

Seasonal Almanac 2003-2004



September 21	International Day of Peace
October 13-19	Canada's Citizenship Week
November 5-11	Veterans' Week
November 11	Remembrance Day
December 10	International Human Rights Day
February 15	National Flag of Canada Day
March 21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
April 17	Anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
May 6-12	International Youth Week
June 21-July 1	Celebrate Canada
June 21	National Aboriginal Day
June 24	Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day
June 27	Canadian Multiculturalism Day
July 1	Canada Day

This resource has been developed in conjunction with Classroom Connections.

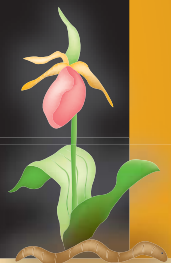




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NOTES

for Users



This activity guide and the accompanying posters are products of the Promotion Division of the Integration Branch, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

In 2000, CIC launched Canada's Citizenship Week during the third week of October. To celebrate that important week, we produced a series of activity guides on the theme of "belonging." More than 150,000 copies of the Belonging trilogy have been delivered to schools and youth-serving organizations across the country over the past three years. This series is still available on our Web site at www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizen/celebrate.html.

This resource, *Planting the Seeds*, is the first in a new trilogy on belonging and citizenship, entitled *Cultivate Your Commitment to Canada*.

Cultivate Your Commitment to Canada: The Series

Cultivate Your Commitment to Canada is a series of three activity guides designed for use in schools and community youth groups across Canada. These resources explore the nature of Canadian citizenship, the values that we share as Canadians, and the responsibilities inherent in participating actively in Canadian culture. Citizenship involves much more than having a birth certificate, reciting an oath or learning the national anthem: it includes a commitment to ourselves, our neighbourhoods, our country and our global community. It is an opportunity to share in the rights and benefits intrinsic to living in a peaceful, inclusive and democratic country.

Each guide in *Cultivate Your Commitment to Canada* aims to empower young people with the concepts, understanding and skills they need to be responsible, caring and active citizens.

The resources will encourage young people to do the following:

- respect the rights and opinions of others
- embrace diversity and reject intolerance, exclusion and discrimination
- promote a culture of peace in thoughts, words and actions, and reject violence as a means to resolve conflict
- take care of each other with compassion and empathy
- protect and care for the earth and its resources
- actively participate in the democratic process
- follow and respect the laws of our country.



Planting the Seeds—Personal Citizenship

This first resource in the series builds the framework for the garden that is Canadian citizenship. It examines the traits and values of citizenship that are the seeds we wish to cultivate and strengthen in our landscape. This resource examines what citizenship means and encourages young people to cultivate an understanding of and appreciation for shared Canadian values such as respect, acceptance, peace, justice and democracy. It also explores how we can create the best possible conditions for these values to flourish within our culture by nurturing the development of skills young people need to support, internalize and act in congruence with these values.

This resource is divided into three sections:

- Preparing the Soil: What is citizenship?
- Spreading the Seeds: What are the values we share and what do those concepts mean?
- Conditions for Growth: What strategies and skills would help us honour those values in our everyday actions?

Who Uses This Guide?

This guide is a tool to help teachers and community leaders empower children between the ages of 9 and 12. Although the guide often refers to students and teachers, the guide is intended for use by any organization working with people in this age group that wishes to address issues surrounding the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and to promote the shared values of peace, belonging and environmental stewardship. Some activities are more appropriate for the younger or older range of young people, and most activities can be adapted to any age group, depending on need.

Many of the topics explored in these activities relate directly to the themes and strands explored within grades 4, 5 and 6 social science and social studies curricula across Canada. Teachers using this guide may wish to consult our Web site at www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizen/celebrate.html for a detailed listing of the curriculum connections.

The communicative methodology can be particularly useful in helping English as a second language (ESL) students develop language skills in the classroom. These activities can also be easily adapted to adult education classes.

Although the guide will be launched during Canada's Citizenship Week (October 13–19, 2003), it is designed for use throughout the year.

Growing Tips

This guide is based on a student-centred, cooperative and activity-based approach to learning. Student-centredness holds that young people learn best when they are encouraged to explore for themselves and when they are addressed as individuals with a unique set of beliefs, experiences and strengths.

Activity-based learning emphasizes the connection between *how* we teach and *what* we teach. In this learning *in* (or *through*) approach, the actual process of learning is as significant as the intended content of learning. This approach recognizes that learning is reinforced through the very nature of the classroom environment and the methods used to structure teaching and learning experiences. Overall, the principles upon which this guide's activities are founded help students construct and reinforce a democratic, humane and equitable classroom culture where cooperation, empathy, fairness, respect and peacefulness are practised through an inclusive and participatory learning process.

How we teach, then, includes a focus on learning cooperatively as opposed to competitively or individually. Cooperative learning encourages behaviour that supports group success and concern for the efforts and contributions of others. In addition, it helps develop self-esteem, provides social support, increases the ability to consider the perspectives of others and encourages the use of higher-level reasoning.

Look for the “Growing Tips” boxes throughout the guide to help you use the teaching methods suggested in this resource.

Many of the activities in this resource are based on the research and publications of Barrie Bennett and Carol Rolheiser. Please refer to their work for an in-depth exploration of the skills, tactics, strategies, concepts and organizers involved in the art of instruction.

Note: *The term “activity” has been used instead of “lesson” to describe each set of student experiences that develops understanding of particular concepts. It does not imply that this set of activities could be completed within one class or group session. The number of minutes considered to make up one class period varies with individual school timetables, and community organizations function within a variety of settings and time constraints. In addition, experience in cooperative learning, language levels and group dynamics can all affect the amount of time needed to complete these activities. The teacher or youth leader is the best judge of these factors.*