

# In My Opinion ...

Students use their analysis of media messages to make and support a recommendation on whether or not the selected videos represent Canadian nationalism.

## Instructional Support

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A number of possible tasks are provided in this suggested activity. It is not intended that you work through all of the tasks, but rather select those tasks and resources that will best meet the learning needs of your students. The focus should be on ensuring that students have the background and support to be successful with the skill that is the focus for assessment (support recommendations).

### Setting the Context for Learning

- Share with students a letter to the editor on a current and relevant topic from a local news source. Discuss with students the techniques the author uses to support his or her position. As a class, highlight the specific evidence the author uses to support the argument.

### Support Recommendations

- Discuss with students that supporting a recommendation is a fundamental skill for the social studies program. This skill appears in a number of different ways throughout all of the related issues. Encourage students to keep in mind that when they see "state and support position" and "defend choice," they will be drawing upon the same skill that they will develop within this assessment focus.
- Gather exemplars of pieces of writing where the authors support a position. Ensure that the selection of exemplars contains samples that are strong and samples that need work. Mediocre exemplars provide for valuable conversation, as students are better able to recognize areas that need improvement within a piece of writing that is not their own.
- Present the exemplars to students, and in small groups, have students sort the exemplars into categories based on the persuasiveness of the support given by each author for his or her position. As a class, discuss the qualities that led students to place each of the exemplars in a particular category.
- In small groups, have students use the exemplars to create a list of criteria for the skill of providing strong support for a position or recommendation. Some student suggestions for criteria may include the following:
  - focused on the topic
  - supportive of the stated position
  - convincing
  - accurate
  - specific
- Select an issue and share with students either an editorial from current events or a letter to the editor that addresses the issue.
- Have students identify the elements of the writing that are persuasive. Then have students make suggestions, based on the brainstormed criteria for strong support of a position, on how the author could make his or her support stronger.

- Select a relevant issue from local current events that will likely polarize student opinion. Present the issue to students with the appropriate level of background information and ask students to take a position.
- Using the brainstormed list of criteria for strong support of a position, have students develop specific examples or reasons to support their position on the selected issue.
- Consider having students work in small groups and provide ongoing feedback to one another.
- As students begin to work on the final part of the summative assessment task, support recommendations, have them focus on the videos they have selected. Post in the classroom the list of brainstormed criteria for strong support of a position. Remind students to refer to this list as they develop and support their own recommendations.
- The final product for this task is in the form of speaking notes, which will help students present their recommendations. In this summative assessment, communicating information is not assessed; however, students may need support in creating their speaking notes, particularly in regard to the structure of speaking notes.
- Show students a sample of what speaking notes can look like. For example, speaking notes are often in point form and are succinct.
- Discuss with students the qualities of effective speaking notes. Encourage them to focus on developing a summary of the points they wish to make, including the specific support for their recommendations.
- Remind students that the speaking notes need to contain all of the information that will address each assessment focus because it is the speaking notes that will provide you with the evidence that the students have achieved the skills being assessed.

## Formative Assessment

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Throughout this suggested activity, you will support students in achieving the following skill that is the focus for assessment:

- [support recommendations](#)

The following formative assessment opportunity is provided to help students unpack and develop the focus skill for assessment. Feedback prompts are also provided to help students enhance their demonstration of the focus skill for this activity. Formative assessment support is not intended to generate a grade or score.

### Formative Assessment: Assessment for Learning Opportunity


#### Support Recommendations

Involve students in *peer coaching* so they can provide and receive feedback about the persuasiveness of the support they used in making their recommendations. Use the feedback prompts below to guide students through this formative assessment opportunity.



#### Feedback Prompts:

- Is the support I provided:
  - focused on the topic?

- supportive of my recommendation?
- convincing?
- specific?

These feedback prompts can be posted on an interactive white board or bulletin board, or incorporated into a feedback tool that can be copied for student use. Samples of tools created for a similar skill within a different formative assessment context may be found in the [Social Studies 20-4 Formative Assessment Summary](#) .

## Linking to the Summative Assessment Task

- As students support recommendations through the suggested activity In My Opinion ..., they will have completed the [Summative Assessment Task: What Makes Canada "Canada"?](#) 
- Students should consult the assessment task and the [assessment task rubric](#)  to ensure that they have provided the information required.
- Encourage students to use the feedback received during the formative assessment opportunity to make enhancements to their work in progress.
- If necessary, continue to use the feedback prompts from the formative assessment opportunity to coach students toward completion of a quality product.

## Suggested Supporting Resources

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### Web Resources

#### Web Links for Online Sources:

- Media Smarts: Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy website—section: [Marketing and Consumerism – Special Issues for Tweens and Teens](#)
- MSNBC.com website—The Daily Nightly section: [Leaving Behind a Thank-you Note](#), Brian Williams
- Olympic.org website—Olympic Games section: [Vancouver 2010](#) (photo gallery, closing ceremonies)

#### Videos:

- YouTube.com website:
  - [Tom Brokaw Explains Canada to Americans](#)
  - [Canadian Forces Commercial – Fight Fear](#)
  - [Vinyl Café with Stuart Mclean – Remembrance Day](#)
  - [Tim Hortons Commercial – Sidney Crosby](#)
  - [Tim Hortons Commercial – A Little Piece of Home](#)
  - [The Rick Mercer Report: Canada Explained](#)
  - [The Hockey Song – Stompin Tom Connors](#)
- LearnAlberta.ca:
  - [Jean Vanier: A Canadian Inspiring the World—Belonging: The Search for Acceptance](#)
  - [Vistas: Aboriginal Expressions](#) (12 short films on the theme of "nationhood")

## Critical Challenges:

- LearnAlberta.ca:
  - [Modelling the Tools: Analyzing a Situation](#)
  - [Support Material: Justifying My Choice](#)