



Multicultural Literacy in Canada Survey

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What's this all about?

Canada is often described as a multicultural nation. In this national survey, we want to identify what Grade 10 & 11 high school students know about different groups' histories, achievements, and contributions to building our knowledge and society.

Why are we interested in this information?

Simply stated, we believe that in order to coexist in a tolerant society and to end racism we need to be aware of the important contributions that all cultural groups have made both in Canada and throughout the world. We want to find out what you know about these issues so we can improve our school curriculum and build course materials that reflect our diverse society.

Instructions

In this survey, there are several questions about the intellectual, social and cultural contributions that diverse groups have made throughout the world. **This is not a test that will count toward your mark in school.** It is simply a short survey that we will use for our research. If you want to learn more about these topics, please visit our website (www.multicultural-literacy.ca).

Part A: Personal Information

This information will help us to compare the answers given by different groups (e.g. boys vs. girls). Remember, this survey is completely confidential so your name will not be used or revealed in any way.

1. What Grade are you in?
 - a. Grade 10
 - b. Grade 11

2. Where were you born?
 - a. Canada
 - b. Another country

3. The first language you learned to speak as a baby was
 - a. English
 - b. French
 - c. Another language or dialect

4. At home with your family, you speak
 - a. Only English
 - b. Only French
 - c. English and French
 - d. Another language or dialect
 - e. English or French PLUS another language or dialect

5. Your friends are
 - a. all from the same cultural or racial background as you
 - b. mostly from the same cultural or racial background as you
 - c. mostly from a different cultural or racial background than you
 - d. from all different cultural or racial backgrounds

6. Your family and relatives are
 - a. all from the same cultural or racial background as you
 - b. mostly from the same cultural or racial background as you
 - c. from 2 or more different cultural or racial backgrounds

7. You have gone to school in Canada
 - a. all your life
 - b. for 4 years or more
 - c. for 3 years or less

8. Do you consider yourself a person of colour (a racialized minority person)?
 - a. yes
 - b. no

9. Are you?
 - a. male
 - b. female

Part B: Knowledge Questions

OK, let's switch gears.

Most questions are written the same way: you read some information, and then choose an answer. Let's say the question is:

1. The people of the Six Nations, or Iroquois, Confederacy developed the oldest living *participatory* democracy on earth (lasting over 800 years). The original United States *representative* democracy was inspired in many ways by the Six Nations system of government.
- a. I didn't know about this
 - b. I learned about this at school
 - c. I learned about this from a family member
 - d. I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - e. I learned about this from friends or community members
- If you have never heard of the Iroquois democracy, check a).
 - If you remember the Iroquois Confederacy was a democracy, but don't know the other information, this still counts as knowing about them; or, if you know their democracy lasted 800 years and inspired the U.S. democracy (and maybe you know lots more!), this counts as knowing (we're not distinguishing between how much you know).
 - So now try to remember where it was you heard about them:
 - If you remember learning about them in school, but also remember seeing something about them on TV, check b) and d) (**Note: you can check more than one letter**).
 - If you learned about them in your community (someone at the community centre, or someone at your temple, mosque or church), then check e).

Get the idea?

*** Remember that you can answer more than one letter!! ***

10. The Arabic word *hijab* means the ways you show modesty within Islam (including the way you behave, speak, dress in public). Western media often focus on one part of this, the veil covering your head (and/or body).
- a. I didn't know about this
 - b. I learned about this at school
 - c. I learned about this from a family member
 - d. I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - e. I learned about this from friends or community members

11. A potlatch is a ceremony practiced by First Nations peoples on the Northwest Coast of Turtle Island (North America). It celebrates community events (births, marriages, deaths) through dance, feasting and gift giving. The Canadian government outlawed the potlatch in 1884. In 1922, 20 people were sent to jail for celebrating potlatch. In 1951, the law was taken off the books.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
12. Kwanzaa has been an African American holiday (Dec. 26-Jan. 1) since 1966. It celebrates the roots of African culture, the bonds between African people around the world, and spiritual and communitarian principles.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
13. An arranged marriage is a union between two people that is negotiated by or with their parents. It is a cultural tradition that is practiced in countries such as India and Pakistan as well as Canada.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

Literature:

14. Tomson Highway is a Cree author from Manitoba who has written the humorous plays *The Rez Sisters*, *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*, and the CBC radio series *Dead Dog Café*.
- I didn't know about him
 - I learned about him at school
 - I learned about him from a family member
 - I learned about him from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about him from friends or community members
15. Joy Kogawa wrote a novel called *Obasan* (1981) which tells how the Canadian government took away the property of Japanese Canadians and sent them to live in internment camps during WWII.
- I didn't know about her
 - I learned about her at school
 - I learned about her from a family member
 - I learned about her from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about her from friends or community members


16. Paul Yee has written dozens of books about the lives of Chinese who immigrated to Canada, including *Breakaway*, *Ghost Train*, and *Tales from Gold Mountain*.
- I didn't know about him
 - I learned about him at school
 - I learned about him from a family member
 - I learned about him from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about him from friends or community members
17. Latin American authors who have won the Nobel Prize include Gabriel Garcia Marquez (who wrote *One Hundred Years of Solitude*), Rigoberta Menchu (an indigenous activist from Guatemala) and Pablo Neruda (the poet and author from Chile).
- I didn't know about them
 - I learned about them at school
 - I learned about them from a family member
 - I learned about them from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about them from friends or community members
18. A *haiku* is a Japanese form of poetry that expresses the beauty or emotion of nature or everyday experiences in the fewest possible words and syllables (5, 7, and 5 syllables).
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
19. Anne Frank, a Jewish-German teenager, spent 2 years hiding from the Nazis with her family during World War II before they were discovered and sent to concentration camps. She died at 15, but her diary was saved and published in 67 languages.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

**** Remember that you can answer more than one letter!! ****

History:

20. The first university in world history was in Africa. Located in Alexandria, Egypt, the university had at least 13 lecture halls for up to 5,000 students.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

21. Mathieu da Costa was a free black man who spoke many languages including Mi'kmaq. In his voyages between 1534 and 1542, Samuel de Champlain depended on da Costa to communicate with First Nations peoples.
- I didn't know about him
 - I learned about him at school
 - I learned about him from a family member
 - I learned about him from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about him from friends or community members
22. The American Revolution (1776-1789) and the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) inspired modern history as the first European colonies to win independence based on the dream of liberty, equality, and "brotherhood." The Haitian Revolution was the only successful slave revolution in history to form a free country.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
23. Harriet Tubman, a slave from Maryland, escaped to freedom in Canada in 1849. Later on she helped hundreds of slaves to escape through the "Underground Railroad."
- I didn't know about her
 - I learned about her at school
 - I learned about her from a family member
 - I learned about her from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about her from friends or community members
24. The Upper Canada Abolition Act (1793) freed slaves and the British Imperial Act (1833) outlawed slavery throughout the British Empire. It wasn't until 1948 that African Canadians were allowed to vote in Canada
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
25. In the 1880s, over 15,000 Chinese immigrants helped build the Canadian Pacific Railway. Their pay was less than 50% of other workers' and hundreds died. After the railway was finished, the Canadian government put a head tax on Chinese immigrants. By 1903, it was \$500 (about two years' pay). In 1923, the Chinese Immigration Act limited Chinese immigration to Canada.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

26. Approximately 12,000 Aboriginal soldiers, including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, fought in the Canadian Forces in World War I & II and in the Korean War. They fought for Canada even though, as soldiers, they had to sign away their treaty rights and weren't allowed to vote in Canada (until 1961) or even join the Royal Canadian Legion.
- a. I didn't know about this
 - b. I learned about this at school
 - c. I learned about this from a family member
 - d. I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - e. I learned about this from friends or community members
27. The model of non-violent protest was inspired by Mahatma Ghandi, who led a peaceful movement to win India's independence from Britain in 1949. Indian independence also inspired dozens of other European colonies in Africa and Asia to fight to become independent countries.
- a. I didn't know about this
 - b. I learned about this at school
 - c. I learned about this from a family member
 - d. I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - e. I learned about this from friends or community members
28. Che Guevara, a young doctor from Argentina, is one of the more famous leaders who joined Fidel Castro in the Cuban Revolution (1956-59). The revolution fought for equal opportunity, equal rights and living standards for all Cubans, inspiring other revolutions (e.g. in Angola, Bolivia and Nicaragua), and creating a socialist state still in power today.
- a. I didn't know about him
 - b. I learned about him at school
 - c. I learned about him from a family member
 - d. I learned about him from the media
 - e. I learned about him from friends or community members
- 
29. A key struggle for freedom and equality in the 20th century was that of black South Africans who fought to end apartheid. Under apartheid, citizens' rights were categorized by skin colour, and black Africans lived in poor, separate townships. After 27 years in jail, Nelson Mandela was elected prime minister of South Africa in 1990.
- a. I didn't know about this
 - b. I learned about this at school
 - c. I learned about this from a family member
 - d. I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - e. I learned about this from friends or community members

**** Remember that you can answer more than one letter!! ****

30. In 1966, the UN named March 21 the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This day celebrates the memory of the students who were massacred by police on March 21, 1960 while peacefully protesting against apartheid laws in Sharpeville, South Africa.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

Science:

31. In ancient times, China was a leader in terms of scientific discoveries. The Chinese invented paper, printing, gunpowder, rockets and compasses centuries before these were known in the West.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
32. Elijah McCoy is a famous black inventor from Colchester, Ontario. In 1871, he invented a lubricating cup which lubricates machines while still running. His invention was so important that every piece of heavy-duty machinery needed it to run smoothly. This is the root of the saying, "the real McCoy."
- I didn't know about him
 - I learned about him at school
 - I learned about him from a family member
 - I learned about him from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about him from friends or community members
33. Willow bark, the active ingredient in aspirin, was used as medicine by Aboriginal peoples for centuries. This is one of countless contributions made by Aboriginal peoples to modern medicine.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
34. Traditional Chinese Medicine was developed over thousands of years of research in China. It is based on the scientific principles developed by the Taoist religion/philosophy: that the universe is harmonious, balanced and organized and that we're healthiest when we live in harmony with our environment.
- I didn't know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

Math:

35. The term “algebra” is Arabic, a contribution of the Islamic civilization. The Islamic civilization was developing math, science, philosophy and poetry while Europe was in its Dark Ages (5th – 14th Century).
- I didn’t know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members
36. By 1000 AD, the Maya (southern Mexico and northern Central America) had the most advanced mathematics, astrology and calendar in the world. For example, they used zero to easily calculate large numbers (ie. $19,800 + 3,200 = 23,000$).
- I didn’t know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

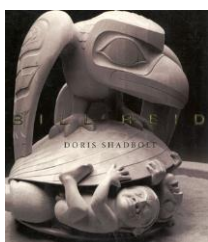
Sports and Phys Ed:

37. *Tai chi chuan* was developed over centuries in Taoist and Buddhist monasteries in China as a form of exercise to keep energy flowing through your body. Using the relationship of balancing strong and weak forces (*Yang* and *Yin*) it was developed as a ‘soft’ fighting style that uses an opponent’s force against him/her.
- I didn’t know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media (newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet, etc.)
 - I learned about this from friends or community members

**** Remember that you can answer more than one letter!! ****

Art:

38. Bill Reid was one of the most famous aboriginal artists in Canada. He was influential in bringing the art of the Haida (from British Columbia) to world attention. You’ll find his sculptures, *Raven and the First Men* and *Spirit of Haida Gwaii*, on the new \$20 bill.
- I didn’t know about this
 - I learned about this at school
 - I learned about this from a family member
 - I learned about this from the media
 - I learned about this from friends/community members



Part C: Impression/Opinion Questions

These questions are phrased a little differently from the section we just finished. Remember, there's no right or wrong answer!

39. Should multicultural literature be taught in the school curriculum?
- I've never read multicultural literature in school.
 - I don't know; I never pay attention to the author's cultural heritage.
 - Multicultural literature should only be studied once we have completed the 'classics.'
 - Reading multicultural literature adds value to my education.
 - Reading multicultural literature is interesting and pleasurable.
40. Which statement(s) do you believe best describe(s) Christopher Columbus?
- He was an important explorer who discovered America.
 - He was the world's 1st "accidental tourist" (looking for China, he stumbled upon America).
 - He was an explorer who began the process of centuries of genocide in the Caribbean and the Americas.
 - He was a thief.
 - I disagree with b-d.
41. Which statement(s) best describe(s) your views on the media debates in Canada over immigration?
- Canada is too generous. We're letting anyone get in and they take away jobs from Canadians.
 - Everyone in Canada is an immigrant except First Nations peoples, so we have no right to claim we have more rights than someone who just immigrated.
 - Since September 11th 2001, Canada has had to put tighter controls on who enters the country for everyone's safety.
 - Canada has always depended on immigration to survive economically. Media debates over immigration are ignorant of everything immigrants contribute to Canada.

Part D: Questions about this Survey

What's your impression of the survey? Remember, you can choose more than one letter!

42. Do any of these statements express your thoughts while doing this survey?
- This information may be interesting but it doesn't seem important enough for schools to teach.
 - I was amazed at a lot of this information: I'd like to learn more about multicultural histories and achievements like these in school.
 - Many topics in this survey sounded familiar; yet I felt I didn't know much about them because I haven't studied them in any detail.
 - Many topics in this survey I felt I knew a lot about.
43. Which statement(s) best describe(s) your opinion on how you learn about other cultures?
- I've learned about a lot of this information from friends and family.
 - I've learned about a lot of this information from people in my community, like members of my mosque/temple/church.
 - I've learned about a lot of this information from TV, movies, magazines and/or newspapers.
 - I learned about many topics in this survey on my own.
 - I've always wanted to learn more about these issues, but haven't known where to turn.