, students develop initiative and a sense of responsibility toward both their own learning and the learning of other group members.

Effective communication is at the heart of co-operative group learning. To assimilate and integrate ideas, students must talk them through. This talk develops students' ability to explore new ideas, points of view, and perspectives; clarify their own ideas; and internalize and personalize their own ideas and those of others. By communicating and working co-operatively, students reinforce many skills that will benefit them in various situations.

Co-operative Groups and Sample Strategies

Informal groups: In informal groups, students turn to the person beside or behind them to discuss a topic. These small groups may work together briefly on a simple activity or for a longer time on a more detailed activity. You may use these groups at the beginning of a lesson to brainstorm, gather ideas, raise questions, or simply trigger interest in a new topic or issue. In informal groups, students can discuss their ideas before sharing them with the class or discuss issues not dealt with in the class discussion.

Think-pair-share groups: Think-pair-share activities are an effective way of introducing informal group learning. This simple strategy provides structure for the progression from individual, independent learning to group learning in a way that enables students to feel secure in their group learning development. This strategy is flexible and may be used in many lesson situations. It also scaffolds students' learning by providing them with opportunities to approach group learning in a step-by-step fashion and provides you — and the students — with opportunities to clearly monitor progress.

Base groups: Base groups provide long-term peer support. You create these groups once you are familiar with students' needs and abilities. Because base groups are support groups, they are usually heterogeneous in ability. Students will learn to understand, appreciate, support, and work with students different from themselves.

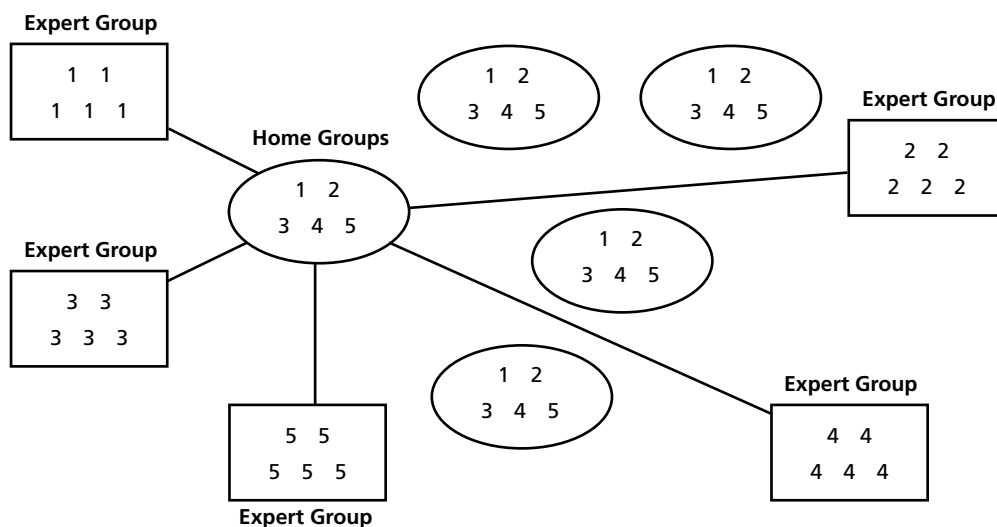
Combined groups: Combined groups are formed when two or more groups join to form one large group. Combined groups provide an opportunity for the members of small groups to learn from one another. The combinations may be decided on by the groups or assigned by you. Combined groups may meet when starting a task, to establish a focus or define a problem, formulate research questions, discuss procedures, or discuss the presentation of material. As they progress through a task, these groups may meet to share and compare material and create a collective database. They may also present information within the group if class presentations are not feasible.

Representative groups: Representative groups consist of a member of each of the groups in the class. Representatives may be chosen by either you or the group. Representative groups provide students with an opportunity to discuss the work of the various groups in the class. A representative of each group may discuss the group's progress or the results of its work. In this way, all groups make their progress or their work public. Representative groups can be used any time during the learning process to provide informal progress reports or engage in panel discussions.

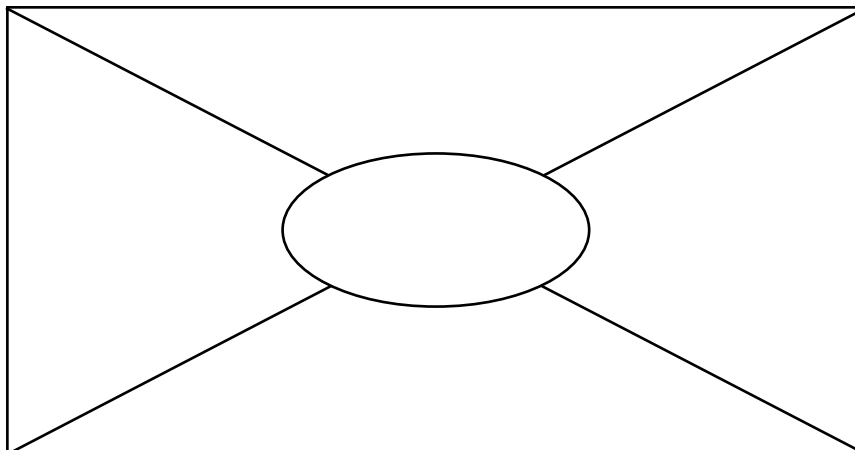
Jigsaw activity: Jigsaw activities are sometimes called reconstituted co-operative small-group learning. They are an excellent way of providing opportunities for students to examine and research issues or events from various points of view and perspectives, and they enable students to explore a broad base of information in a relatively short time.

Jigsaw activities do, however, place a great deal of responsibility on individual students in the expert groups (see the following diagram) to conduct their research and report their findings to the home group. The use of home groups and expert groups makes this form of co-operative learning more complex and difficult. As a result, it is a good idea to delay using this strategy until you are sure students understand how to work in co-operative small groups. Begin with pairs, move on to triads, and gradually work up to the jigsaw technique.

Begin a jigsaw activity by placing students in home groups. Students should number themselves 1 through 4 or 5. Home groups should be no larger than six students. First, students work on a topic in their home group. They then move on to an expert group to explore specific aspects of a topic in greater detail. All students numbered 1 join the same expert group, those numbered 2 join the same group, and so on. When expert groups finish their exploration, students return to their home group to report their findings. The home group comes to an understanding of the various findings and completes the required assignment.



Placemat activity: This simple activity enables group members to organize information and present ideas. Divide the class into groups of four and distribute a sheet of paper divided into sections like the following example.



The group members arrange themselves around the placemat, and each student is responsible for recording particular information in his or her segment of the mat. When students finish recording their information, they take turns sharing their information with other group members, who work together to record the most important information in the centre.

Three-step interview: This form of group discussion is often used to analyze and synthesize new information, but it can serve a variety of purposes. It helps students consolidate their learning by expressing their own ideas and listening actively to the ideas of others. It can also be an effective strategy for encouraging students to think about differing perspectives by playing roles.

Divide the class into groups of four and instruct each group to further divide into two sets of partners. Within each pair, one partner serves as the interviewer and the other as the interviewee. The interviewer asks the interviewee questions related to a topic of study and listens actively to the responses, paraphrasing key comments and details.

The partners then reverse roles and repeat the process. Each pair then rejoins their original group of four. Each student summarizes for the group what her or his partner said about the topic.

Carousel activity: Divide the class into groups and assign areas of the classroom to serve as stations. Each station should include a presentation, question, reading, or activity for students to complete. Groups then rotate from station to station until all the groups have visited and completed the activity at every station.

A carousel activity makes an effective organizational structure for engaging students in responding to student activities such as displays. Beforehand, you might brainstorm with the class to create a list of questions that groups can ask the student who created the display. These questions can help focus students' responses to and assessment of the displays.

STUDENT TALK AND CLASS DISCUSSIONS

When students talk, learning occurs. The lessons in this teacher's resource include many suggestions for small-group and class discussions. Participating in this kind of purposeful talk enables students to explain, clarify, question, consolidate, amplify, and extend their learning. Talk can motivate students, encourage them to take ownership of ideas, help them make connections with the ideas of others, sharpen their critical-thinking skills, and enhance their confidence.

It is often a good idea to begin with small-group discussions before involving the whole class. Encouraging students to discuss ideas in small groups is less intimidating for many students. It also prevents a vocal minority from monopolizing the discussion. Small groups provide a safe environment in which students can experiment with expressing half-formed thoughts and consider new words and ideas. They can also be creative and practise skills.

The class setting is ideal for synthesizing and drawing conclusions from the reports of small groups. In this setting, ideas and information can be compared, amplified, summarized, consolidated, and clarified. You and the students can ask questions that will extend everyone's thinking and learning.

Establishing an environment that promotes purposeful class discussion is important, and guidelines should be worked out with the students. If these are compiled into a list of dos and don'ts, the list can be posted as a reminder. The following are some suggestions

- Be respectful of others.
- Only one person may speak at a time.
- When presenting a group report, ensure that all group members help in the presentation. This enables everyone to practise presenting ideas, and everyone takes responsibility for and ownership of the report.

- Provide enough time for people to express their ideas or give information.
- Listen and respond, rather than simply present information.

The following suggestions can help you nurture a classroom environment that encourages purposeful discussion:

- Ask questions and encourage students to sort out and clarify what they want to say.
- After asking a question, give students time to think before answering. (On average, teachers wait less than two seconds for a student to answer. Try to wait a minimum of three seconds.)
- Encourage students to listen to others, ask questions of you and other students, support the ideas of others with facts, make connections among ideas, and summarize points and discussions.

A number of activities can provide a framework for class discussions.

Graffiti activity: Prepare four questions related to an issue and record each question at the top of a sheet of chart paper. Post the sheets of chart paper in four different areas of the classroom and divide the class into four heterogeneous groups. Give each group a different-coloured marker and assign one question to each group. Tell group members to gather at the sheet that contains their question.

Give each group a specified time to record comments on and answers to the question on their sheet of chart paper. When the time is up, instruct the groups to rotate to the next question, taking their coloured marker with them. Group members should read the existing responses and add new ones of their own. If students can think of no new responses, they can comment on the responses of previous groups. Continue doing this until all the groups have responded to all the questions.

Follow up by encouraging each group to share the highlights of the responses on the chart paper in front of them.

Inside-outside circles: Divide the class into groups of six. Tell each group to form a circle, with three students facing outward and the other three forming a circle around them, facing inward so that each student faces a partner. Tell each pair to exchange information about a specific topic. This may be a question or issue related to the day's lesson or a discussion of their responses to a related issue or chapter issue. Then tell the students in the centre circle to rotate so they are facing a new partner. Continue until the students have discussed the issue with three different partners.

As an alternative, students can form rows facing one another and follow a similar rotating process.

DEBATES

A debate is an exercise in speaking and reasoning on a single topic presented by opposing sides. The goal is to convince the audience that a point of view is valid. A number of debate formats can be used effectively in social studies classrooms.

Formal debate: The formal debate may be the most effective way of assessing or evaluating each student's ability to think critically, persuasively, and analytically. The following is one way of organizing a formal debate:

1. Pick a topic. The topic should be stated in the affirmative (e.g., Be it resolved that national self-determination is a divisive force).
2. Form teams. The number of members in each team may range from two to four students.
3. Choose sides. You may assign sides or allow students to choose the side they wish to represent.

4. Instruct students to begin researching the topic. Encourage students to use *Exploring Nationalism* as the starting point in preparing for the debate. Remind them to take notes. Students should research material that can both support and oppose their position. Researching material that seems to oppose their position enables them to prepare to refute the opposing team's arguments.
5. Advise teams to rank their arguments in order of strength. The strongest argument should be stated by the last speaker.
6. Explain the debate format to the students. In many formal debates, the structure is broken down as follows:
 - opening statements — Each team is allotted a specific time — usually two to five minutes — to present its position.
 - question-and-answer period — Opposing teams are given the opportunity to question the position taken by other teams. A time limit should be imposed on the length of the team's response. The other team is then given a chance for rebuttal. Again, a time limit should be imposed.
 - closing statements — Each team either restates its position or acknowledges the superiority of the other side's arguments. Members of the two teams should shake hands.
7. The debate takes place.

Students can determine the debate winner in a number of ways. You might, for example, take a vote on the issue before and after the debate. The winning team may be the one with the most votes or the one that convinced the most students to change sides.

Tag debate: The tag debate lends itself to evaluating or assessing student participation, as no more than four students are involved in the debate at one time. Generally, tag debates are structured as follows:

1. Divide the class in half. Assign the halves an opposing point of view on an issue.
2. Give students time to use their existing notes or *Exploring Nationalism* to obtain a fundamental understanding of the issue in the debate.
3. Instruct students to prepare a minimum of five arguments for the position they have been assigned to support.
4. Four students, two from each side, begin to debate. Either side may start, and from this point on, the two sides take turns refuting the position taken by the opposing side.
5. Once the debate has started, the remaining students may “tag” into the debate circle by touching the shoulder of a participating member of their team. Or you may simply choose to stop the debate at any time and require that a “tag” take place.
6. After the debate, ask students to reflect on which points were most persuasive and which issues seemed most controversial.

Continuum debate: This kind of debate enables students to move actively and is usually organized in four steps. It enables students to argue a view and modify this view as the debate progresses.

1. Select eight to ten students whose positions represent a range of opinions on an issue.
2. Place these students in a line at the front of the classroom, with extreme opposing views at each end and students with mixed feelings in the middle.
3. Begin the debate at one of the extremes, alternating sides and working toward the middle. As the debate continues, encourage all students in the line to alter their positions if their opinions change.

4. At the end of the debate, instruct students to collectively identify questions that need further clarification and encourage them to justify their reasons for changing their opinions.

Horseshoe debate: Similar to a continuum debate, this activity organizes students in a horseshoe shape. Those who agree most strongly with the debate statement sit on one side of the horseshoe, and those who disagree most strongly sit on the other. Those whose positions are in between or who are undecided sit across the top of the horseshoe.

The debate progresses in steps similar to those in a continuum debate. Students may alter their positions as they hear persuasive arguments.

Four-corners debate: Also similar to a continuum debate, this simple, active strategy helps students focus their thinking about issues. If students take notes during group and class discussions, this debate can become an effective strategy for helping them prepare to write a supported opinion piece.

1. Before the debate begins, decide on a statement (e.g., Nationalism is dangerous because it leads to ultranationalism). Then create four signs — Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree — and place each in a corner of the classroom. In some cases, you may wish to add a fifth sign: Undecided.
2. Give students time to consider their opinion, then instruct them to move to the area of the classroom that best represents their position on the statement.
3. Give the groups a few minutes to discuss the justification for their position, then ask one person from each group to share his or her arguments with the class. Encourage students who have been swayed by the arguments to change position. When all the groups have presented their justifications, discuss which arguments persuaded students to change their position.

Triangle debate: This kind of debate is carried out in a small-group format.

1. Write a statement on the chalkboard (e.g., There is no such thing as a Canadian identity) and divide the class into groups of three. Assign each student in each group the letter A, B, or C to identify their role in the debate. Student A argues in favour of the statement; student B argues against the statement; and student C listens, records, and prepares comments and questions for A and B.
2. Give students time to prepare for the debate. To help them do this, you might distribute a worksheet like the following.

Speaker A	Speaker B	Commenter C
Argument	Argument	Strongest argument for A
Supporting detail 1	Supporting detail 1	Strongest argument for B
Supporting detail 2	Supporting detail 2	Questions for A
Supporting detail 3	Supporting detail 3	Questions for B

Explain that students A and B should record their response to the statement in the first row of the worksheet and supporting details in the next three rows. As they do this, student C should record questions that he or she might ask the debaters.

3. Students A and B present their arguments in turn while the other group members listen or note comments on the arguments. Once the arguments have been presented, student C asks questions of the debaters — and listens carefully to their responses. At the end of this stage, student C decides who won the debate by presenting and defending arguments most effectively.
4. If time allows, you may wish to follow up by organizing a round-table discussion in which student C reports who won the group's debate and which arguments were most compelling.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentations, which help students take ownership of their learning and draw on their talents and interests, can be an effective strategy for achieving content- and skill-related objectives. An effective presentation requires students to draw on their research, organizational, group, and communication skills, as well as their creative abilities.

Reproducible B, *Ten Steps to Making Effective Presentations*, sets out tips for presenting material effectively. If you distribute this reproducible and discuss the suggested strategies with students, the reproducible can serve as a checklist that students can consult as they prepare presentations.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Graphic organizers require students to consider information and make decisions about how to reorganize it. Organizers also help students consolidate information in new ways, a strategy that is especially helpful for visual learners. The student becomes a creator of new information rather than a mere copier of words.

Graphic organizers can take many forms, from a simple two-column comparison chart to a very complicated mind map. Venn diagrams and mind maps are two of the most common types, but the reproducibles that accompany this teacher's resource include many different kinds of graphic organizers.

Venn, or comparison, diagrams: A Venn diagram is useful for identifying the similarities and differences between two or more people or events. Each person or event is placed in its own circle. Differences are recorded in the outside sections of the circles, while similarities are recorded where the circles overlap.

Mind maps: Concept, or mind, maps are more complex graphic organizers. The purpose of mind mapping is to graphically organize thinking about a specific topic. Mind mapping has a strong appeal for many learners, especially visual learners, and has been shown to increase memory and motivation. Mind mapping can be an individual or group activity. When it is a group activity, it may take on the form and rules for brainstorming.

T-charts: These two-column organizers can be created easily by drawing a large T on a page or folding a page as follows.

T-charts can be used in a variety of ways. Students might be asked, for example, to record main ideas in the left column and supporting details in the right. Or they may be asked to record the pros of a course of action in one column and the cons in the other.

Foldables: Foldables are three-dimensional, student-made, interactive graphic organizers created from plain paper. Making a foldable is a fast, kinesthetic activity that helps students organize and retain information.

Foldables are an idea developed by Dinah Zike and detailed in the book *Dinah Zike's Foldables*, published by Glencoe/McGraw-Hill. This soft-cover book (ISBN 0-07-860518-0) is available from McGraw-Hill Ryerson and presents step-by-step instructions, illustrations, and photographs showing how to make 34 foldables such as a folded book, a two-, three-, four-, or five- tab book, a folded table or chart, a concept map book, and a four-door diorama.

Foldables can be used to

- quickly organize, display, and arrange data
- produce student-created review guides
- provide a multitude of creative formats in which students can present projects, research, interviews, and inquiry-based reports
- replace teacher-generated written or photocopied sheets with student-generated print
- easily communicate data through graphs, tables, charts, models, and diagrams, including Venn diagrams
- enable students to make their own journals for recording observations, research information, primary and secondary source data, surveys, and more

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Exploring Nationalism provides many opportunities for you to assess students' achievement. As students progress through each related issue, they will prepare to meet the challenge that is introduced at the beginning of the issue. The challenge is specifically designed to be assessed summatively, and rubrics, as well as a checklist for success, are provided to help students meet their learning goals and understand the criteria you will be using to judge their work.

In addition to the challenge, *Exploring Nationalism* includes a variety of activities designed to be used for formative-assessment purposes. Any of these activities — the activity icons, “Reflect and Respond,” “Explorations,” and “Your Turn” — can also be developed and used for summative assessment.

DEFINING TERMS

Assessment may be **formative** or **summative**.

Formative assessment refers to assessment *for* learning. It is the continuing, descriptive feedback teachers provide to students about their achievement and performance. One of its purposes is to enhance learning by providing students with opportunities to revise their work before it is submitted for summative assessment, or evaluation.

Summative assessment refers to the assessment *of* learning. It involves gathering data and making judgments about students' overall performance for the purpose of determining and reporting a grade. According to the Alberta Assessment Consortium, scores derived from summative assessments should be used to report levels of achievement when teachers are evaluating how well a student has achieved the course outcomes.

Evaluation is a judgment of the quality, value, or worth of a student's response, product, or performance, based on established criteria and curriculum standards.

Diagnostic assessment is a form of assessment that involves exercises carried out for the purpose of determining students' attitudes, previous knowledge, and skill level before instruction is given. Diagnostic exercises help determine the nature of instruction.

RUBRICS

Learning is a process that evolves over time and requires students to develop many supporting skills. As students mature as learners, they begin to recognize what is involved in these skills and the need for and value of setting standards that define the quality of their work or performance. To achieve their goals, students must first learn to assess their own work — in other words, they must create their own rubrics. And like all other skills, the ability to devise rubrics for assessment purposes is a skill that must be practised.

A rubric is a blueprint that defines levels of performance based on standard criteria. Using rubrics in the classroom has many advantages. They enable teachers to clearly communicate — to students, parents and guardians, and the community at large — expectations about the quality and quantity of work required to achieve specific levels of performance. More important, however, rubrics lay the foundation for effective assessment by informing students — ahead of time — what they are expected to achieve and how they are expected to achieve it.

Providing rubrics to students *before* they begin a learning task helps them complete the task with the assessment and evaluation criteria in mind. This enables students to set specific goals and strive to achieve them. As students work on the task, they can use the rubric as a checklist to assess their performance — and revise their work accordingly. Assessment feedback from teachers and their peers, who are also aware of the criteria, also helps students revise their work in preparation for the final summative assessment, or evaluation.

Rubrics that are effectively constructed can become the basis of a developmental continuum that guides students through the learning process. As students use rubrics, a great deal of incidental learning takes place. Students become self-motivated, reflective assessors of their own learning. They develop confidence, self-esteem, and the motivation to succeed because the criteria guiding their performance as they create the work are the same criteria the teacher will use to assess and evaluate their work.

To find out more about formative assessment (i.e., assessment *for* learning) and summative assessment (i.e., assessment *of* learning), visit the Alberta Assessment Consortium web site at <<http://aac.ab.ca>>.

