

Activity 10

CANADA IN THE WORLD

Objectives

To become familiar with:

- the history, culture and government of Commonwealth and La Francophonie nations;
- the similarities and differences between Canada, other Commonwealth members and other members of La Francophonie; and
- the reasons for and the history of La Francophonie and the Commonwealth.

(Note: You may wish to schedule your Luncheon during Celebrate Canada! from June 21st to July 1st (which encompasses National Aboriginal Day on June 21st, St-Jean Baptiste Day on June 24th, Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27th and Canada Day on July 1st), on Commonwealth Day, which falls on the second Monday of March, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, on March 21st, March 20th, Journée internationale de la francophonie, or in conjunction with a similarly significant date.)

Directions

1. Assign one or two of the more than 50 member countries of the Commonwealth or La Francophonie to each individual (see Additional Resources for lists). Have users research the following information: (Note: You may wish to make copies of the Canada in the World activity sheet for users to organize their research.)
 - the years in which they joined (or rejoined!) the Commonwealth or La Francophonie
 - their constitutional status: realm, monarchy, republic, etc.
 - basic information about the country's history and culture
 - basic statistics about the country's current economic and political situation
 - why this country remains in the Commonwealth or La Francophonie: economic reasons, continuity, alliances, etc.
2. Have the group compose a letter to an individual of their age in that country. Ask him or her when and if he or she has studied their system of government and what they know about it. Do they think it works well? What changes would they and/or their parents like, if any? You may wish to actually send the letters, after reading and approving them. An excellent site for addresses for schools around the world can be found at: <http://web66.coled.umn.edu/schools.html>.
3. Plan a Commonwealth Luncheon/Fête de la Francophonie:
 - a) Have each individual bring a dish or drink typical of the cuisine of the country they researched. Be careful of food allergies, and encourage reasonable substitutions of hard-to-get or expensive ingredients.
 - b) Have them download or reproduce a small flag for their country that they can pin to their shoulder.
 - c) Encourage them, if possible, to wear an item of national dress.
 - d) Each individual should also bring enough slips of paper with their country's name printed on the slip to be able to give one to each of the rest of the group.
 - e) At the luncheon, everyone "visits" each of the other countries. If they can figure out which country they're visiting using the flag, the food, any costume clues, plus a yes and no question and answer game (they can ask only questions about the country and its government that require a yes or no answer) the Commonwealth/La Francophonie member awards them a slip. Award points — or extra food! — to the individual with the most slips by the end of the lunch hour.
 - f) You may consider inviting guests. Suggestions: Other staff members, local officials, community members, even your Lieutenant Governor or Commissioner.

Activity Sheet

CANADA IN THE WORLD

Find the following information about Canada and your other Commonwealth or La Francophonie country. Sources of Information: "Info Box: The Commonwealth and La Francophonie," print resources such as encyclopedias, the Internet, e.g.:

<http://www.rcscanada.org/>

<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/>

<http://www.francophonie.org/>

<http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/francophonie2001/francophonie/francophonie-e.htm>

http://www.francophonie.org/oif/francophonie/membres/ARTICLES/sy_338.html

http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/fields/government_type.html

You might also contact embassies, high commissions and trade commissions of "your" country, or search for its e-mail address online.

Full name of country:

Location: _____

Date joined the Commonwealth/La Francophonie: _____

Previous history as colony, independent nation, etc.:

Current form of government and components:

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Type and size of elected assembly:

Elections (Eligible voters, frequency of elections, election procedure, voter turnout, etc.):

ACTIVITY SHEET: CANADA IN THE WORLD (Cont.)

Executive Branch includes (note if elected or appointed):

Legislative Branch includes (note if elected or appointed):

Judiciary (Independent, how appointed or elected, court system):

Other similarities with Canada's system of government and law:

Other differences from Canada's system of government and law:

Compose a paragraph explaining the basic differences between Canada's government and the government you studied, focussing on the reasons why the two systems evolved differently.
