

## INTRODUCTION

# What are the big ideas of this book?

**issue:** a topic that connects to citizenship, identity and quality of life, and on which well-informed people have different views and perspectives

**perspective:** values and ideas shared by people with a common language, culture and history

**point of view:** opinions and preferences of an individual based on personal experiences

**quality of life:** a measure of personal and collective well-being

**rights:** what individuals and groups are allowed to do in society, usually as established in law

**society:** a social system where a group of people share a common geographic region, sense of common identity and culture, and who participate in shared political and economic institutions for a communal purpose or interest

In Grade 9 social studies, you will encounter **issues** that have impacts on citizenship and identity. Issues present opportunities and challenges for building a **society** in which all Canadians belong, and in which everyone has a good **quality of life**. Opportunities and challenges arise because people in Canada respond to issues differently, based on their individual and collective identities.

Individual identity comes from your personal interests and experiences, and from the many roles you have — for example, as a sister, brother, or team member. There are as many individual identities in Canada as there are people! Your identity as an individual contributes to the decisions you make as a citizen.

Collective identity refers to a sense of belonging shared by a group of people, especially because of a common language, culture and history. Most people in Canada belong to one or more groups with a collective identity. This, too, contributes to the decisions you make as a citizen.

This year, you will explore how responding to issues affects your quality of life. You will also explore how it involves **perspectives**, **points of view** and **rights**. The issues at the centre of your investigation will come from two key questions:

- How does governance in Canada affect you and all Canadians?
- How does economic decision making in Canada affect you and all Canadians?



**CRITICAL THINKING CHALLENGE** How could being a Canadian citizen affect your individual or collective identity?



In what ways do you express your individual or collective identity?

New Canadian citizens Ken Fang, Susan Gong and Ben Fang pose for a photo with a citizenship judge and an RCMP officer. Many immigrants choose to become citizens of Canada. **Think critically: What does citizenship mean to you?**



## How does governance connect to citizenship and identity?

**Governance** is about the way nations govern themselves. It is about how citizens participate in their government, which makes decisions that affect them and everyone. It involves rights such as bilingualism and institutions such as courts of law. It involves topics such as:

- How the structure and function of Canada's **political system** affects government decision making, your actions and your participation in decision making.
- The role that Canada's political system plays in building a society where you and everyone belong.
- The effect of individual and collective rights on how government can act, and on how you can respond to issues that are important to you.
- How government decisions about important issues affect you — your quality of life, and what you value and believe in.

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**governance:** the process of governing

**political system:** the structure of government

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Demonstrators assert the right to health care services in French, one of Canada's two official languages. This demonstration took place in 1997 in Ottawa, when the Ontario government proposed to close Hôpital Montfort Hospital. The hospital offered — and, as a result of the actions of citizens, continues to offer — training in the French language for health professionals.

## How does economics connect to citizenship and identity?

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**economic system:** how a society organizes the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services

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Economics involves using resources to create goods and services, and distributing and consuming goods and services. Many decisions affect economics — decisions we make as individuals and decisions governments make on our behalf. These decisions affect the opportunities people have — including you — to work and earn an income. They involve topics such as:

- How your economic decisions and the structure of Canada's **economic system** affect your quality of life and the quality of life of Canadians.
- How your economic decisions reflect your values, and how different values shape economic decision making in Canada and the United States.
- How government decisions about important economic issues affect you — your quality of life, and what you value and believe in.

This is Tyrone Brass, an electrician who started his own business after attending the Aboriginal Entrepreneur Program at Keyano College in Fort McMurray. Attending the entrepreneur program and starting his own business may affect how Tyrone Brass makes economic decisions and what he values as a citizen.



## What factors are important to your quality of life, citizenship and identity?

Try this. What do you believe are the most important factors that affect your quality of life? Make a list of things that reflect who you are and what's important to you — for example, the languages you speak, your traditions, and the things you require to meet your basic needs such as food and security. Rank your ideas from most important to least important.

- Why are some factors more important than others?
- How do these factors affect your sense of individual and collective identity?
- How do they affect your actions and responsibilities as a citizen?

Quality of life is about your values and what's important to you. Your quality of life connects to political and economic issues, and the decisions that government and citizens make in responding to issues.



## What factors are important to the quality of life, citizenship and identity of people in Canada?

This section presents comments about quality of life from three Canadians. Consider what shapes each person's point of view or perspective. **How does this connect to factors that affect their quality of life? To what extent do these factors affect your identity and your responsibilities as a citizen?**



**Which statements by the following speakers communicate an individual point of view and which seem to state a larger group perspective on factors affecting quality of life?**



Elder Albert Yellowknee is a member of the Bigstone Cree Nation in Alberta.



**What factors are important to Elder Albert Yellowknee's quality of life? In what ways do his comments reflect collective identity?**

In my family, we were brought up learning our traditional ways, morals, virtues, and most importantly speaking our language. I was taught by the Elders — by my parents, who taught from the heart. We were always taught to respect our traditional ways.

Spirituality is a must to our quality of life. We must not go hungry — not only physically, but also mentally, spiritually and emotionally. We need to achieve balance to be whole.

Today life may be different, but the goals are the same. We still have to learn our traditional ways. But we also need formal education. Our Elders have said this for many decades: that we also have to learn the ways of our brothers and sisters from other cultures.

In the past, all was passed down orally and this is still important to us, especially for sacred ceremonies. Ceremonies are always spoken, not written down. This is our protection. This is our way to survive. We teach each other from the heart, in our own language.

We have to remain distinct. This sense of pride and dignity is a must for the future.

We Elders must ensure that the generations to come learn our traditions, values and of course our language. Our language is the root, the base, the stem of all connection to Mother Earth and the Great Spirit.

The most important factor in my quality of life is to feel safe. In Canada, you don't have to live in fear all the time. Canadians' rights are respected. If you have something on your mind, you can speak about it and not worry that somebody will try to harm you because they disagree. Everybody is pretty accepting of everybody else.

The second most important factor is public health care. Everybody is treated equally, whether you have money or not.

The third thing is to have time for your family. I know some people who have to work two jobs, and they struggle to have quality time with their families.

Education is also very important. I really appreciate that somebody like me, a refugee from a foreign country, could go to university and make something of my life. In many places in the world, you wouldn't have a chance of ever going to university.

I can't think of any country that I would rather live in than Canada.



Sandra Vidakovic came to Canada from Bosnia in 1995 as a refugee. During the 1990s, a war between different ethnic groups tore Bosnia apart.



### What beliefs and values are important to Sandra Vidakovic's quality of life?

I think some of my priorities are similar to other people's. I want to feel that I'm contributing to society — participating and making a difference. I want to be close to my family, and I want my family to be healthy and well.

I'm also Francophone. Being able to speak French — to express myself in my language — is vitally important to my quality of life. It's important to me to be able to work in French and to live in French with my family. I want my children to carry on speaking French.

I don't expect to be able to speak French everywhere. That's not important. What is important is recognition. I went on a trip to Yellowknife recently, and in almost every restaurant, we were served in French. People heard us speaking French, and so they served us in French.

It's good to feel an openness in society to French language and culture, a willingness to try. That's marvellous.



Dolorèse Nolette is directrice générale (superintendent) of the Conseil scolaire du Nord-Ouest, one of Alberta's five Francophone school boards.



### What link does Dolorèse Nolette make between speaking the French language and her collective identity? How does the right to speak French affect her quality of life?

**opinion:** personal reaction to an issue

## How do issues affect the quality of life, citizenship and identity of Canadians?

This year, you will think critically about issues. You will investigate examples of decision making in Canada and in the United States to develop your own informed and active responses to issues. Your responses can affect your quality of life, and help you make meaning of people’s actions and values in the world around you.

As you explore issues, keep this in mind: issues exist because people value and believe different things. People have different ways of seeing the world — different personal **opinions**, individual points of view, and collective perspectives. These can affect what issues are important to them and how they respond to issues.

### What issues could these photographs communicate?



Political and economic decisions affect the development of energy resources, such as wind energy. **Think critically:** How do they connect to decisions about the environment and quality of life?



Passengers at an airport line up for security screening. **Think critically:** How do Canadians’ individual rights affect security searches and policing?



In 2007, some of the people who lived in this tent city in Edmonton had no other place to go. **Think critically:** What options do people in Canadian society have if they can’t meet their basic needs?



**Think about your school, family and community. What issues are people talking about? What issues are making headlines in the news?**

## What makes something an issue?

Considering the impact that issues can have on our lives, it is important to be able to both identify and respond to issues. To help you do this, consider the following **criteria** for what makes something an issue.

**criteria:** standards for evaluating something

**unbiased:** without preconceived ideas

An issue:

- Involves a topic that receives a wide range of responses from different people and that generally has an important impact on their quality of life, citizenship or identity.
- Is framed as an open-ended, **unbiased** question. This question is about a complex problem regarding a particular topic that cannot be easily “solved” with one clear right or wrong answer.
- Requires an informed response, supported by clear and relevant reasons and appropriate examples.
- Requires critical thinking, and personal reflection about identity and worldview, to create an informed response.
- Requires understanding and appreciation of multiple perspectives and responses to create an informed response.
- Requires background knowledge and research to create an informed response.

What issues could these photographs communicate?



These students are wearing decals from one of Canada’s political parties. Canada’s political system creates opportunities and challenges for people of different views and perspectives — including Grade 9 students — to participate as active citizens.



Elder Marion LeRat leads dancer Seth Cardinal, graduates and education officials in the grand entry for the Aboriginal Graduation Celebration at Calgary’s Father Lacombe High School in 2007. Asserting your collective identity can be an act of citizenship in Canada, and can involve collective rights that make Canada unique.



Each car makes some exhaust, and a lot of cars make a lot of exhaust — a demonstration of how the individual choices to purchase and drive a car can affect the quality of life of everyone. Governments sometimes make decisions to influence consumer behaviour.



## Let's look at an example.

### Why does the topic of gun control raise issues?

The topic of gun control is about whether Canada should have laws that require individuals to get permits for guns. Why might this topic provoke a wide range of responses?

Begin by considering how the topic might connect to people's individual and collective identities — what they value and believe, the experiences they've had, the culture they are a part of, the language they speak, and how they see the world.

In the case of gun control, try to identify what aspects of people's individual and collective identities could affect their level of support for gun control. Start to research points of view and perspectives to help you identify questions to explore.

For example, some preliminary research and critical thinking about gun control could lead you to identify questions such as:

- As a citizen living in Canada, should a person have the right to own a gun?
- Should gun ownership be restricted in Canada?
- How effectively do gun permit laws protect Canadians from gun violence?

To decide which of these questions to explore further, think of the criteria for what makes something an issue. Then, develop an informed response. In this book, we call this process “Spot and Respond to the Issue” and you will see opportunities to use it in each chapter.

In October 2007, at a press conference in Edmonton, Ron Jones asserts the right of the Métis to hunt and fish, as one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples under Canada's constitution. The right affirms the history and identity of the Métis in Canada. The issue of gun control affects the Métis because of their Aboriginal rights.





## One Question, Many Responses

The diagram on this page illustrates responses to one possible issue about gun control. A federal law passed in 1995 requires all Canadians to register their guns with the government. The law continues to spark questions about individual rights, safety and security, and economic costs.

### SHOULD GUN OWNERSHIP BE RESTRICTED IN CANADA?

#### Response

Society is worried about the way criminals use guns, not the way law-abiding citizens use guns. Gun control will just make criminals out of law-abiding citizens who fail to get permits.

— Peter Worthington, columnist, *The Windsor Star*, Windsor, Ontario: September 28, 2000, p. A6.

#### Response

Gun control will make it easier for police to prevent and solve crimes by making guns easier to track.

source: Coalition for Gun Control

#### Response

Gun control would make society less safe than it is now. It would discourage citizens from owning guns, but it would make no difference to criminals. So, citizens would lose an effective way to defend themselves.

source: National Firearms Association

#### Response

So much tragedy in our society could be prevented by gun control. In Alberta, statistics show that a murder is three times more likely in a home with guns than in a home without guns.

— Stephen Hume, columnist, *The Vancouver Sun*, Vancouver, B.C.: June 2, 2006, p. A13.

#### Response

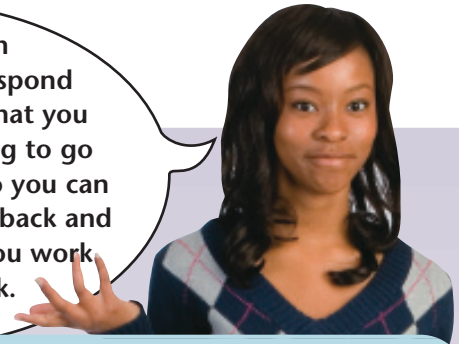
Hunting is a right of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. Guns are part of the way they exercise their right — something gun control should not interfere with.

source: Windigo First Nations Council; B.C. Assembly of First Nations



## SPOT AND RESPOND TO THE ISSUE

When you see an alert to “Spot and Respond to the Issue,” here’s what you need to do. We’re going to go through this in detail, so you can use it as a model. Come back and look at this again, as you work through the book.



### 1 What is the topic about?

What individuals and groups are most affected by this topic or idea?  
 What are some points of view and perspectives about the topic or idea?

*People who use firearms and people who support gun control are responding differently to the topic of gun control. They seem to value different things when they talk about how gun control will affect people in Canada. The topic seems to affect all people in Canada, including criminals, police, people who use or collect guns, victims of gun violence, and First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and their hunting rights.*

### 2 What is the central issue question?

What is the most common or important question asked about the topic?  
 How does this question affect citizenship, identity and quality of life for you and others?  
 Is this particular topic or idea one that cannot be easily “solved” with one clear right or wrong answer?

*The question “Should gun ownership be restricted in Canada?” seems to state a common issue for people about this topic that is not biased by or easily solved with one “right” answer.*

### 3 What’s your first response to the issue?

What is your initial personal opinion on the issue?  
 What parts of your identity, such as your values and beliefs and how you see the world or believe it should be, inform your opinion and help you to develop an individual point of view about the issue?  
 What in your experience could inform your opinion, and help you to develop an individual point of view and possibly a collective perspective about the issue?

*My first response is that is a good idea because it will make people safer. It makes sense to me that there could be less violence involving guns if people can't have guns without telling the government.*

*Some of my experiences that could inform my opinion are that I live in a big city, go to a large school, and my family has never had or wanted any guns in my house. I value peace and feel that guns usually create violence and conflict. I'm not sure if anyone besides the police really need to have a gun.*



## SPOT AND RESPOND TO THE ISSUE

### 4 How can you develop a more informed response to the issue?

What additional relevant and reliable sources can you find that will help you to learn more about the issue? Where can you find these sources?

How can these additional sources help you to develop further understanding and appreciation of different perspectives and responses to the issue?

What additional background knowledge and research about the issue do you need to help you understand more about the complexity of the issue and who it affects?

*I reviewed some of the information in Chapter 1 about how the federal government makes decisions, like gun control laws. Chapter 3 helped me to remember that individual rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms could be relevant to the issue of restricting gun ownership.*

*I also did an online search about this issue in Canada and contacted some organizations that came up in my search.*

*This research helped me see how complex the issue of restricting gun ownership is in Canada, and to see even more points of view and perspectives about it.*

### 5 What is your informed position on the issue?

What do you believe is your most relevant, supported, and informed response to the issue?

Which reasons, examples and evidence best support your response?

How can you organize the evidence you have collected to best demonstrate your position about the issue?

*Should gun ownership be restricted in Canada? There are many possible responses to this question, depending on what you value and believe in, your experiences, and your consideration of others' thoughts about the issue. It's my position that some form of fair control of gun ownership in Canada is needed to protect the safety and security of people in Canada.*

*The reasons and examples supporting my position are...*

### 6 What action do you need to take on this issue?

How does the issue affect the quality of life, citizenship and identity of you and other people in Canada?

In what ways can you communicate the importance of the issue and your response to it to others?

*The issue affects my values and my actions as a citizen. I can have some influence on government decisions by trying to get more people involved in responding to this issue. I can do this by sharing what I have learned about this issue and sharing my informed position on it. I can do this in my discussions on the Internet, in conversations with friends and teachers, in a letter to a local organization that supports my position, or in a letter to my member of parliament.*



## Meet the Nine on 9 team!

Geneva is part of a team of Grade 9 students from Alberta who contributed to this book. Watch for how these students use the skills you need to learn this year. They have tips and suggestions for you in every chapter.



Geneva



Braeden



Brian



Dale



Joanna



Gari



Marinda



Vicky



Kelvin

## WATCH FOR THESE TEXTBOOK FEATURES

**Chapter Titles:** The title of a chapter is always an issue. By the end of each chapter, you need to respond to the issue.

**Chapter Task:** Each chapter has a task that helps you target and demonstrate what you need to learn. You start the task at the beginning of the chapter and revisit it in activities, “Task Alerts” and a wrap-up page.

**Blue Questions:** Blue questions refer to the information on the pages where they appear. This book has two types of blue questions. Most blue questions ask you to investigate the information on the page more closely. Blue questions labelled “Critical Thinking Challenge” ask you to connect the information on the page to bigger ideas.

**Photo Captions:** Photo captions can have questions that ask you to “think critically.” These questions use the photograph as a springboard to bigger ideas.

**Connect to the Big Ideas:** These boxes contain questions and activities that put your skills to work as you explore the chapter issue, the chapter task and the big ideas of the textbook.

**Review Questions:** Chapters conclude with questions and activities that help you synthesize skills and information. The first review activity always involves revisiting and responding to the issue in the chapter title.

## What's your first response to the big ideas?

Use the diagram below to formulate your first response to the big ideas of this textbook. Read each caption and discuss your ideas with a partner.

Think of some examples of government decisions that affect your quality of life. **Think critically: How do these examples affect citizenship in Canada?**

**Individual and Collective Citizenship**

Economic systems shape services such as health care. **Think critically: How do health-care services connect to citizenship and quality of life?**



**Issues**  
Governance and Rights

**Canada**  
Opportunities and Challenges

**Issues**  
Economic Systems



**Individual and Collective Identity**

The rights and freedoms of Canadians affect many issues in our society, such as justice for youth. What do you already know about your rights and freedoms in Canada? **Think critically: How do rights and freedoms affect your identity and quality of life?**

Economic systems affect the products available to you. **Think critically: How might factors such as identity and citizenship affect your behaviour as a consumer?**