



News in Review

RESOURCE GUIDE

November 2011

News in Review

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News in Review, November 2011

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2. The Eurozone and the Economic Crisis

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NiR Study Modules

Using print and video material from archival issues of *News in Review*, teachers and students can create thematic modules for independent assignments, and small group study.

Related CBC Videos

Other videos available from CBC Learning; see the back cover for contact details.

TEEN SUICIDE: BREAKING THE SILENCE (Length: 16:06)

Suicide is a major problem in Canada. Every day 10 Canadians take their own lives. Suicide is also the second leading cause of death among teenagers in this country. In this *News in Review* story we'll look at a Canadian school where teenagers are encouraged to talk about their problems before they reach a breaking point.

NiR Study Modules

A New Campaign to Fight Bullying
December 2010
Teaching Children How to Care
December 2006
Bullies in Schools, September 2001

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It's a Girl's World (audio)
It's a Teen's World
Reaching Out: Sandy Bay, SK
Stolen Children
This Secret Shame
When the Bough Breaks

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS (Length: 14:25)

For over a year a debt crisis in the European community, or eurozone, has been affecting the stability of the world's economic system. In recent months this crisis has reached critical levels and is threatening to plunge the Canadian economy into another recession. In this *News in Review* story we'll look at the problem and what is being done to try to overcome it.

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December 2009
Canada Faces a Recession, December 2008

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AMANDA LINDHOUT'S AFRICAN JOURNEY (Length: 17:07)

Amanda Lindhout is a young Canadian journalist who was held hostage in Somalia for more than a year. Now Somalia is in the grip of a terrible famine. In this *News in Review* story we'll follow Lindhout as she returns to Africa to try to provide hope to Somali women.

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K'naan: A Canadian Sings for the World
May 2010
Peace Radio: Canadian Voices in Somalia
May 2004

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Flora's Afghan Mission
Stephen Lewis: The Man Who Couldn't Sleep
We Will Remember Them

COPING WITH THE STRESS OF GRADUATION (Length: 15:41)

Going to school for the first time can be a nervous time for many students, but so can graduating. There are academic pressures, and financial ones, and sometimes they can be unbearable. In this *News in Review* story we'll look at the class of 2011 in one Canadian school and at a new program designed to help students cope with the stress.

Related CBC Videos

Hyper Parents & Coddled Kids
End of Men
Reds, Whites & The Blues



Sections marked with this symbol contain content suitable for younger viewers.



Exercises marked with this symbol indicate that a worksheet to aid in the exploration of the topic is available online.

TEEN SUICIDE: BREAKING THE SILENCE

Introduction

Focus

Thanks to some recent high profile cases, teen suicide has become a topic for discussion in schools and homes across Canada. In this *News in Review* story we examine some of the ways in which this discussion is changing how we view teen suicide and attempt to prevent it.

Note to Teachers: Teen suicide is a very sensitive and emotional topic and it is important to create a safe place for students to consider the topic and its effect on friends and family members. Students should not be made to share out loud their answers to questions, as their answers may be too personal to reveal publicly. It is also a good idea to prep students the day before that suicide is going to be the topic for discussion and invite anyone who has serious concerns to speak to you ahead of time.

Suicide is very much one of those topics that most people would prefer not to think about, let alone discuss.

Nonetheless, lots of people do think about it. In an average year in Canada, over 3 500 people take their own lives. Many of them are teenagers. Many more attempt suicide.

Why do young people try to kill themselves? There is no simple answer—and there are a number of possible reasons— but it seems that the vast majority of these teens are suffering from some kind of debilitating mental illness. In the majority of cases that illness is never diagnosed. Even family members are unaware of the problem until a suicide attempt is made.

Recently, some families who have lost children to suicide have begun to speak out. They want to share their stories to help others recognize the signs that a teen may be contemplating a suicide— because those signs are not always easy to recognize. They are asking for programs to help both families and students recognize the danger signs.

These families know that mental illness can strike anyone and that there is no shame in talking about it. They realize that, had they had more information and known

what to look for, they might have been able to intervene before it was too late.

There is also increasing recognition that other factors play an important role in determining who is likely to make a suicide attempt. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth are four times as likely as straight youth to try to kill themselves. Bullying in general contributes to attempts by those being bullied; and over 90 per cent of LGBT youth report that they have been bullied.

Serious attempts are being made to solve the problem of teen suicide. Schools and youth organizations are refining their anti-bullying programs, tailoring them to their individual circumstances. Programs are being developed for schools to promote awareness of the extent and dangers of mental illness. Governments are providing increased funding for research into mental illness and its treatment to aid in the prevention of suicide.

Most importantly, however, people— teens, parents, teachers—are being encouraged to talk about suicide and the reasons it can happen. This *News in Review* story hopes to contribute to an ongoing dialogue on teen suicide and its prevention.

To Consider

1. If you wanted to discuss the topic of suicide, to whom would you go: your parents, a teacher, a friend?
2. What might be the advantages and disadvantages of talking to each of these groups?

TEEN SUICIDE: BREAKING THE SILENCE

Video Review

Check It Out

CBC television host Rick Mercer made a passionate “rant” about bullying in schools and the need for all of us to step up and accept gay kids and others who are targeted by bullies. Check out his rant at www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1OvtBa2FK8.

Pre-viewing Questions

In your notebook, record your responses to the questions below. When you are finished, discuss your responses with a classmate.

1. Based on your current knowledge, what would you list as the reasons why some young people might try to take their own lives?

2. Why is this a topic that many people find very difficult to talk about?

3. Do you think it is a good idea for a friend to tell an adult if a teenager tells them that he or she is considering suicide? Why or why not?

4. What do you think should be done to reduce the amount of bullying that goes on during childhood and adolescence?

Viewing Questions

Record your responses to the questions in the spaces provided.

1. Where does suicide rank as a cause of death among teenagers?

2. How old was Mitchell Wilson when he killed himself?

3. What do experts believe is the key to reducing the number of lives lost to suicide?

4. From what mental illness does Hannah Brunson suffer?

Further Research

Go to the Daron Richardson website (www.doitfordaron.com) to learn more about the Richardson family's attempts to help promote suicide prevention by promoting teen mental health.

5. How old was Hannah Brunson when she first experienced the problem?

6. What percentage of young people in Canada are affected by mental illness?

7. How does Stephanie Richardson describe her daughter Daron's last day?

8. Briefly describe Hannah Brunson's current state of mind.

9. What are some of the signs of trouble that Ioanna Roumeliotis says parents should look out for?

Post-viewing Activity

1. Review your responses to the Pre-viewing Questions. Did the information in the video confirm your beliefs about the reasons behind teen suicide? Were there any new insights provided?

2. Prepare a fact sheet for younger students based on what you have learned about teen suicide. Outline how common teen suicide is, why it happens, and what they can do to help reduce the frequency. Be prepared to compare your fact sheet with those of other students in your class.

TEEN SUICIDE: BREAKING THE SILENCE

What Do We Know?

Did you know . . .

In 2007, 218 Canadian young people (10-19) committed suicide.

Reading Prompt

As you read this section, try to identify the types of people who are most likely to be at risk of suicide and the warning signs that indicate they are at risk.

In recent years an extensive amount of research has been done to explore the causes and consequences of suicide. As a result, researchers are beginning to draw significant conclusions about those who are more likely to commit suicide.

A Statistical Breakdown

- An average of 48 Canadians per day are admitted to hospital for treatment of what the medical profession calls “self-injury.” This category includes both attempted suicide and self-mutilation. Note that the category includes only those treated in hospital.
- The most likely people to self-mutilate are young women, aged 15-19.
- In 2007 (the most recent year for which statistics are available), there were 3 578 suicides in Canada: 2 709 men and 869 women.
- The most common form of self-injury is poisoning at 85 per cent (this figure includes drug overdoses). Next is cutting or piercing (10 per cent), then strangulation (2 per cent).
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds, and among girls between 10 and 14.
- Girls attempt suicide more often than boys, but boys commit suicide more often. The suicide rate for boys is twice that for girls.
- In a major U.S. study, 20 per cent of gay, lesbian and bisexual teens admitted to having attempted suicide. In comparison, four per cent of straight teens surveyed said they had made an attempt.

- The picture is grim world-wide. According to the World Health Organization, suicide rates have increased 60 per cent in the last five decades. About one million people die each year by their own hand, and 20 times that number attempt to kill themselves. As it is in Canada, around the world suicide is the second leading cause of death for the 10-24 age group.
- Compared with those of other nations, Canada’s suicide rate falls in about the middle. But its youth suicide rate per capita is about three times that of the United States.

Those Most at Risk

Darcy Santor, a psychologist at the University of Ottawa, believes that at least 91 per cent of suicide victims have some form of mental illness at the time of their deaths. In many cases this illness will never have been diagnosed (*The Globe and Mail*, September 24, 2011). The more risk factors that are present—depression, anxiety, alcohol abuse, bullying, social isolation, learning disabilities and shame—the greater the danger that the person will attempt suicide. Young victims of sexual abuse are also at higher risk.

Studies consistently find that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth (LGBT youth) fall into the highest risk category for suicide. Adolescence is a stressful time for all teenagers, but the added stress that comes from dealing with sexual orientation issues results in high levels of anxiety and depression. In addition, LGBT youth are much more

Further Research

To download a valuable pamphlet—“After a Suicide: A Practical and Personal Guide for Survivors”—go to the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) website at www.suicideprevention.ca/survivor-support/.

likely to be the targets of bullies.

In Canada, suicide has been a particularly difficult problem in remote northern Native communities. In 2009, 13 teenagers living in communities along the James Bay and Hudson Bay coasts committed suicide, and another 80 attempted to do so. The suicide rate among First Nations youth is estimated at five to six times that of non-aboriginal youth.

Warning Signs

It is good to be aware of some of the warning signs of suicide, but it is important to remember that everyone feels one or more of these symptoms at one time or another—and this does not mean they are going to attempt suicide. The list below is provided by The Jack Project (www.thejackproject.org), a mental health project founded by Eric Windeler following the suicide of his son Jack. Some or all of them may be demonstrated by a subject at risk.

- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness, depressed mood, poor self-esteem, or guilt
- Withdrawal from friends, family, and activities that used to be fun
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns . . . feeling tired or exhausted all of the time
- Trouble concentrating, struggling in school, rapid drop in grades
- Restless, irritated, agitated or anxious movements or behaviours
- Heightened emotions, or regular crying.
- Neglect of personal care
- Reckless or impulsive behaviours
- Persistent physical symptoms such as headaches or other chronic pain

Follow-up Activity

Go to the CASP website and locate the organizations for your province or territory that provide assistance to survivors of suicide. If the organization has a website visit it and list the services it provides that would be most useful to suicide survivors.

- Thoughts or talking about death or suicide.

Being aware of some of the warning signs is important, but often a person decides to kill themselves quite quickly, and it is not always possible to intervene. In one study in 2001, for example, researchers found that of the 153 young people who had attempted suicide in their study, 70 per cent of the teens who decided they wanted to die actually attempted suicide within an hour of their decision (*The Globe and Mail*, September 24, 2011).

Those Left Behind

For those friends and relatives who were close to a suicide victim, coping with the loss is an extremely intense process. It is a highly emotional time when people are dealing with grief at the loss of a loved one, anger at the victim, and guilt over not having somehow prevented the suicide. Families and friends of suicide victims need a great deal of support and time to heal.

Those who attempt suicide but survive need a lot of support as well. In the past, suicide survivors were seen as “crazy” and often felt isolated because suicide was such a taboo topic. In some cases, families and friends of survivors pretended it hadn’t happened and were afraid to talk about it. But times have changed, and the situation is improving. There are now many organizations that can help to assist someone who has attempted suicide or the family of someone who has committed suicide. A full list of Canadian organizations is available on the CASP website, at the address in the sidebar.

TEEN SUICIDE: BREAKING THE SILENCE

What Can We Do?

Focus for Reading

Being aware of suicide risk is one thing, but knowing how to respond is another. In this section we examine some of the ways in which individuals, organizations, and governments are responding to the problem of teen suicide. As you read the section, make a list of the ways you can personally contribute to the campaign to prevent teen suicide.

Speaking Out

Perhaps the most important way we can help prevent teen suicide is by talking about it.

In the past, suicide was often a taboo topic. Families of teen suicide victims grieved in private, reluctant to draw attention to the act that had ended their child's life. Thankfully, this is no longer the case, although suicide still does carry a stigma. Families of suicide victims now grieve in public in hopes that others will recognize that suicide is something that can happen in any family.

A recent example of this change in behaviour took place in Ottawa in November 2010. Daron Richardson, the 14-year-old daughter of Ottawa Senators assistant coach Luke Richardson, took her own life. The family never saw it coming. Daron's family decided to share her story with the public, holding a memorial service at Scotiabank Place that was attended by thousands.

The Richardsons hoped that their action would raise awareness of the potential for mental illness among teens. They wanted to encourage parents to talk to their kids about suicide and to be aware of any potential signs that all was not right in their children's lives. "Talking about suicide does not make a person more likely to attempt it. It helps remove the stigma, making it easier to air feelings, and acts as a deterrent by bringing the 'secret' out into the open" (Erin Anderssen, *The Globe and Mail*, September 24, 2011).

Special Organizations

One of the outcomes of the Richardsons' efforts was a new organization, Do It for Daron (DIFD). DIFD was created by Daron's friends and family to raise awareness of youth mental health. In the fall of 2011 a project partly funded by DIFD is providing 600 grade 11 and 12 students in the Ottawa area with a course on the fundamentals of mental illness. It will teach them how to go about getting help either for themselves or for a friend.

DIFD, through its sponsors, has raised thousands of dollars for mental health organizations that assist children and teens. It holds an annual promotion every February to raise awareness of teen mental health issues in hundreds of schools across Canada. The DIFD website is www.doitfordaron.com.

Another Canadian organization created by the parents of a teen suicide is The Jack Project. Jack Windeler was a first-year student at Queen's University when he committed suicide. His family, friends, and university contacts all missed the signs that Jack was losing control of his life. In retrospect, it became clear that he was suffering from mental illness.

Jack's family created The Jack Project specifically to promote "young people's mental health by providing them with much-needed information and support as they move from late high school into college, university, or independent living. We also equip key adults—parents, family members, and educators—with

Quote

"It's a stigmatized problem, and it's a silent problem. This has to end. Suicide is not just a personal tragedy, it's a key issue of public policy, and facing up to it requires political will." — Bob Rae, leader of the federal Liberal Party (CBC News, October 4, 2011)

the knowledge they need to support the young people in their lives" (www.thejackproject.org/index.php).

The Jack Project is partnered with Kids Help Phone and is piloting a project with several organizations, including 22 high schools, providing both outreach programming and online resources promoting dialogue on mental health.

A third organization—this one with a special focus—is The Trevor Project. It provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth (www.thetrevorproject.org). There is currently no Canadian equivalent, but the site does provide a great deal of information useful to Canadian teens.

PFLAG Canada (Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays) has announced it is hoping to provide a 24-hour-a-day hotline for youth across Canada by the end of 2011. The PFLAG website is at www.pflagcanada.ca/en/index-e.asp. Ontario LGBT youth currently are served by the Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line. Its website is at www.youthline.ca.

Government Initiatives

In October 2011 the federal Liberals tabled a motion calling for a national strategy on suicide, with funding for programs to prevent suicide as well as assist survivors. (Megan Leslie, a New Democratic Party MP, introduced similar legislation in 2010). The Prime Minister responded that his government has taken steps to deal with the problem, but is willing to look at additional ideas. To date, however, the most significant measures are being taken at the provincial level.

No province has had a greater success in reducing youth suicide than Quebec. Over the last 10 years Quebec—which in the 1990s had Canada's highest youth

suicide rate—cut the number of youth suicides in half.

To do this, Quebec developed Canada's first suicide strategy, which it outlined in the 1998 document "Help for life" (available at <http://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/acrobat/f/documentation/1997/97-237-a.pdf>). The four main components of the strategy are:

1. Consolidate and bolster health services to ensure help can be provided quickly—with an emphasis on getting mental health services to high-risk groups like homeless youth.
2. Promote mental health and wellness in young people with changes in school curriculums and the funding of community groups.
3. Launch a broad anti-stigma campaign.
4. Make suicide more difficult by taking steps such as installing barriers on Montreal's Jacques Cartier bridge.

The Quebec initiative responds to the lessons that recent research is teaching us about how to prevent youth suicide. These include:

- promoting mental wellness in schools
- providing youth with the tools to cope with emotional stress
- ensuring that help—someone knowledgeable to talk to—is readily available
- creating a comfortable environment for those seeking help

The Copycat Effect: Real or Imagined?

Is suicide catching? Does talking about suicide promote suicide?

Some studies, including ones from the Canadian Psychiatric Association, suggest that media reporting of suicide can result in copycat suicide, especially among young people under the age of 24. The theory is that when vulnerable people learn about another person's

suicide they feel they have permission to do the same. The effect seems to be greatest after a celebrity suicide.

Some countries fully endorse the theory and have developed journalism codes that outline when and how suicides may be reported. Some suicides—such as those on the Toronto subway system—are never reported in the press.

Does the copycat effect mean suicide should remain a taboo topic? On the contrary, most authorities would argue that we need to talk about it openly with one another. What we need to avoid is “glamorizing” suicide. When the media show restraint in its coverage, the copycat effect is lessened.

Follow-up

1. Quebec is considering requiring any movie depicting a suicide to have a content advisory. Do you think this is a worthwhile idea? Why or why not?
2. Prepare a brief report (two-pages maximum) on how one of the three organizations discussed in this article (Do It for Daron, The Jack Project, The Trevor Project) was created and the issues in suicide prevention with which it is especially interested.

TEEN SUICIDE: BREAKING THE SILENCE

Bullying

Did you know . . .
National Anti-Bullying
Day will be held on
December 16, 2011.

Focus for Reading

As you read the section, consider ways in which your school could do a better job dealing with bullying.

Bullying is a problem in many schools and has been linked to several recent teen suicides. In this section we look at a few of the more prominent recent cases, the teens most vulnerable to bullying, and some attempts to reduce its impact.

The Case of Jamey Rodemeyer

Jamey Rodemeyer was a 14-year-old grade nine student in Buffalo, New York, who also happened to be gay. He came out in Grade 8. Jamey had a circle of supportive friends, but he was also subject to regular taunts and slurs at school. Even when he was away from school he couldn't escape the hate comments. For over a year he was a victim of the worst kind of cyber bullying, and at one point was actually encouraged to kill himself.

In September 2011 Jamey did kill himself. Police began a criminal investigation, and charges of harassment, cyber harassment, and/or hate crimes are pending.

In the year before Jamey's death, several other teen suicides had made the headlines. Among them:

- Tyler Clementi, a freshman student at Rutgers University. He jumped from a bridge in New York after his roommate secretly made a video of him being intimate with another male and posted it on the Web.
- Asher Brown, 13, a Houston grade eight student who was regularly picked on by his peers because of his small size, the way he dressed, and because they believed he was gay. The day after being physically bullied at school,

Asher shot himself with his stepfather's gun.

- Billy Lucas, a 15-year-old Indiana high school student, bullied over a year and a half for being "different." Other students called him a "fag" and told him he was "a piece of crap." One day Billy went home and hanged himself in the barn.

The examples are not limited to the United States. Shaquille Wisdom, a 13-year-old grade nine student in Ajax, Ontario, killed himself after over a year of abuse. He had been outed as gay by a friend. He was both cyber bullied and physically attacked. The day before he hanged himself he was stuffed into a school garbage can by classmates.

Nor are the examples limited to gay students. As we saw in the video, Mitchell Wilson was bullied because of his disability. Jesse Logan, an 18-year-old Ohio high school student, and Hope Witsell, a Florida 13-year-old, both committed suicide after nude pictures they had sent to boys they liked were sent around their schools. Both left notes saying they felt hopeless because of the name-calling and abuse that resulted from that action.

Some Facts about Bullying

BullyingCanada.ca identifies on their website four major kinds of bullying. It is not unusual for several of these types of bullying to take place at one time.

1. Verbal bullying: This includes name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, spreading rumours, threatening, making negative references to one's culture, ethnicity,

Further Research

Visit the BullyingCanada.ca website to learn more about the causes and effects of bullying and how to prevent it.

- race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, and unwanted sexual comments.
2. Social bullying: This category includes activities such as mobbing, scapegoating, excluding others from a group, humiliating others with public gestures, or creating graffiti that puts others down.
 3. Physical bullying: Activities such as hitting, poking, pinching, chasing, shoving, coercing, destroying or stealing belongings, or unwanted sexual touching.
 4. Cyber bullying: Using the Internet or text messaging to intimidate, put down, spread rumours or make fun of someone.

In Canada, studies have shown that about 15 per cent of youth between the ages of 11 and 16 are bullied. The percentage for LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender) youth is much higher—about four times that of straight youth. As many as one in 10 young persons has bullied another student. Most bullies outgrow the practice in their mid-teens.

Bullying can have a whole range of physical and psychological consequences, ranging from withdrawal from favourite activities to headaches and panic attacks.

Stopping Bullying

Many Canadian schools have initiated programs to prevent bullying, with mixed success. According to an international survey by the World Health Organization, Canada has many more reports of bullying than both the United

States and England. Another study in 2008 found that about one-third of students believed anti-bullying programs had improved their school environment. Individual victims and bullies, however, reported very little change (*The Globe and Mail*, October 30, 2010).

One of the anti-bullying projects with the highest profile is Jeremiah Project 51 (www.jeremiah51.com). It was founded in memory of Jeremiah Lasater, a 14-year-old special education student who killed himself after being bullied at a California high school. The project acts on behalf of bullied students or their parents to ensure that schools deal with complaints of bullying that are brought to their attention. The project is currently devoting many of its resources to dealing with cyber bullying.

The It Gets Better Project (www.itgetsbetter.org) was created by Dan Savage, the writer of “Savage Love,” a syndicated relationship and sex advice column. The project is aimed specifically at LGBT youth and promotes the idea that even though high school is a difficult time for LGBT youth and other kids labelled as ‘different,’ life after high school does get much better. The website has videos from thousands of individuals testifying that things will improve and life is worth living.

A few months before he took his own life, Jamey Rodemeyer had uploaded his own testimonial to the It Gets Better Project. Sadly, Jamey never lived to discover the truth of that statement. You can watch Jamey’s video on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pb1CaGMdWk.

For Discussion

1. Does your school have an anti-bullying policy? Is it effective?
2. Would you feel comfortable intervening if you saw someone being bullied? Why or why not?
3. There can’t be a kid or teenager alive who doesn’t know how awful it is to be bullied. So why do you think it continues to happen?

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Introduction

Focus

This *News in Review* story focuses on the debt crisis in Greece and other European countries—known as the eurozone—that is threatening to plunge the Canadian economy into another recession. We will explore the crisis, growing protests against economic inequality around the world, and what is being done to solve these problems.

The uncertain state of European and global economies dominated headlines around the world in the fall of 2011. In the streets of Athens, Greece, protestors and police fought pitched battles as demonstrations against the government's planned austerity measures grew. The changes included severe wage cuts, reductions in social benefits, and big tax hikes. The Greek government hoped that the cuts would allow it to avoid defaulting on its massive debt.

Political and business leaders across the continent were alarmed that Greece's serious economic difficulties might spread to other countries of the eurozone, including Portugal, Spain, and Italy. As a result, world financial markets were jittery, leading to plummeting stock values in major exchanges from Tokyo to New York and Toronto.

Meanwhile, the streets of the financial districts of many countries echoed with calls that governments act to reduce the growing gap between rich and poor—starting with a move to “occupy” New York's Wall Street. Support for this movement grew rapidly, attracting supporters around the globe. In Toronto demonstrators massed outside the Toronto Stock Exchange on Bay Street. Protestors demanded that salaries of highly paid corporate CEOs be limited and more money be spent on programs

that would create jobs. As the Occupy movement gained traction, there was evidence that political leaders such as U.S. President Barack Obama were listening and responding to its demands for greater social and economic justice.

While many economists and political leaders expressed grave concern about the future of Europe, and the U.S. economy continued to perform poorly, the situation in Canada did not appear quite as serious or worrisome. Indeed, Canada had emerged more quickly and with less damage from the recession of 2008-09 than most other Western countries. Its rates of growth in GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and employment compared quite favourably with those of most European states, and were far better than those of its huge southern neighbor and major trading partner.

Nonetheless, if the economic crisis now affecting Greece was to spread to more countries in Europe, the consequences for the tightly linked global economy might include another world-wide recession, possibly even more severe than that of 2008. Such a course of events would result in very serious damage to the Canadian economy, despite the government's best efforts to manage it effectively and insulate it from outside influences.

To Consider

1. Do you think that public protests like “Occupy Wall Street” are effective in raising awareness and bringing about change? What might be some other effective courses of action?
2. Do you have any concerns about the gap between the rich and the poor? Explain your response.
3. Should limits be placed on how much money any one person can make so that money can be redirected to those who are poor? Why or why not?

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Video Review

Check It Out!

An animated short in *The Guardian* explains the latest plan to solve the European debt crisis: www.guardian.co.uk/business/blog/2011/oct/28/euro-debt-crisis-animated-explanation.

Pre-viewing Questions

With a partner or in a small group discuss and respond to the questions below.

1. How much do you know about the current economic crisis facing Greece and how its people and government are responding?

2. Do you think that economic problems in Greece and other European countries are likely to have any impact on Canada? Why or why not?

3. Are you worried about the future prospects for Canada's economy? Why or why not?

Viewing Questions

As you watch the video, respond to the questions in the spaces provided.

1. What was the main cause of the recession of 2008?

2. What impact did this have on Canada?

3. How many European countries use the euro as their currency? Which one of them is facing a serious crisis?

4. What deal have the other members of the eurozone offered Greece as a solution to the problems it is facing?

5. Who is the Prime Minister of Greece? What steps has his government taken to reduce the country's fiscal deficit?

6. How have ordinary people in Athens reacted to the government's austerity measures?

7. Why does the Greek government believe it has no other choice but to introduce measures that are unpopular with many people?

8. How large is Greece's total debt? What step might Greece have to take if it is unable to repay it?

9. Besides Greece, what other eurozone countries are facing serious debt problems?

10. Why might a Greek debt default result in another global recession like that of 2008?

11. How has the uncertain state of the eurozone economies affected stock markets in Canada?

Post-Viewing Questions

Join with your partner or small group again and respond to the following questions.

1. Now that you have watched the video, revisit your responses to the Pre-viewing Questions. Add any information you learned from the video, or otherwise update your answers.

2. If you were living in Greece, would you support the government's harsh austerity policies or would you take to the streets in protest against them? Why?

3. Why are so many other eurozone countries worried about the consequences of Greece's defaulting on its debt? Do you think their fears are justified? Why or why not?

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Europe's Unfolding Economic Crisis

Focus for Reading

Each section below begins with a question. As you read, record your responses to each question.

1. Why is Greece in trouble?

In October 2011, Athens was gripped by a massive general strike, and violent protests erupted outside the country's parliament. Greek citizens from all walks of life were angry their government was about to introduce yet another round of austerity measures that would cause even more economic pain for the country's already suffering people. These steps included punishing wage and salary cuts, drastic reductions to pensions and other social benefits, the layoffs of tens of thousands of public employees, and sharp tax hikes.

Trade unions, professional associations, and small-business organizations all demanded the Socialist government of Prime Minister George Papandreou reconsider its policies, which they argued were penalizing ordinary Greeks for the past mistakes of the nation's political and business elites, and driving Greece into a severe recession. But for its part, the government claimed that it had no alternative but to persevere with its belt-tightening actions, despite the severe hardship they would cause. In the words of the country's finance minister, Evangelos Venizelos, the government faced a choice between a "difficult situation and a catastrophe" ("Eurozone crisis explained," BBC News Business, www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-13798000).

The catastrophe Venizelos referred to was the real possibility that Greece would be forced to default on its massive debt, with untold consequences not only for it but for each of the other 17 countries of the eurozone. In order to prevent this from happening, the

International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Central Bank (ECB), and major European countries such as France and Germany were prepared to offer Greece substantial amounts of money in bailout packages—amounting to hundreds of billions of euros—so it could at least begin to pay back some of what it owed to foreign bond-holders. This rescue package was made necessary by the fact that bond-rating agencies such as New York's Standard and Poor's had reduced Greece's credit rating so severely that it was unable to borrow any more money by selling government bonds on the international market. But the condition for Greece's receiving these emergency injections of funds was that its government had to take serious steps to reduce its spending and get its mounting fiscal deficit under control.

Economists differed on what had led to Greece's serious predicament. Some pointed to the fact that successive governments had borrowed liberally on international markets at low rates of interest in order to finance ambitious public-works programs such as the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics and a generous expansion in social welfare benefits, with little regard for how these loans would eventually be repaid. Others held ordinary Greeks responsible to the extent that they were part of a "culture of tax evasion" and sought to avoid paying their fair share of taxes—leaving government coffers empty when it needed revenue most. And finally, there were those who looked deep into the country's troubled past, which included centuries of poverty under Ottoman rule,

the harsh Nazi occupation during the Second World War, and the devastating civil war that raged from 1945-49, which had pitted Greek against Greek and left the country in ruins for many years.

While other war-ravaged European nations such as Germany had received significant economic aid from the U.S. as part of the Marshall Plan for European Economic Recovery, Greece had only gained military assistance to defend itself against potential enemy states.

2. Could the crisis spread beyond Greece?

The main reason why the IMF and the ECB are anxious to extend multi-billion-euro bailout funds to Greece is to make sure that the country is able to begin to pay down its massive debt and avoid a default. But some economists are preparing themselves for the worst, believing that even with bailouts Greece will be forced into a default position anyway. This could take one of two forms: an “orderly” or a “disorderly” default.

In the first scenario, Greece would negotiate a deal with its creditors to write off a substantial amount of its debt, possibly amounting to as much as 50 or even 60 per cent. This is what economists call a “haircut.” At the same time, Greece might have to withdraw from the eurozone and reintroduce its former currency, the drachma, at a seriously devalued rate of exchange. This would enable its exports to compete more favourably on world markets. Such

an eventuality would result in many years of severe hardship for Greece, with the faint possibility that one day it would succeed in reviving its economy.

However, the second alternative, the nightmare scenario of a “disorderly” default is what business and political leaders across the eurozone fear most. In this case, Greece would be unable to negotiate any mutually satisfactory terms for debt repayment with its creditors, and its economy would basically implode. The country’s political structures would be shaken to their very foundations, widespread social misery and unrest would break out, and Greece would enter into an economic tailspin worse than anything seen in Europe since the 1930s.

The effect of such a calamity on other countries in the eurozone could prove to be incalculable. Witnessing the collapse in Greece, international investors might question the wisdom of offering any more financial assistance to other troubled European economies, such as Portugal, Ireland, Spain, or even Italy. The first two countries have rather small economies, like Greece, but if either Spain or Italy, or both, were forced into a default, then the shock waves of such a disaster would reverberate around the world, plunging it into a depression far worse than the 2008-09 recession. And despite its relative immunity from events in Europe so far, even Canada would feel the devastating effects of such a scenario, given that globalization has linked the world’s economies so closely.

Follow-up

1. With a partner, share your responses to the two questions posed in this section. Help each other to complete any missing information that you think is important.
2. Do you agree with Greece’s finance minister that the government has no alternative except to impose further austerity measures? Why or why not?
3. From what you have read, which of the explanations for Greece’s current economic difficulties do you find most persuasive? Why?
4. How do you think Canada’s economy would be affected by a Greek debt default and the consequences that might result from it?

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Focus on Canada

Focus for Reading

As you read this section, make notes on the most important aspects of the economic situation in the Maritimes, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. Create an organizer like the one below in your notebook to help you organize your responses.

The View from the Maritimes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workers at the Irving Shipyard in Halifax rejoiced on learning that the firm had been awarded a major contract to build ships for the navy.• The award meant that many new jobs would be created.• A Vancouver company won a smaller contract, but a troubled firm in Quebec was shut out of the competition.
The View from Quebec
The View from Saskatchewan

Unlike the United States and some countries of the eurozone, Canada has so far been spared the worst effects of the current economic crisis spreading across the globe. Although the recession of 2008-09 did impact negatively on economic growth and job creation in the country, Canada emerged more quickly from these impacts than the United States. But as the history of Canada clearly shows, prosperity is not always evenly distributed across the various regions of this large country. The following profiles describe the economic situation in three regions of Canada.

The View from the Maritimes

Workers at the Irving Shipyard in Halifax erupted with cheers of joy on October 19, 2011, when the federal government announced it was awarding a \$25-billion contract to the firm. The contract, which had been hotly bid on by a number of shipbuilding companies across Canada, meant that the workers at Irving would be busy for many years building 21 new combat vessels for the Canadian Forces. For the nearly 800 workers at Irving the

announcement came as a huge relief. It meant that their jobs, which had been in jeopardy, were now secure.

In addition, the contract would mean that 11 500 new jobs would be created, both directly with Irving and indirectly with other companies associated with the project. For a region whose economic outlook had been cloudy, the awarding of the Irving contract was a huge piece of good news.

The View from Quebec

Nova Scotia was not the only province to receive good news from the federal government that day. A smaller contract, worth \$8-billion, was awarded to Seaspan Marine, a Vancouver-based shipbuilding company, for the construction of seven non-combat vessels. But this was bad news for Davie Shipyard, in Levis, Quebec, where many workers were facing layoffs. This troubled company, which made its last major delivery of ships in 1979, had stood idle for years until it was bought by an Ontario firm as part of a joint venture with a Quebec and South Korean

company. The Quebec government loaned Davie \$6-million to cover the costs of its late entry into the bidding process, to no avail.

The bad news from the Davie shipyard was not the only depressing aspect of Quebec's economic health in the fall of 2011. Retail sales across the province were slumping as consumers appeared to be cutting back on spending as economic uncertainty grew. And by October, Quebec's economic performance was the weakest in the country. Incomes were increasing very little, if at all, and new jobs were not being created fast enough to absorb the pool of unemployed and underemployed workers. High taxes were also acting as a brake on business expansion and consumer spending, with the province's sales tax slated to rise to 9.5 per cent in 2012. In addition, Quebec residents, who already pay among the highest gas prices in the country, were also looking at a 4 per cent gas tax hike over the next two years.

The View from Saskatchewan

Canada's Prairie provinces, in particular Saskatchewan and Alberta, appeared to be almost immune to the economic difficulties facing other parts of the country in the fall of 2011. Global demand for oil, gas, potash, grains, and other natural resources this region processes remained high, and as new residents moved to these provinces in search of jobs, the construction industry

was booming. In a speech to a business audience in Toronto, Calgary's mayor, Naheed Nenshi, hailing the region's booming economy, called on people seeking jobs in eastern Canada to consider relocating to his city, where there were many positions in lucrative fields standing vacant as a result of a shortage of workers.

The good economic times in the Prairies was fostering an optimistic, "can-do" spirit among local residents who were going into business for themselves. Among them was Colin Schmidt, of Lumsden, Saskatchewan, who, with his wife, Meredith, had started the province's first micro-distillery, producing high-end vodka. The Schmidts, who had moved to Saskatchewan from the United States after running a mortgage brokerage there, were happy to be relocating to a prosperous area of Canada.

The combination of high global prices for commodities, along with a lower Canadian dollar that makes these exports cheaper for foreign buyers, means that the Prairies may be looking at continued good economic times despite the uncertainties that cloud other regions of Canada. But this region, no stranger to the cycle of boom and bust that has impacted its resource-based economy many times in the past, could not be so confident as to predict that the current favourable situation might continue indefinitely.

Follow-up

1. With a partner or in small groups compare the information in your summary chart. Help each other complete any missing information.
2. Why was the federal government's announcement of the naval shipbuilding contracts good news for some regions of Canada but not for others?
3. What are some of the factors that are impacting negatively on the economy of Quebec and positively on the Prairies?

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Europe's Lost Generation and its Junk Jobs

Reading Prompt

As you read this section, make notes on the reasons you think young Europeans are frustrated about their employment prospects and worried about their future.

Silvia

Silvia is a 24-year-old with a master's degree in public relations living in Madrid, Spain. Like many well-educated young Europeans, she finds herself working in a series of dead-end jobs with no hope of earning a decent salary or being entitled to any fringe benefits. She is paid 300 euros, or about \$420 a month, in a public-relations firm where the permanent, full-time salaried employees sitting next to her doing the same job earn far more. Living with her parents because she cannot afford an apartment of her own, Silvia finds that most of her meager monthly earnings are eaten up by transportation costs to and from work and her daily lunch money. But still, Silvia counts herself as lucky because, unlike most of her fellow graduates, she is actually working in the field for which she was trained.

Silvia's story is far from unique in many of the eurozone's troubled economies, especially Greece, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. National unemployment rates are high in all of these countries, but joblessness among young workers is even higher. In Spain, for example, while about 20 per cent of workers are unemployed, the rate among those aged 15 to 25 is a staggering 40 per cent. And those lucky enough to obtain work more often than not find themselves trapped, like Silvia, in what are known as "junk jobs," working on temporary contracts for low salaries, with little hope of ever gaining benefits such as unemployment insurance, vacation pay, or retirement pensions.

At the same time, these young workers find themselves doing the same jobs as their middle-aged counterparts who are earning far more, are secure in their employment, and can look forward to a good pension once they reach retirement age. This dual-track job market is causing growing friction in a number of European countries between younger and older workers and is one of the reasons why large, noisy, and sometimes violent protests against economic inequality and joblessness have erupted in the streets of Madrid, Athens, Rome, and other European cities.

The recession and debt crisis in the eurozone is taking a severe toll on an entire generation of young Europeans who feel that the system has abandoned them and that they have no hope of ever gaining secure, full-time employment. For many of them, even being able to move out of their parent's home and rent or buy an apartment is an unrealizable dream. This situation is having negative consequences on the economies of many European countries, since young people like Silvia are not able to purchase new homes or furniture, thus decreasing consumer demand and preventing manufacturing and retail outlets from expanding and hiring more workers.

Federico

Twenty-seven-year-old Federico graduated with a degree in history from the University of Rome in 2009. Since then, he has moved through a succession of unsatisfying temporary jobs, the last one offering him 500 euros per month

for a full-time job working 10 hours a day. Like many other young European workers, Federico originally thought that accepting a “junk job” was his way of getting a foot in the door so he could eventually gain a full-time, permanent position with the firm he worked for. But many companies, and even government agencies, are resorting to what in Portugal are called “green receipts” as a way of minimizing labour costs. Workers employed on this basis have full-time jobs like permanent employees, but unlike them have no right to paid holidays, social security, health insurance coverage, or severance pay. And it is not only young workers who are hired under green receipts. A middle-aged manager at Portugal’s Institute of Museums in Lisbon and some of his colleagues have held a green receipt for over a decade.

According to Tom Wilthagen, a labour expert at Tilburg University in the Netherlands, European governments and businesses that are employing young workers on this basis may be saving money in the short run, but are creating conditions that will have dire

effects for their economies in the future. In his words, “you cannot just leave one segment of the labour market fully untouched and not motivate people to go to the job where they fit best. You might create employment in the short term but in the end it’s a dead-end road” (“Youth unemployment offers a flashpoint in Europe too,” www.theguardian.co.uk/politics/2011/feb16).

As an increasing number of frustrated young Europeans—many of them highly educated and underemployed—take to the streets in angry protests, the future of the eurozone’s most troubled economies appears just as precarious as their employment prospects. Discontent among unemployed youth was one of the key factors behind the massive demonstrations that led to the toppling of governments in Tunisia and Egypt during the tumultuous Arab Spring that swept North Africa and parts of the Middle East during the early months of 2011. Some observers wonder if a similar phenomenon could be just around the corner in Europe as well.

Follow-up

1. With a partner or in a small group share your responses to the situation of the young European workers depicted in this section.
2. If you were an unemployed or underemployed young European worker, who would you hold responsible for your situation? Why?
3. During the 1960s, many countries in Europe and the Americas witnessed a youth revolt as young people took to the streets in protest, even though their economic well-being was not seriously threatened at the time. Do you think a similar youth revolt, based on poor job prospects and an uncertain economic future, is likely to occur in the immediate future? Why or why not?

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Two Views of the Occupy Movement

Focus for Reading

As you read this section, use the following T chart to record points in favour of and against the Occupy movement. You should be able to identify at least three or four points in favour of and against the movement and its goals.

Points in Favour	Points Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Occupy movement is addressing a real grievance about the growing gap between rich and poor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Occupy movement is engaging in class warfare, putting the “haves” in conflict with the “have-nots.”

The Occupy Wall Street movement, which attracted the attention of the United States and much of the world media in the fall of 2011, was a new style of leaderless social movement. Motivated by an intense grievance against the growing gap between rich and poor in many modern societies, and the apparent unwillingness of the nation’s business and political leaders to address it in any serious way, the “occupiers” claimed that they were speaking on behalf of the 99 per cent of Americans whose growing economic difficulties were being deliberately ignored by the increasingly well-off one per cent.

As the Occupy movement spread from the streets of New York’s financial district to other Western cities—including Toronto—observers debated what it meant and what impact it might have on current economic and political developments in the U.S. and other countries. While some prominent political figures—such as Senator John Kerry and Representative Nancy Pelosi in the U.S., and Liberal leader Bob Rae and NDP MP Olivia Chow in Canada—expressed sympathy for the motivations behind the protests, other more conservative spokespersons like Republican congressman Paul Ryan denounced the “occupiers” for engaging

in what he called “class warfare,” or a deliberate, resentful pitting of society’s “have-nots” against its “haves.” And responding to the demand of many of the young “occupiers” for government action to create jobs, Herman Cain, a rising Republican presidential hopeful and the owner of a multi-million-dollar pizza franchise, told the protestors, “don’t blame Wall Street, don’t blame the big banks. If you don’t have a job and you’re not rich, blame yourself. It is not someone’s fault if they succeeded. It is someone’s fault if they failed” (“Herman Cain: Occupy Wall Street protests planned to help Obama,” www.opposingviewpoints.com/politics/2011/occupy-wall-street-protests-planned-help-obama).

Behind the political debates, however, there was some evidence that the Occupy movement had identified a real problem. Indeed, there was ample evidence that the gap between rich and poor, especially in the United States, had been growing at a dramatic rate for at least four decades. For example, in 1976, the top one per cent of U.S. households received 8.9 per cent of all pre-tax income. By 2008, this had risen to over 21 per cent. Between 1979 and 2009, the top five per cent of American families enjoyed a rise in their real incomes of almost 75 per cent, while the lowest 20 per cent saw theirs fall by

7.4 per cent. And to counter the claim of many wealthy Americans that they were overtaxed by a spendthrift federal government, statistics revealed that the tax rate for the highest income earners had plummeted from 91 per cent in 1960 to only 35 per cent today. The financial guru Warren Buffett, one of the richest men in the U.S., recently stated that there was something fundamentally wrong in a country where his secretary paid more in income tax than he did.

In the view of Joseph Stiglitz, a respected economist and advocate of greater government involvement to stimulate the troubled U.S. economy, the affluent and comfortable one per cent of American society ignored or dismissed the growing demands of the other 99 per cent for greater equality at their peril. He noted that, “the top one per cent have the best houses, the best educations, the best doctors, and the best lifestyles. But there is one thing that money does not seem to have bought them: an understanding that their fate is bound up with how the other 99 per cent live. Throughout history, this is something that the top

one per cent eventually do learn. Too late” (“The milquetoast radicals,” www.nytimes.com/2011/10/11/opinion/the-milquetoast-radicals.html).

But to David Brooks, an influential columnist with the *The New York Times*, the claim that the “occupiers” speak for a “virtuous” 99 per cent of the U.S. population and in opposition to a “rich and greedy” one per cent is a gross and potentially misleading oversimplification. “These are problems that implicate a much broader swath of society than the top one per cent” (“The milquetoast radicals,” www.nytimes.com/2011/10/11/opinion/the-milquetoast-radicals.html).

And as evidence of support for Brooks’s opinion, a backlash against the Occupy movement, at least in the United States, is emerging in the form of a group calling itself the “fifty-three per cent,” standing for the percentage of Americans who pay income tax, some of whom believe that they are overtaxed and that the federal government is misspending their money.

Follow-up

1. With a partner or in a small group compare the points in favour of and against the Occupy movement that you were able to record from reading this section.
2. Discuss the points in favour of and against the Occupy movement and decide which side of the argument is more persuasive to you, and why.
3. Young people form a significant and enthusiastic part of the Occupy movement. Why do you think this group in the population would be especially attracted to such a protest movement? Do you have any sympathy for it? Why or why not?

THE EUROZONE AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Activity: Pulling It All Together

This *News in Review* story focuses on four distinct issues that all relate to the general theme of the economy. They are:

- 1) the debt crisis in Greece and other countries of the eurozone
- 2) economic trends in various regions of Canada
- 3) youth unemployment and underemployment in Europe and elsewhere
- 4) the Occupy movement: its goals and significance

Form groups to research and prepare a report on any one of these issues and how it relates to the general theme of the economy. Your report can take the form of a written essay, a PowerPoint presentation, a graphic representation, video, skit, dramatization, mock interview, or debate.

When conducting your research, visit www.cbc.ca/news for the latest stories on these issues.

After all of the reports have been presented, have a class discussion exploring which of these issues you feel are the most pressing. As well, identify whether or not the presentations helped to enrich your understanding of current economic issues in Canada and other countries and how you might be affected by them.

As a focus for debriefing and discussion of these issues, teachers may wish to pose questions such as these to the class:

1. Why is the economic situation in Greece so serious, not only for that country but for the other member-nations of the eurozone?
2. Why is the current performance of the Canadian economy so uneven when various regions of the country are compared?
3. Why is the phenomenon of European unemployment and “junk jobs” so serious for the future of the continent and its next generation of citizens?
4. What are the main goals and methods of protest of the Occupy movement and why have they aroused so much controversy in the United States and other countries?

AMANDA LINDHOUT'S AFRICAN JOURNEY

Introduction

Focus

Amanda Lindhout is a Canadian freelance journalist who was kidnapped and held captive for 15 months in Somalia. Remarkably, after her release she returned to the country to try to improve education for women. In this *News in Review* story we examine her journey and her remarkable story.

On August 23, 2008, Canadian freelance journalist Amanda Lindhout, along with Australian photojournalist Nigel Brennan and two Somalis, was kidnapped by militiamen 18 kilometres southwest of the Somali capital, Mogadishu. The team was en route to a refugee camp to report on the humanitarian crisis faced by people caught in the crossfire of a decades-long civil war. The kidnapped were moved frequently among various houses within the Mogadishu area and subjected to physical and mental torture.

Five months later, the Somalis had been released, but it was not until November 2009, after a lengthy negotiation and an estimated \$600 000 ransom payment, that Lindhout and Brennan were freed and returned to their respective home countries. Reporters Without Borders, a non-profit international organization that supports press freedom, stated that the long duration of Lindhout's captivity was quite rare (*Toronto Star*, Sept 3, 2008).

While in captivity, it was the brutal actions of her captors—many of whom were teenagers—that gave Lindhout the idea of using education to help foster a belief system of gender equality and improved treatment of women in Somalia. A few short months following her return to Canada Lindhout began a new career as an advocate and humanitarian aid worker for Somalis.

Remarkably, two years after her release Lindhout returned to the region of her

captivity to witness the dire situation in the Horn of Africa. In the fall of 2011, the United Nations estimated that 750 000 people were at risk of starvation and another 13 million people needed emergency food, medicine, and shelter.

Battling her personal fears and memories, Lindhout visited Kenya's sprawling Dadaab refugee camp, located near the Somali border, in her role as the founder and executive director of the Global Enrichment Foundation (GEF). Established in 2010, the GEF is a non-profit organization that aims to empower Somali women through education, health and wellness, and economic initiatives. One of GEF's goals is to send 100 Somali women to university annually for the next four years (The Global Enrichment Foundation, <http://globalenrichmentfoundation.com>).

Lindhout's foundation also pledged \$60-million to build a new educational facility in Dadaab so that Somali children can go to school. However, Lindhout's efforts to bring about change through education have been met with criticism by some members of the international development community and government. Lindhout's response to the detractors is straightforward: "For anybody who is questioning this right now, that is fine, that is fair. It is an incredibly challenging environment to work in, but time will tell the story" (CBC documentary *African Journey*, September 1, 2011).

To Consider

1. Should the dangers of conflict zones deter us from providing humanitarian assistance or, as global citizens, do we have a responsibility to help those in need?
2. As a potential donor, do you think your money would be best used by a small charitable organization with a specific cause or to a large charitable organization with many initiatives? Explain your selection.

AMANDA LINDHOUT'S AFRICAN JOURNEY

Video Review

Did you know . . .

Since the civil war began in 1991, over one-third of Somalia's population has either fled or been internally displaced.

Pre-viewing Questions

Answer the following questions on your own and then share with a partner or as a class.

1. How much do you know about the present crisis in the Horn of Africa (causes, effects, implications)?

2. Have you heard of Amanda Lindhout? If so, why has she been in the media spotlight?

Viewing Questions

As you watch the video, record your responses in the spaces provided.

1. Why is the East African country of Somalia so dangerous?

2. What is causing Somalis to flee into neighbouring countries?

3. What happened to Amanda Lindhout in 2008?

4. What is the focus of Lindhout's organization, the Global Enrichment Foundation?

5. Why did Lindhout travel to Kenya? What personal fears did she encounter on her journey?

6. List some of the hardships faced by the Somali refugees.

7. What realities of the refugee camp did Amanda Lindhout find distressing?

8. What has Lindhout pledged to do for Somali refugees in Dadaab and why?

9. Not everyone supports Lindhout's plan. Record the criticisms you heard in the video.

10. What actions did Kenyan troops take in October and why?

Post-viewing Questions

Answer the following questions on your own and then share with a partner or as a class.

1. If you were Amanda Lindhout, would you have returned to this region? Explain your decision.

2. As Canadians, do you think we should increase our support of the countries in the Horn of Africa? Why or why not?

3. Do you think that the work of Lindhout's organization, Global Enrichment Foundation, and other international organizations can bring about significant change in the Horn of Africa? Explain your answer.

AMANDA LINDHOUT'S AFRICAN JOURNEY

Horn of Africa: A Profile

Further Research

See the September 2011 story in *News in Review* titled "War and famine in Somalia" for additional background information about Somalia.

Definition

Rift valleys form when a block of the Earth's crust falls down in between two parallel faults or when two tectonic plates pull apart.

Reading Prompt

Use the information in this section to answer the "5 Ws": What is happening? Why is it happening? Where is it happening? When is it happening? Who is impacted?

Located in eastern Africa, the countries of Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya comprise what is known as the Horn of Africa. (Note: Some sources consider the Horn of Africa to consist of Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda.) Armed conflict, extreme poverty, and widespread drought threaten the stability of this region.

Geography

The landscape in this area varies from mountains in the west to rolling hills, plains, and plateaus in the centre, and coastlines in the east. A dominant feature is the East African Rift Valley system, which stretches in a north-south direction through the Horn of Africa and extends into Mozambique. The Rift area is characterized by cliffs, valleys, volcanoes, deep lakes, and the continent's highest mountains—Kilimanjaro and Kenya. The land

contains mineral deposits of gold, zinc, limestone, copper, and iron ore, and the region's volcanic activity has the potential to generate geothermal power.

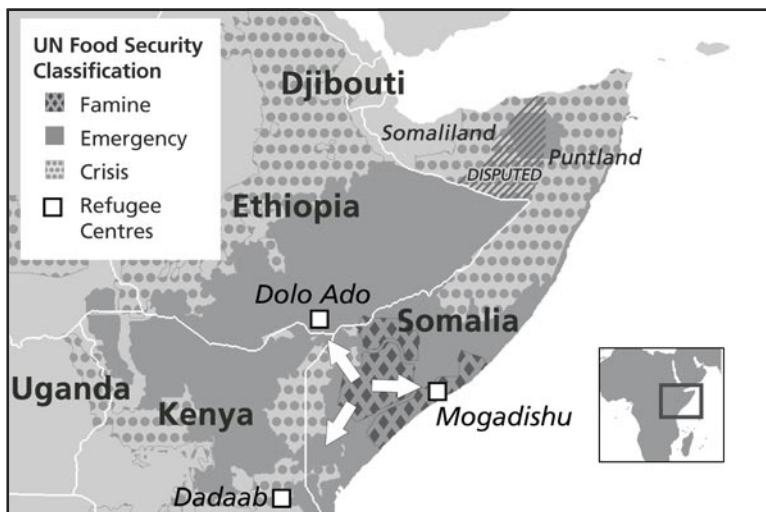
The strategic access of Horn of Africa countries—except for landlocked Ethiopia—to the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean helps to facilitate the export of mined materials, agricultural goods such as tea and coffee from Kenya and Ethiopia, and in the case of Djibouti, the situation of international military bases.

The climate of this region ranges from tropical coastal regions in Kenya to arid northern and interior regions characterized by hot temperatures and recent extreme drought conditions. By contrast, the Ethiopian Highlands in the west of the region possess a temperate climate due to its higher elevation and moderate rainfall from May to October.

Background Facts

Country/ Criteria	Eritrea	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Somalia	Kenya
Capital city	Asmara	Djibouti	Addis Ababa	Mogadishu	Nairobi
Land area (km ²)	117 600	23 200	1 104 300	637 657	580 367
GDP per capita (in USD)	600	2 800	1 000	600	1 600
Total population	5 939 484	757 074	90 873 739	9 925 640	41 070 934
Literacy rate (% of pop.)	58.6	67.9	42.7	37.8	85.1
Ethnic groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 recognized • Main groups: Tigrinya, Tigre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2/3 Somali • 1/3 Afar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 recognized • Main groups: Oromo and Amara 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somali majority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 recognized • Main groups: Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, and Kamba

Source: CIA World Factbook <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>: Data estimates 2010-2011



Recent Situation

- The United Nations has officially declared six famine areas in Somalia.
- According to the FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations), currently 13.3 million people (of which four million are Somali) are in need of immediate food, shelter, water, and medicine.
- The FAO warns that 750 000 people in the Horn of Africa are at risk of starvation by December.
- Thousands of children have died and more than 320 000 (half in central and southern Somalia) suffer from life-threatening malnutrition.
- The United Nations estimates that \$2.5-billion in humanitarian assistance is needed in the Horn of Africa. To date, there is a funding shortfall of \$627-million. International organizations are concerned about the spread of diseases like cholera and malaria as well as providing shelter to

refugees on the outskirts of camps.

- Most international organizations have not been able to bring food aid to the famine-stricken southern regions of Somalia because it is controlled by Al Shabaab, a rebel force—with suspected links to the terrorist group Al Qaeda—that has largely opposed international intervention.
- Somali Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali is slated to hold elections in 2012 in a country deemed internationally as a “failed state.” Somalia’s ongoing civil war and weak transitional government have led to a lawless state where Somali pirates troll the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean, and the rebel force, Al Shabaab, controls segments of the country.
- Bomb blasts in Nairobi and kidnappings of European tourists and aid workers have prompted Kenya to respond militarily against Al Shabaab.
- Kenyan and Ethiopian troops, along with a 9 000-member African Union peacekeeping force led by Burundi and Uganda, have pushed Al Shabaab from the capital, Mogadishu.
- The aim of the Kenyan army’s intervention is to remove Al Shabaab from rebel-controlled areas of southern Somalia to secure the border region between these countries.

Sources: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/89101/icode/; *The Guardian*, August 1, 2011; *The Globe and Mail*, October 24, 2011

Analysis

1. How have the geographic location and physical landscape of the countries in the Horn of Africa contributed to the present humanitarian crisis? Use evidence from both the map and the written text.
2. Examine the Background Facts table. Select one piece of data for each country that you think presents the greatest challenge to that country. Which countries share this selection and which ones differ? Explain your rationale.
3. Research similar, recent data for Canada using the criteria from the Background Facts table. In comparison to Canada, how would you classify the countries in the Horn of Africa: developed, developing, or industrializing? How do you think Canada could help the countries in the Horn of Africa? Use data examples in your answers.
4. Read through the Recent Situation section and decide which three points of information you think are most important for Canadians to be aware of? Justify your selections.

AMANDA LINDHOUT'S AFRICAN JOURNEY

Refugees

Quote

"I believe that Somalia represents the worst humanitarian disaster in the world."
— Antonio Guterra, United Nations High Commission for Refugees (*Toronto Star*, July 11, 2011)

Did you know . . .

A total of about 1.5 million Somalis are reported to be internally displaced. This means they have fled their own homes and villages but remain in the country.

Check It Out!

Explore a "virtual" refugee camp through Médecins Sans Frontiers' interactive map and role-playing game links on their website at <http://refugeecamp.ca>.

Reading Prompt



In this section we will examine the plight of Somali refugees forced to flee their homeland, which has been ravaged by conflict and famine. As you read this section, complete the Multiple Consequence Web that can be downloaded from the *CBC News in Review* site at <http://newsinreview.cbclearning.ca/worksheets/>. Start by placing the causes of conflict—drought, poverty, and famine—in the central triangle.

Somali refugees who have made it safely to the refugee camp in Dadaab, Kenya, have survived personal tragedies and ordeals that most of us cannot even imagine. International organizations, governments, and citizens are trying to provide humanitarian assistance to those Somalis who cannot return to their homeland.

Who is a refugee?

The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) 1951 Convention defines a refugee as someone who has a fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, and membership to a social or political group. Refugees reside outside, and are unable to return to, their country of nationality. The 1967 Protocol includes persons who have fled due to violence, conflict, foreign aggression, or large-scale human rights violations.

In an October 2011 report, the UNHCR stated that there are 940 000 registered Somali refugees in neighbouring countries, in particular, Kenya, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. Throughout 2011, over 300 000 Somalis—the majority being women and children—have fled to the refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia. Approximately 200 to 400 refugees arrive daily to Ethiopia's Dollo Ado camp and 1 000 to 1 500 per day to Kenya's Dadaab camp. This influx has placed an immense strain on these impoverished and drought-

stricken countries.

The UNHCR's report also estimates that 200 000 Somalis are registered refugees in Yemen. The journey across the Gulf of Aden to Yemen's Kharaz refugee camp is particularly dangerous. And Yemen's own poverty, food shortages, and political instability make it very difficult for that country to effectively care for Somali refugees. As a result, the treatment of Somali refugees who make the trek to Yemen can be particularly harsh.

What is a refugee camp?

A refugee camp is a compound that provides basic essentials such as food, water, shelter, sanitation, health care, schools, and sometimes a small market and other local employment opportunities. Refugee camps can range in size from a few thousand to hundreds of thousands of people, depending on the needs of a particular country or region. They are intended to provide temporary accommodation, but many camps have become permanent residences for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are either waiting to return to their home country or emigrate to another.

Refugee camps tend to be situated on the outskirts of towns and cities and distanced from borders and conflict zones. In order to provide access to Somalis fleeing by foot and walking hundreds of kilometres, the refugee

camps in Ethiopia and Somalia have been established near the Somali border. For example, the Ethiopian camp in the Dollo Ado area houses approximately 130 000 Somali refugees among its four centres, including the recently opened Hilaweyn camp.

The camps supporting IDPs in Mogadishu are trying to provide emergency food and medical aid for Somalis who cannot access the border regions. However, the war-ravaged city and control of the region by rebels restrict the flow of aid into the capital.

The world's largest refugee camp is in Dadaab, Kenya. Opened in 1991 at the start of the Somali war, this camp was designed to hold 90 000 refugees. It is now home to almost half a million people and is spread over four complexes. In conjunction with the Kenyan government, Dadaab's operation is co-ordinated by the UNHCR along with a number of partner organizations such as International Committee of the Red Cross, UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Fund), UNWFP (United Nations World Food Program), CARE International, OXFAM, and Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF).

Needless to say, the size and continuing influx of Somali refugees at the Dadaab refugee camp presents a number of significant challenges. These include:

- building more housing blocks
- expanding sanitation systems
- ensuring there is enough food aid to meet the twice-weekly rations
- providing clean water in sufficient amounts in this arid location
- providing education for children and adults who need it
- providing medical attention and vaccinations for fast-spreading diseases like measles
- offering grief counseling for families

and support for women and children who have been raped

As the rainy season approached in the fall of 2011, fears turned to the potential spread of cholera and other water-borne illnesses through the overcrowded camps and outlying areas. As well, Dadaab camp security has recently become a major issue after the shooting of a European aid worker and the kidnapping of two others by suspected Al Shabaab insurgents.

Stories from the Dadaab Refugee Camp

Story A: British journalist Sally Williams met one woman who was standing for a second consecutive day in line at MSF's clinic for the severely malnourished.

"Her baby is asleep in a shawl wrapped around her back. However, the baby's sleep is much too still. This is the kind of detail visitors to Dadaab pick up . . . You learn that malnutrition has a 'flat effect'—children stop playing or moving about" (*The UK Telegraph*, October 29, 2011).

Story B: A CARE Canada representative working in the camp was horrified to learn about violent attacks on women who fled Somalia. "When she (the refugee) was travelling with a group of 14 they were attacked before reaching the border. Five women were raped. All their belongings were stolen and they still had seven days to walk" (*Toronto Star*, July 15, 2011).

Story C: During their 35-day walk to the camp, three of Muslima Aden's children died. "I became a little insane after I lost them," she said (*Toronto Star*, July 11, 2011).

Story D: "Isak walked for 20 days from Somalia to get here. What he

encountered was what so many other refugees described: piles of dead animals, empty villages, people dying of starvation, an unbroken trail of bodies from his village to the camp.” In Isak’s words, “there is nothing left back there” (*Toronto Star*, July 16, 2011).

Story E: K’naan, the Somali-born Canadian musician, met a young mother

at the camp who had walked from her farm carrying her malnourished six-month old twins. Surprisingly, she said to him: “You are a very good artist.” After he quietly thanked her, she continued: “We will be out of this in no time. My kids will be better. I’ll be back on my farm. But the sad thing for me is how we are seen by the world” (*The Globe and Mail*, September 10, 2011).

Analysis

1. Working with a partner or in a small group, share the information you recorded in the Multiple Consequence Web. Add any additional information to your web from your partner or group members. As a team select and rank three of the most pressing consequences facing Somali refugees. Discuss how these consequences should be addressed.
2. Working in small groups, each member is to silently read and respond in writing (it can be in point form) to the refugees’ stories (A-E). You may wish to respond directly to the story or to a group member’s comment or both. When finished, review all the responses. Decide on ONE word that best summarizes the responses for each story. Your teacher may need to give each group a copy of these stories with space to record your responses.
3. Would you: completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or completely disagree with the following statement: “Refugee camps are nothing more than a band-aid solution to humanitarian crises.” Support your position using information from this section. Be prepared to defend your position within a small group or class setting. After hearing other people’s rationale, do you want to re-adjust your position? Why or why not?

AMANDA LINDHOUT'S AFRICAN JOURNEY

Education and Amanda's Dream

Pre-reading Activity

Answer the following questions. You may wish to share your answers with a partner or in a small group.

1. Have you or a family member ever donated to a charity? If so, which one(s) and why?
2. Have you or a family member ever volunteered with a charity? If so, which one(s) and where?
3. What do you think is the main function of charities?
4. Who do you think should take responsibility for helping people during a crisis: individuals, charities, or governments?

Amanda Lindhout's "Promise"

In August 2008, 28-year-old Canadian freelance journalist Amanda Lindhout travelled to Somalia to report on how millions of people had been affected by two decades of war, drought, and hunger. While en route to a refugee camp 18 kilometres south of the capital, Lindhout and the party she was travelling with were taken hostage by militiamen.

Despite previous assignments in Afghanistan and Iraq, Lindhout admits she was a little reckless about the security risks in Somalia. She has been criticized for travelling without a security plan—an imperative for foreigners even when travelling only a short distance from the guarded hotels of the capital (*The Globe and Mail*, May 18, 2009).

During 460 days in captivity she was segregated, physically and mentally tortured, and malnourished. And it was during these long days that Lindhout decided to find a way to help the people of Somalia and, in particular, Somali women. Referring to her mostly male teenaged captors, Lindhout commented: "I used to wonder how they would have been different if they had had the opportunity to have an education, to understand something of a broader world view, and learn something about

tolerance" (*Toronto Star*, May 26, 2010).

Turning the Dream into Reality

Within months of her November 2009 release, Lindhout focused her efforts on becoming an advocate and humanitarian aid worker for the people of Somalia. She has advised international governments, non-profits, business leaders, and policy makers on the importance of using education to counter the radicalization of youth. By 2010, Lindhout had founded the Global Enrichment Foundation, a non-profit organization that aims to empower women through education, health and wellness, and economic opportunities.

Three main programs of the GEF are:

1. Community empowerment of women through sport, leadership opportunities, and female-led advocacy
2. The "SHE WILL" campaign
3. The Somali women's scholarship program

The scholarship program aims to send 100 Somali women to university annually for the next four years. Raising the money to fund this scholarship may be a daunting task, but Lindhout's determination is mirrored in her statement: "I understand that because of my story people are willing to listen, and so . . . if I can use

Quote

“The Somali Women’s Scholarship program is a very real and tangible project because it is going to educate these people in their own country.” — Ahmed Hussen, president of the Canadian Somali Congress and co-director of GEF (*Toronto Star*, May 26, 2010)

that platform to raise awareness of the conditions that women are enduring in Somalia then I think that it is a great thing and that’s not difficult for me to do” (*Toronto Star*, May 26, 2010).

Education in a Refugee Camp

In order to assess the condition of Somali women and to promote the GEF’s education initiatives, Lindhout returned to the region of her captivity. Visiting Kenya’s Dadaab refugee camp forced Lindhout to face not only her personal fears, but also the startlingly realities of Somalis who have fled their home country and how they were trying to survive in the camps. She also witnessed the immense strain that the constant influx of refugees place on the humanitarian services the Dadaab camps provide—including education.

According to the UNHCR, classrooms have expanded from 60 to 100 children per teacher. These class sizes make the quality of the education poor because of lack of classroom space, limited school supplies, and an impossible burden placed on teachers. Through the GEF, Lindhout has pledged to raise \$60-million to build a new educational facility that would provide teacher training and a school for Somali children living in the camp (CBC documentary *African Journey*, September 1, 2011).

Very few children are enrolled in primary education in the camps.

UNICEF reports that approximately 150 000 of Dadaab’s refugees are school-aged children, but only one-third have access to educational facilities.

CARE International, UNICEF, and Save the Children, have been running accelerated learning programs to bring children up to speed before they join regular classes. They have also constructed tents for additional classroom space and expanded teacher training within the adult refugee population. The country director for CARE International in Kenya stresses the importance of enrolling children in school when refugees are registered at the camp. “If children are left idle in the camps, they are most vulnerable to abuse, drugs, and other threats. When attending classes, children do not only learn how to read and write, but also build up their self-confidence” (CARE International, Media Release, August 11, 2011).

Funding for education can often take a back seat when resources are focused on providing water, food, and medicine during emergencies. Although schools and hospitals help to protect refugees, donors fear that expanding these services will result in more refugees arriving and staying. Save the Children argues that “education is something that will actually provide the refugees with some long-term solutions because educated people find their own way out” (*The Telegraph* [UK], October 29, 2011).

Follow-up

1. It was during her lengthy captivity when Amanda Lindhout decided to help the people of Somalia—in particular women.
 - a) What did Amanda Lindhout promise to do if she regained her freedom?
 - b) What realities did these promises turn into?
 - c) What challenges does Lindhout’s organization face?
2. When emergency situations arise, humanitarian aid tends to focus on food, water, shelter, and medicine. Education is often a secondary concern. How would the international community respond to the statement: “Going to school should not be a luxury.” Record the arguments FOR and AGAINST this statement in a T chart.

AMANDA LINDHOUT'S AFRICAN JOURNEY

Activity: Working for Change

Did you know . . .

According to CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), Canadians have contributed over \$70-million for humanitarian aid to be used in the Horn of Africa.

During Amanda Lindhout's recent visit to the Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya she pledged to raise \$60-million through her Global Enrichment Foundation to build a new educational facility that would provide teacher training and a school for Somali children living in the camps. Many organizations and individuals agree with Lindhout's mission, because they believe that education is a crucial part of the long-term solution for those living in refugee camps. But not everyone agrees with Lindhout's overall plan.

Step 1

Read the following statements and respond to the questions at the bottom of the organizer.

Detractors' Statements		Responses in Support of Lindhout
<p>"Ms. Lindhout is contributing to the problem of spreading resources too thinly. Instead of 'doing her own thing' she should join an existing coalition of humanitarian agencies to ensure that the administrative costs are shared." — Denise Beaulieu, Canadian development consultant (<i>The Globe and Mail</i>, September 7, 2011)</p>		<p>"Telling her personal story through book deals, national speaking engagements and appearances on CNN and NBC [have] led to a surge in donations. This has helped Lindhout's agency with its operating costs and ability to bring life-saving food to thousands of refugees in southern Somalia, thus 'creating a path for other agencies to follow'" (<i>The Globe and Mail</i>, September 7, 2011).</p>
<p>"I think somebody like that is an example, an individual who has a good will but it's too little, too little to do much in terms of fixing Somalia . . . The best chance of assuring a future for Somalia is international military intervention in that country, not a well-meaning fundraiser from Canada with a big idea . . . [\$60-million to build an educational facility] is small. It is a drop in the ocean. It's not anything to rely on, to bring peace in Somalia. I think that if education was to bring peace in Somalia, then it should have happened a long time ago because in 1991 when the refugees came here they were all educated." — Badu Katelo, Kenya's Commissioner for Refugees (CBC documentary, <i>Return to Africa</i>, September 1, 2011)</p>		<p>"For anybody who is questioning this right now, that is fine, that is fair. It is an incredibly challenging environment to work in, but time will tell the story . . . I was completely dedicated to this before coming here and there's nothing else I'm going to do with my life . . . if every child gets an education, if there are enough schools, textbooks, and teachers in the camps, and students are taught conflict resolution and leadership skills, many will return to the chaos of their home country as peace builders" (CBC documentary, <i>Return to Africa</i>, September 1, 2011).</p>
<p>Where do I stand and why?</p>		
<p>Agree with the detractors' statements?</p>	<p>Somewhere in the middle?</p>	<p>Agree with supporting statements?</p>

COPING WITH THE STRESS OF GRADUATION

Introduction

Focus

Graduating from high school and moving on to college or university can be a very stressful experience for many Canadian students. This *News in Review* story looks at the stress of graduation and what can be done about this significant transition in a young person's life.

It's like everything hits you at once in your graduating year: college and university applications, maintaining or improving your grades, earning your diploma, juggling a part-time job, clubs, sports, and wondering where the money is going to come from to pay for your future education. (And we haven't even mentioned the prom and all of the stress that accompanies that event). Couple this with personal issues such as peer pressure, body image worries, and struggles with parents and it becomes pretty clear that graduation year is often very stressful.

The need for good grades is more important than ever, competition to get into certain programs is steeper, and it costs a great deal of money to attend a post-secondary educational institution. The average university tuition fee for Canadian students runs at just over \$5 000 per year (with Ontario students paying close to \$7 000 to go to university). College tuition runs about 30 per cent less than that. But when you add the costs of residence, food, books, and living expenses, today's student is on the hook for up to \$20 000 per school year. Even students living at home can see their costs climb toward the \$10 000 mark, depending on how much their parents chip in. According to Statistics Canada, the average student will owe almost \$19 000 when they graduate from college or university. If a student lives away from home, the Toronto Dominion Bank estimates that the total cost of earning a

diploma or degree will be \$80 000.

But if you talk to most students, it's not the money that stresses them out—it's the competition to get high marks. Students need to earn at least a 70 per cent average to gain admission into most college and university programs. But professional programs such as engineering, architecture, and health science require an average of over 90 per cent to get an offer. The number of students who can achieve these grades is, in the grand scheme of things, miniscule. Most students will struggle to earn an 80 with the knowledge that an 85 will get them into the majority of Canada's post-secondary institutions.

Nonetheless, it appears that most students are finding a way to make the grade. Enrolment at colleges and universities is quite good, with around half of Canada's high school graduates getting into a post-secondary program. However, the dark side of great enrollment numbers is that a shocking number of students are collapsing under the pressure. Campus mental health services have been overwhelmed with students suffering from panic, anxiety, and depression—leaving many to wonder if the pressure to get high marks and succeed has a negative, long-term impact on students.

This situation has left high school, college, and university administrations struggling to help stressed-out teens who are having trouble coping with their lives.

To Consider

1. Do you think the cost of education is preventing bright students from low-income families from attending university?
2. What is the most stressful issue for today's students in their graduating year?
3. Why do you think there seems to be a higher number of students using mental health services while they are attending college or university?

COPING WITH THE STRESS OF GRADUATION

Video Review

Pre-viewing Activity

List five things that stress you out about leaving high school and going to college or university. Put them in order from most stressful to least stressful. Discuss your list with a partner before watching the video.

Viewing Questions

Record your responses in the space provided.

1. According to the students of Glen Forest Secondary School in Mississauga, what was the hardest part about being a high school student?

2. Besides trying to keep up with his schoolwork, what other challenges does Daniel Tulla have to deal with? Does this put him at a competitive disadvantage?

3. a) How does Shannon Devereaux plan to pay for the exclusive university program she was accepted into?

- b) How does she plan to get to and from school?

- c) How much will her program cost?

4. Why is Rachel Chen terrified that she might not be able to achieve her goals? Why is her road to success more difficult than that of most of her friends?

5. What does North Toronto Collegiate student Ashkhan Tabib think is the average mark needed to be considered for most university programs? Do you think he is right?

6. a) According to Joel Gorenkoff, the principal of North Toronto Collegiate, where is the pressure to succeed coming from?

b) What program did Gorenkoff and his staff introduce to help students deal with their stress?

c) Why do many people feel the stress-buster program is so important for students?

7. What mental health concerns seem to be popping up more often in secondary schools, according to social worker Jean Middlebrook?

8. What does Ashkahn Tabib mean when he says, "After getting into university, it's all the scholarships that start haunting you"?

Post-viewing Questions

In the video, Glen Forest student Daniel Tulla says the hardest part of moving on is "the fear that I might not make it."

1. Is this a fear that you share with Daniel?

2. If you share this fear, why do you doubt your ability to succeed?

3. If you don't share this fear, what gives you the confidence to know you are going to make it?

COPING WITH THE STRESS OF GRADUATION

Student Concerns

Before Reading

1. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 meaning not concerned at all and 5 meaning extremely concerned) how concerned are you about your marks? Explain your choice.
2. How much do you think college or university is going to cost you? How will you pay for your post-secondary education?
3. What career do you hope to pursue after you have finished school?

Concern #1 – Grades

Competition to get into certain programs can be fierce:

School	Program	Admission Average
Carleton University	Journalism	85 to 88
McGill University	Architecture	91.3
McMaster University	Health Science	90+
Queen's University	Nursing	87+
University of British Columbia	Arts	Mid to high 80s
University of Calgary	Neurosciences	90
University of Toronto	Engineering Science	Low to mid 90s

Students feel overwhelming pressure to earn high grades to open as many doors as possible when it comes to college and university programs. Some will even go to extreme lengths to make their mark transcript as appealing as possible to the schools they are courting.

In the fall of 2011, the *Toronto Star* published a series of stories on “credit mills.” A credit mill is a provincially certified private school that grants remarkably high grades in high school courses to underachieving students. The *Star* series focused on one Toronto private school that offered a Grade 12 chemistry class to students looking to upgrade their marks over the summer. Working undercover as a student,

reporter Jennifer Yang received a mark of 85 even though she didn’t study, never did her homework, and failed almost all of her tests. In fact, she went into the final exam with a 60 average and, based on the course mark breakdown, could only have earned a maximum of 72 per cent if she was perfect on the final exam. However, when she received her final mark it was an 85 (“Slacking off gets high marks at this ‘high school,’” September 16, 2011).

While the vast majority of students would not turn to credit mills to get high grades, their very existence demonstrates the lengths to which some will go to get the exceptional marks they think they need to get into college and university.

To Consider

1. What lengths would you go to get higher marks?
2. Do you know anyone who has ever cheated on a test or assignment to get a better grade? Why do you think they did it?
3. Why are credit mills ineffective in getting students ready for the academic challenges of college and university?

Concern #2 – Tuition

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives studied the rising cost of tuition and managed to summarize how drastically the cost of higher education has escalated over the years. In their report “Under pressure: The impact of rising tuition fees on Ontario families” they claimed, “If tuition fees and other compulsory fees are adjusted for inflation, Ontario students have witnessed a 244 per cent real tuition fee increase between 1990 and 2011”

(Alexandra Pozadski, September 22, 2011).

In the 2010-2011 school year, Ontario university students paid \$6 640, the highest tuition fees in Canada. It seems that the only provinces willing to reign in tuition costs are Quebec (\$2 519) and Newfoundland and Labrador (\$2 649). In 2010, Statistics Canada reported that the ongoing increase in the cost of education would result in an average student debt of \$18 800 upon graduation (*The Daily*, September 16, 2011).

To Consider

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives claims that if every family was taxed \$100, tuition fees could be rolled back to 1990 levels. Do you think this is a good idea? Is it something the Canadian government should pursue?

Concern #3 – Future Employment

The Great Recession has many parents worried about the employment options available to their children after college or university. With an unemployment rate of just over 7 per cent in September 2011, and markets still uncertain, parents hope that the post-secondary programs their children are selecting will lead to fruitful careers. Meanwhile, many students hold a combination of optimism about their future and an underlying fear that they won't be able to get a job.

That's why it is important for students to determine the relationship between the program they are taking in college or university and their potential career options. According to Lindsey Pollak, the author of *Getting from College to Career: 90 Things to Do Before You Join the Real World*, here are some of the most common mistakes people make when choosing a career:

1. Saying “I Can't.”: Make sure you have solid, verifiable reasons to demonstrate why you can or cannot do something. Never say you can't when you really can.
2. Expecting Too Much Money: Don't pick a job just for the money. Many seasoned professionals leave well-paying jobs for work that is more personally fulfilling.
3. Doing What Others Expect: Try to make your own career decision and not the one your parents either want or you think they want.
4. Going It Alone: Ask for help when you need it. Don't ask people to solve your problems but ask them for help so that you can solve your own problems. You will need advice.

Source: “Proceed with caution: Mistakes to avoid in career planning,” by Mark Rowh. *Career World*, April-May 2008.

To Consider

Which of the common mistakes do you think most people make? Why do you think that they are more apt to make this mistake?

COPING WITH THE STRESS OF GRADUATION

Generation Stressed!!!

Did you know . . .

You can reduce the negative impacts of stress through physical activity.

To Consider

There are positive and negative ways to deal with stress. Positive strategies include breathing exercises or using time management techniques. Negative strategies include eating junk food or smoking. What types of strategies do you use to deal with stress? Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies that you use.

Coping with Transitions

Any life transition can be stressful, but the transition from high school to college or university seems to be creating very high levels of stress for today's teens. Recent studies have demonstrated that one of every four students who visits college and university campus health clinics is showing symptoms of clinical depression and experiencing suicidal thoughts. But are these students more stressed than those of the past? Or are they just more willing to talk about their anxiety and depression?

The problem starts well before young people transition into post-secondary education. Many students feel they are under constant pressure in high school. This pressure seems to come from a desire to be popular and successful and, more specifically, to achieve high grades.

Some observers believe that part of this stress is a result of parenting styles today—in particular, “over-parenting,” where parents micro-manage every aspect of their kids lives. In an interview with *The Hamilton Spectator*, author Don Peck outlined the negative effects of over-parenting: “Trained since childhood to disconnect performance from reward, and told repeatedly that they are destined for great things, many [young people] are quick to place blame elsewhere when something goes wrong and inclined to believe that bad situations will sort themselves out—or will be sorted out by parents or other helpers” (August 15, 2011). Peck is worried that “helicopter

parenting”—where parents swoop in and make every conceivable decision for their children—is damaging kids to the point where even the smallest life choice is seen as overwhelming.

He's not alone in his beliefs. In her book *The Price of Privilege*, psychologist Madeline Levine maintains that kids who grow up in homes where their lives are micromanaged by their parents leave the nest virtually paralyzed when it comes to making their own decisions. In essence, their highly scheduled lives negate the opportunity for downtime and introspection, leading to a heightened state of anxiety and depression. San Diego State University's Jean Twenge agrees with this position in her book *Generation Me*. She claims that over-parenting shelters kids from reality, leading to the development of false optimism in young people. As a result, “When things don't happen the way they expect, they can hit anxiety and depression” (*Maclean's*, April 2011).

This seems to be the case when many students reach college and university and have a significant amount of trouble coping with the pressures of post-secondary education. The mental health clinic at McGill University in Montreal was swamped with 18 000 visitors in the 2010-2011 school year. The University of Western Ontario in London reported a 20 per cent increase in counselling appointments over an 18-month period starting in 2010. Meanwhile, Queen's University in Kingston reported

being overwhelmed with requests for psychological and stress-related counselling in the aftermath of six student deaths in a 14-month span (four to suicide, two to alcohol-related incidents).

Self-Imposed Stress?

So what's the problem? In an article for *Toronto Life* focusing on the deaths at Queen's, Jan Wong mused that kids going to post-secondary institutions today feel they are entitled to an A in every course. The reality is that few get straight As. And when this happens, many students do not have the coping strategies to handle their disappointment (September 2011).

Wong identifies self-imposed stress and perfectionism working in tandem with the false optimism created by helicopter parenting. In effect, when

young people make it out of high school and into college or university, they are faced with the regular academic and social stress that accompanies this transition. But because they are not used to dealing with stress on their own, this regular stress proves overwhelming. Some even turn to their parents to sort out their problems with the college or university—which is shocking to many post-secondary administrators because legally they are obligated to deal with the adult student (not their parents).

It doesn't matter if problems are surfacing because of a surge in stress, over-parenting, or some other societal factor. What does matter is that colleges and universities are struggling to keep up with the demand for mental health services. In a sense, they are not quite sure what to do about "generation stressed."

Follow-up

1. Do you think the transition from high school to post-secondary education is as overwhelming as everybody keeps saying? Or are people just allowing themselves to get psyched out?
2. Whose opinion do you most agree with: Don Peck, Madeline Levine, Jean Twenge, or Jan Wong? Why?
3. Do you believe that over-parenting is a problem contributing to student stress?
4. How should colleges and universities respond to the growing demand for mental health services? What if expanding these service would mean a tuition hike?

COPING WITH THE STRESS OF GRADUATION

Advice from Your Teachers

Focus for Reading

Create a chart like the one below into your notebook, leaving space for your thoughts and comments. Fill in the chart as you read the article.

Advice	Summary	How the Advice Applies to Me
1. Know your strengths and weaknesses		
2. Work hard, skip the excuses		
3. Knowledge is power		
4. Always have a Plan B		
5. Remember: It's your future		

Teachers have an extensive background in post-secondary education and know what needs to be done to be successful after high school. Here's a summary of advice from teachers:

1. Know your strengths and weaknesses

Your grades are an indicator of your strengths and weaknesses. So is the verbal feedback you get from teachers and parents regarding the things you are good at and those you are not. Take these indicators seriously. Don't get too full of yourself regarding your strengths and don't beat yourself up over your weaknesses.

As a general rule, if you tend to do well in math and science (and you enjoy those courses), consider pursuing a post-secondary program that features one of those subject areas. Similarly, if you struggle with math and science, it wouldn't be a good idea to pursue these subjects beyond high school. There are a surprisingly large number of students who enrol in programs based on the

advice of well-meaning parents and friends that have no bearing on what a particular student is good at or enjoys.

2. Work hard, skip the excuses

Teachers often say, "If students spent as much time doing their homework as they do making excuses, they would all have incredible marks." This is a facetious way of encouraging you to work hard to get good grades and avoid a "dog ate my homework" mentality. School gets progressively more difficult from grade 9 through to grade 12. The curriculum is designed to build on previous knowledge so that you have a strong foundation established before you head off to college or university. Students with poor work habits will likely see their marks drop—often most dramatically in grade 12. Believing that you can slack off in grades 9, 10, and 11 and then suddenly pull one out of the hat in grade 12 is tantamount to dreaming.

Typically, student marks tend to stay the same or go up or down by around three per cent from one school year to

the next. In other words, if you earned a 65 in grade 11, you are likely to either stay at 65 or move to a 62 or a 68 (with an outside chance of hitting 70) in grade 12. It is hard work—not magic or miracles—that is going to get you what you want. And if your marks are lower than you might like, get help from your teacher or get a tutor. That said, make sure you apply to schools that fit your academic average. For example, students with a 70 average should not apply for a program with an acceptance average of 95 per cent.

This information is not given to discourage you if your marks are on the low side. Instead it is designed to encourage you to devote the time to improve your skills so that post-secondary education is not overwhelming. Education is a process. There is no magic pill that allows a person to instantly get high marks. Encouraging students to work hard, avoid excuses, and overcome gaps in skill is simply solid, realistic advice.

3. Knowledge is power

While your friends are a valuable source of some information, they are often among the worst when it comes to accurate information concerning post-secondary education. If a friend starts a sentence with, “Well, I heard . . .” be very cautious about believing what they say next. If you want accurate information about education beyond high school, the best place to start is with your guidance counsellor. Ask questions, seek clarification, show initiative—and your guidance counsellor can help you as you go.

Keep a few things in mind: the application process for colleges and universities is usually the same from year to year. Familiarize yourself with the process—especially the deadlines. As a general rule, the opportunity to apply

to a post-secondary institution does not present itself until mid to late fall. Application deadlines tend to happen early in the New Year, with offers being extended in the spring.

In terms of selecting a program, do your research. Find out what a given area of study has to offer. Determine whether or not you have taken (or should take) certain prerequisite courses and whether your marks are high enough to gain acceptance into the program. Go for a campus tour. While you can never be 100 per cent certain that a program is perfect, you will have a reasonably good feeling that a program is a good fit. Apply for that program and, when you accept the school’s offer, don’t second guess your decision.

4. Always have a Plan B

It doesn’t matter if you think you will definitely get into a program, you should always have a Plan B. There is a chance that the school you want to go to may not extend you an offer. This may be the first significant rejection you have experienced in your life; don’t let it crush you! Rejection and failure are a part of life. The sooner you learn to adapt to these setbacks, the better off you’ll be. Michael Jordan, one of the greatest basketball players ever, was cut from his high school basketball team. Instead of wallowing in self pity, he used the disappointment as motivation to improve his game. There are many routes you can take to reach your goals. Have a Plan B ready in the event of a setback so that you can move ahead—just like Michael Jordan did.

5. Remember: It’s your future

Choosing a post-secondary program may be the first major life decision you will make. The bottom line: it needs to be your decision and not the decision of your parents or friends. *This is a decision*

you need to own. Often students panic and wonder whether they make the right choice. But can you really make a “wrong decision”? If you pick a program that isn’t for you, you can make a change. Isn’t it better to switch programs after a year or two than to wait and discover 10 years into a job that you hate

that you need a career change? Decide on the program that fits your ambitions, own the decision, and adjust your educational path later if things don’t pan out the way you thought.

Source: “State of unreadiness,” by Sandy Farran (*Maclean’s* November 19, 2007)

Analysis

1. Which piece of advice do you feel is the most valuable? Which is the least valuable? Explain your choices.
2. Did the advice given set your mind at ease or did it only serve to stress you out even more? If it helped, explain how the advice helped. If it stressed you out, describe the source of your stress.

COPING WITH THE STRESS OF GRADUATION

Activity: Focus on You

Step One – What do you want to do?

Your first task is to figure out what you want to study. Visit the guidance office in your school and gather as much information as you can about the post-secondary options you want to pursue. Look through calendars of various colleges and universities and see what grabs your attention. Find five programs that you think you would like to apply for.

Step Two – Narrow your search

Now get more specific. Consider the courses you have most enjoyed over the course of your high school years as an indicator of a potential area of study for you to pursue. Are these preferences reflected in your program choices? After careful consideration, trim your list to three and proceed to the next step.

Step Three – What do I need to do to get into these programs?

Research the three programs and fill out a chart based on the following sample:

Name of Program	Pre-requisite Courses	Cut-off Average	Other Applications Considerations (e.g., portfolio)

Step Four – Pick a program

Based on your research, determine the top program for you. Now conduct some follow-up research:

- How much will the program cost in tuition? How much will your parents contribute? How much will you contribute? How much will you have to acquire through student loans?
- How much will residence cost if you decide to live on campus? How much will your food and other living expenses cost you?
- How much will it cost to commute to and from school?
- Which courses will you have to take in first year?
- How many hours do you think you will have to spend studying to stay on top of your course work?
- Which books will you have to purchase? How much will they cost?

Step Five – Careers

What career options do you have as a result of the program you selected? What will your income likely be? How long will it take you to pay off your student loans? (If your parents are paying for everything THANK THEM NOW!)

Step Six—Evaluation

This exercise should have relieved some of your stress. Did it help to work your way through the process? Keep in mind: if you were unhappy with the outcome of your research you can go back to step one and find another program. The key is to find the program that fits you best.

News in Review Index

A list of the stories covered last season and to date in the current season is provided below.

The complete chronological index for all 21 seasons of *News in Review* and a subject-oriented index listing *News in Review* stories appropriate for various subject areas can be accessed through our Web site at <http://newsinreview.cbclearning.ca>. Hard copies of these indexes can also be obtained by contacting CBC Learning.

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Residential Schools: Truth and Healing

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The Real Story of the King's Speech

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War and Famine in Somalia
The 9/11 Attacks: Ten Years Later
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Terry Fox: Remembering a Canadian Hero
Libya and the Fall of Gadhafi
The Vancouver Riot: What Went Wrong?

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