

Chapter 4 Affirming Identity, Language, and Culture



Figure 4-1 Every summer, the people of Calgary celebrate their community and their cultural heritage at the Calgary Stampede. These photographs show highlights from the parade that opens the Stampede, as well as the chuckwagon races that are a crowd favourite.

CHAPTER ISSUE

To what extent can people respond to globalizing forces that affect identity?

THE PHOTOGRAPHS of the Calgary Stampede on the previous page show an event that Albertans — and hundreds of thousands of visitors — celebrate every summer. Individuals and collectives from Calgary, from other parts of Alberta, from Canada's other provinces and territories, and from countries around the world celebrate together by sharing, affirming, and promoting their traditions, languages, and cultures.

Examine the photographs on the previous page. Find and list elements that show

- people affirming their cultural identity
- the traditions that are part of Alberta's cultural heritage
- people sharing one another's culture
- ways that community celebrations help people share their culture
- the influences of global connections and interdependence

Think about the significance to cultural identity of community events like the Calgary Stampede. How do celebrations like this help bring communities together? How do these events reflect ways in which Albertans are responding to globalization?

KEY TERMS

cultural content laws

cultural diversity

LOOKING AHEAD

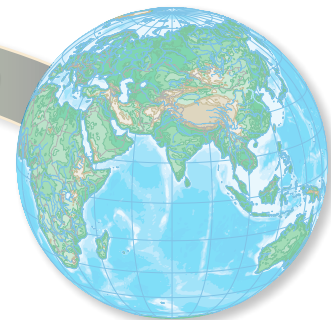
In this chapter, you will explore answers to the following questions:

- How do people affirm and promote their language in a globalizing world?
- How do people affirm and promote their culture in a globalizing world?
- How do governments affirm and promote languages and cultures in a globalizing world?
- How do international organizations affirm and promote languages and cultures in a globalizing world?



My Point of View on Globalization

Look back at the notes you recorded as you began each of the previous three chapters. How have your understandings of globalization changed? Use words or images — or both — to answer this question. Date your ideas and add them to the notebook, learning log, portfolio, or computer file you are keeping as you progress through this course.



VOICES



Our own mother tongues are things in which we participate totally. They change our perception. So that if we spoke Chinese we would have a different sense of hearing, smell and touch.

— Marshall McLuhan, Canadian media expert who first used the term “global village”

HOW DO PEOPLE AFFIRM AND PROMOTE THEIR LANGUAGE IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD?

To some people, language *is* identity. Language is so important to cultural identity that peoples, governments, and organizations around the world use many different strategies to affirm their language in a globalizing world.

How important is your language to you? How does it shape your identity?

People have always expressed their traditions, values, world views, and cultures through language. In *Empires of the Word: A Language History of the World*, language expert Nicholas Ostler wrote that written and oral languages do more than just help people communicate with one another: “Even when they are unwritten, languages are the most powerful tools we have to conserve our past knowledge, transmitting it, ever and anon, to the next generation. Any human language binds together a human community, by giving it a network of communication; but it also dramatizes [the community], providing the means to tell, and to remember, its stories.”

Think about a typical day in your life. Up in the morning. Prepare for school. Go to classes. See friends. Homework. TV. Bed. Choose a day and list your activities. Beside each, indicate what role language played. Did you, for example, read the label on the juice box at breakfast? How many people did you speak to at school? What was the reason for each conversation? Keep this list for future reference.

The table on this page shows the percentage of Canadians whose first language was English, French, or a language other than Canada’s two official languages in three different years. What changes do these statistics show? How do you think globalization has contributed to these changes? What changes do you think might show up in statistics for 2006? For 2011?

Figure 4-2 Language Groups in Canada, 1991–2001

Designation	1991	1996	2001
Anglophone	60.4%	59.8%	59.1%
Francophone	24.3%	23.5%	22.9%
Allophone (people whose first language is a non-official language)	15.3%	16.6%	18.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, “Population and growth rate of language groups, Canada, provinces, territories and Canada less Quebec, 1991, 1996, and 2001”



Figure 4-3 Inuit people have always handed down their culture and knowledge orally. This photograph shows Inuit teacher Rhoda Ungalaq telling students — in Inuktitut — about the *quillluq*, the traditional lamp used for cooking and warmth.

fewer conflicts occur? What criteria might you use to make this prediction?

Other people believe that though globalization provides opportunities, it also presents challenges. They believe that globalization threatens cultural diversity. As proof, they sometimes point to the growing number of endangered languages. They believe that the challenge in a globalizing world is to find ways to affirm and promote all languages and cultures.

Differing Views

Some advocates of globalization believe that increased communication and interdependence will bring greater understanding among the peoples of the world. They say that if everyone speaks a common language, it could reduce the differences among peoples. Do you agree? If everyone spoke the same language, would

fewer conflicts occur? What criteria might you use to make this prediction?

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Endangered Languages

The map on this page highlights two regions, the northwestern Caucasus and Vancouver Island, where languages have either disappeared or are endangered — at risk of disappearing.

The number of languages spoken in the world declines every year. On average, one language disappears every two weeks. Language experts believe that between 6000 and 7000 languages are spoken on Earth. Of these languages, 96 per cent are spoken by only four per cent of the world's people. More than half these languages are endangered.

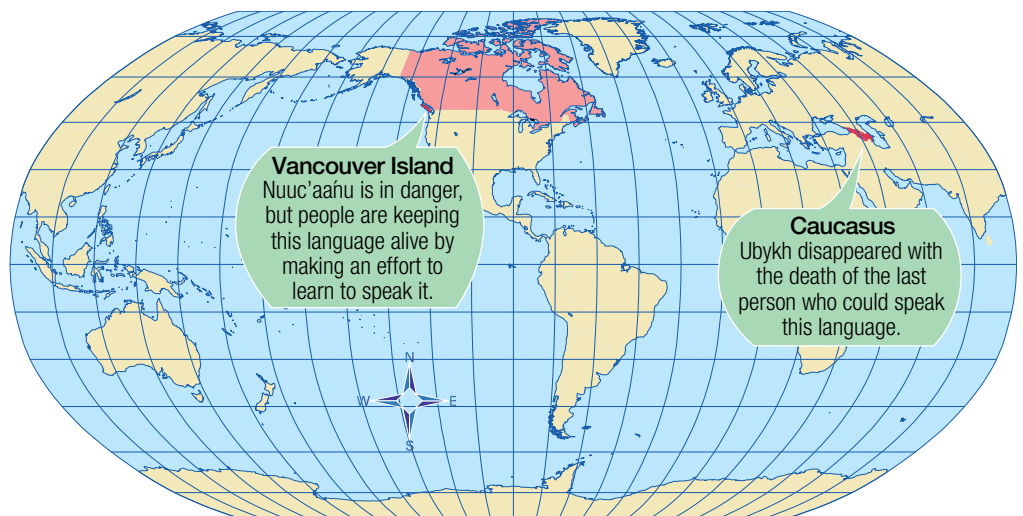
Even linguists — people who study language — disagree over exactly how many languages exist and how many are in danger. How many languages can you name? You may be able to name the top three global languages in terms of number of speakers — Chinese, English, and Spanish — but it is much harder to know the total number of languages. There are many reasons for this. New languages are still being discovered in remote regions. Some countries don't keep track of the languages spoken by their citizens. And even if a country does keep track, people may disagree over what is a separate language and what is a dialect — one of a group of closely related languages.

Why languages disappear

Languages can disappear when few people can speak them. When Tevfik Eсенç died in 1992, for example, the Ubykh language died with him. His people had come from the northwestern Caucasus region that is now part of Russia (see Figure 4-4). At one time, Ubykh was widely spoken in this area. But by the time Eсенç died, even his three sons could not speak Ubykh. Before his death, Eсенç wrote the inscription that he wanted placed on his tombstone: “This is the grave of Tevfik Eсенç. He was the last person able to speak the language they called Ubykh.”

Individuals and groups across Canada and around the world are working to keep endangered languages alive. Aboriginal Elder Carrie Little, for example, teaches the Nuuc'aanu, or Nootka, language to small groups of her people on Vancouver Island. This language has been in decline for more than 100 years — and today, only a few hundred people speak and understand Nuuc'aanu.

Why does the number of people who speak a language matter? Based on the stories of Tevfik Eсенç and Carrie Little, what do you think are some of the challenges faced by language communities in a globalizing world? What do you think will happen to the Nuuc'aanu language in the future?




We believe that, like our values, our languages and the active use and expression of them have the capacity to inspire our leaders, our Elders and youth: to unite us in working toward our common goals. We are our language. Our language, culture and traditions are inseparable.

— *A Treaty among Ourselves: Returning to the Spirit of Our Peoples*,
Assembly of First Nations Renewal
Commission Report, 2005

Figure 4-4 Vancouver Island and the Caucasus

VOICES



Computer technology increases the frequency of communication, which creates a desire to communicate across boundaries. But the technology also enables communication in multiple languages, using various alphabets. In fact by 2020 we might see automatic translation systems.

— Christian Huitema, wireless communications developer

Dominance of English

Around the world, English has become the major language of business, scientific research, and popular culture. English is spoken by billions of people in dozens of countries. English is also the main language of the Internet and the World Wide Web. How would this affect you if you did not speak English? What challenges might you face in expressing your identity and your culture?

When computers first began to connect to the Internet, most users lived in English-speaking countries. Even in countries where English was not the first language, people who had access to the Internet were usually able to communicate in English. Accessing and understanding the Internet was not difficult for people whose first or second language was English.

The Internet was also designed to use the Roman alphabet (a, b, c, d, etc.), not characters like those in Arabic, Russian, Chinese, and Japanese. The result is that more than 90 per cent of the content on the Internet is now in only 21 languages. Most of the speakers of the world's more than 6000 languages do not benefit from — and often do not have access to — the Internet.

Christian Huitema, a wireless communications developer, believes that better translation tools are a possible answer to this problem. Translation cannot, however, carry the meaning of many ideas and feelings that are expressed in a language. Have you ever tried one of the translation tools available on the Web? If so, what was the result?

In addition, thousands of languages are just not represented on the

Internet. Various international organizations warn that if nothing is done to correct this situation, it will lead to a loss of cultural diversity.

But some people are predicting that the dominance of English may not continue. Around the world, the number of people who grow up speaking English as their first language is declining. In the middle of the 20th century, nearly nine per cent of the world's population grew up speaking English. By 2050, this figure is expected to drop to five per cent.

In 2006, the world's largest language group, in terms of first-language speakers, was Mandarin Chinese.

What difference will it make if the number of people who speak English as a first language declines? Consider the countries where English speakers are being born. Where, in general, do these countries rate as world powers? In a globalizing world, which is more influential: the number of speakers of a language or the dominance of a language group?

FYI

For safety reasons, many people who work in international air travel and commercial shipping must have a working knowledge of English. Both pilots and air traffic controllers must be able to work in English. And on large cargo ships that transport goods across international waters, officers and engineers are required to have a working knowledge of English.

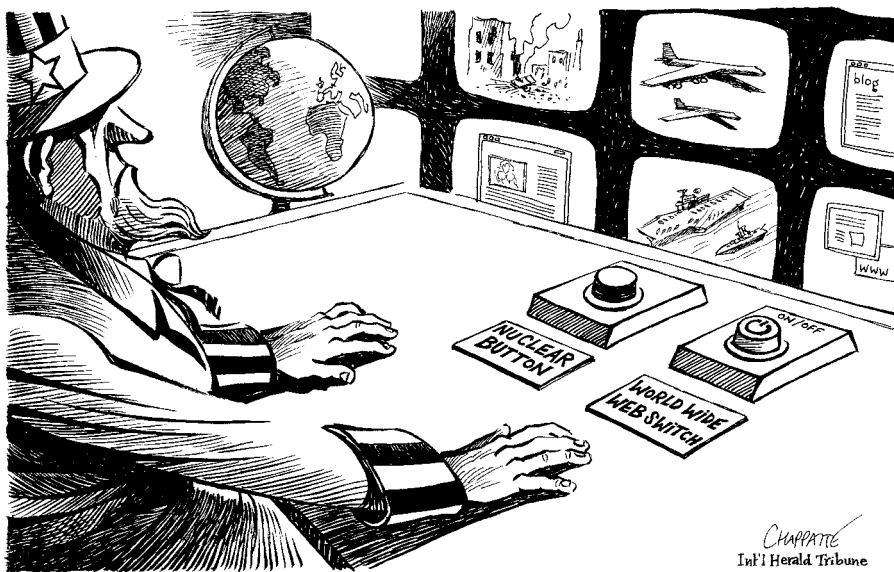


Figure 4-5 In 1998, a U.S.-based non-profit organization took over the control of the Internet. Why do you think cartoonist Patrick Chappatte, along with other commentators, is concerned about American control of the World Wide Web?

Magic Carpet

In this story, Mitali Perkins tells how her childhood need to assimilate into Western culture caused the loss of her first language, Bangla, and many of her family connections.

I had a magic carpet once. It used to soar to a world of monsoon storms, princesses with black braids, ferocious dragons, and talking birds.

"Ek deen chilo akta choto rajkumar," my father would begin, and the rich, round sounds of the Bangla language took me from our cramped New York City apartment to a marble palace in ancient India.

Americans made fun of my father's lilting accent and the strange grammatical twists his sentences took in English. What do they know? I thought, perching happily beside him.

In Bangla, he added his own creative flourishes to classic tales by Rabindranath Tagore or Sukumar Roy. He embellished folktales told by generations of ancestors, making me chuckle or catch my breath. "Tell another story, Dad," I'd beg.

But then I learned to read. Greedy for stories, I devoured books in the children's section of the library.

In those days, it was easy to conclude that any tale worth publishing originated in the so-called West, was written in English, and featured North American or European characters.

Slowly, insidiously, I began to judge my heritage through colonial eyes. I asked my mother not to wear a sari, her traditional dress, when she visited me at school.

I avoided the sun so that the chocolate hue of my skin couldn't darken. The nuances and cadences of my father's Bangla began to grate on my ears. "Not THAT story again, Dad," I'd say. "I'm reading right now."

My father didn't give up easily. He tried teaching me to read Bangla, but I wasn't interested. Soon, I no longer came to sit beside him, and he stopped telling stories altogether.

As an adult, I've struggled to learn to read Bangla. I repudiate [argue against] any definition of beauty linked to a certain skin color. I've even lived in Bangladesh to immerse myself in the culture.

These efforts help, but they can't restore what I've lost. Once a child relinquishes her magic carpet, she and her descendants lose it forever.



Figure 4-6 Mitali Perkins was born in Kolkata, which was formerly known as Calcutta. Her family lived in Cameroon, Ghana, Mexico, and New York before settling in San Francisco.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

"The loss of a language is more than the loss of the ability to communicate with others." Explain what this statement means. How does Mitali Perkins's story illustrate this statement?

In groups, brainstorm to create a list of reasons why languages have been lost. In your session, talk about the consequences for the identity of members of a language group when their language is lost. Then list four positive steps that members of a group might take to affirm their language and identity.

PREDICTING LIKELY OUTCOMES

FOCUS ON SKILLS

Around the world, the number of people who speak Indigenous languages is dropping. An Indigenous language is one that originated in a specific place and was not brought from somewhere else. Various individuals, groups, and organizations are trying to stop this language decline.

Consider this question: How successful will efforts to save the world’s endangered languages be?

No one can know the answer to this question. But to do something about the situation, people need to develop informed opinions. How would you develop a prediction that is informed and is based on reliable factual evidence?

The following steps can help you conduct research to develop an informed prediction in response to the question. As you progress through this course, you can use these steps to help you make predictions in response to other questions.

Steps to Predicting Likely Outcomes

Step 1: Review prior knowledge

When researching to predict what is likely to happen in the future, the present is a good place to start.

- Think about what you already know. You might start by making notes on the section of this chapter that talked about Indigenous languages.
- Think about your own experience. The language you speak at home, for example, may not be English. You may take language learning classes outside school, or you may have discussed the life of the language with Elders or teachers.
- What is your point of view as you start this inquiry? You may believe, for example, that Canada is not doing enough to save endangered languages. Or you may not have formed an opinion yet.

Step 2: Establish criteria for making judgments

Establish criteria for judging whether efforts to save endangered languages will be successful. You can express these criteria as questions (e.g., Is the number of speakers of endangered languages rising? What do people who have studied the issue say?).

You may wish to check the prologue to review strategies for developing criteria.

RESEARCH TIP

Remember that your criteria — and question — can change. As you conduct your research, you may want to alter your criteria to reflect your changing point of view.

Step 3: Create a point-proof-comment organizer

A point-proof-comment organizer can help you prepare to make and back up a prediction.

On a sheet of paper or in a computer file, create an organizer like the one shown here. Repeat the point-proof-comment pattern several times. Use a full page so you will have plenty of room for writing and thinking through the evidence you gather. An example is provided below.

How successful will efforts to save the world’s endangered languages be?	
Research Source 1: <i>Exploring Globalization</i> (page 91)	
Point	Many languages are endangered because few people speak them.
Proof	96% of endangered languages are spoken by only 4% of the world’s people.
Comment	More people need to be encouraged to learn to speak endangered languages.
Research Source 2:	
Point	
Proof	
Comment	

Step 4: Conduct research

Examine the sources on this page. As you review each, ask, What do I think? How does this information meet my criteria for judgment?

You will also need to conduct other research. Where could you locate a variety of relevant, useful, up-to-date resources? Consider the kind of data you need. For example, do you want numerical data? Then the Statistics Canada web site may be the place to go.

Record a point, a proof, and a comment on the evidence the source offers.

Summing up

Review your criteria. Do you need to change any of your questions? Review your notes and point-proof-comment organizer. Which arguments are most reliable and authoritative? Reflect on your findings and whether your position has changed since you started.

Write a paragraph that states your prediction, explains why you are making it, and supports it with reliable evidence. If you can't make a prediction, explain why not. Edit your paragraph until it clearly says exactly what you want it to say.

Source 1 According to the Worldwatch Institute, an international research organization, many of the world's Indigenous languages are endangered.

More than half of the world's 7000 languages are endangered, and nearly 550 languages are spoken fluently by fewer than 100 people, increasing the likelihood that they will disappear quickly. Of these, 516 are considered nearly extinct. A language is classified as nearly extinct when the speaker population is fewer than 50 or when the number of speakers represents a very small fraction of an ethnic group.

Source 2 Statistics Canada reports that, in 1996, 29 per cent of Aboriginal peoples in Canada said they had enough knowledge of an Aboriginal language to carry on a conversation. By 2001, this figure had dropped to 24 per cent (see Figure 4-7).

Source 3 Mark Abley, a Canadian writer, studies languages. In his book *Spoken Here: Travels among Threatened Languages*, he talks about the Hebrew language, which is used in everyday life in Israel: in schools, in government, on television and radio, in songs and theatres. In the 1995 census, 4 510 000 people in Israel — or 63 per cent of the population — spoke Hebrew.

In 1880 no child in the world spoke Hebrew as a first language. Although it had a rich vocabulary, Hebrew was a sacred language that was used mainly for prayer and recitation. Today, after many years of determined efforts by the Jewish people to revitalize and modernize the language, Hebrew is the official language of Israel.

Figure 4-7
Aboriginal Language Speakers in Canada

Aboriginal Language	Speakers in 1996	Speakers in 2001	Percentage Change
Cree	95 555	92 630	-3.1
Inuktitut	29 400	31 945	8.7
Ojibway	29 735	27 955	-6.0
Dene	9525	10 500	10.2
Montagnais-Naskapi	9335	10 285	10.2
Micmac	7975	8625	8.2
Oji-Cree	5480	5610	2.4
Attikamekw	4075	4935	21.1
Dakota/Sioux	4710	4875	3.5
Blackfoot	5530	4415	-20.2
Salish languages not included elsewhere	2285	2675	17.1
Algonquin	2555	2340	-8.4
Dogrib	2430	2265	-6.8
Carrier	2830	2000	-29.3

Source: Statistics Canada, "Aboriginal-identity population with knowledge of an Aboriginal language and with an Aboriginal language as mother tongue, for selected languages with 2,000 or more speakers, Canada, 1996 and 2001."

HOW DO PEOPLE AFFIRM AND PROMOTE THEIR CULTURE IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD?

When you affirm your identity, you strengthen your sense of self through your personal expressions. When the descendants of people who came to Alberta from Ukraine created a heritage village (see Figure 4-8), they strengthened their collective identity. Collectives affirm their identity when

they speak their language or express their culture, nation, or gender. But how does globalization affect collective cultural identity? How can people affirm their culture and avoid being fed into what Gwynne Dyer calls “the



Figure 4-8 The Ukrainian Heritage Village near Edmonton affirms the culture and heritage of people who came to Alberta from Ukraine. How do sites like this promote a community’s culture in a globalizing world?

industrial-strength blender” (see Voices on this page)?

Some people affirm their cultural identity by reclaiming what has been lost. In 2006, for example, the Haisla people of British Columbia reclaimed a totem pole, called the G’psgolox pole, from the National Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm, Sweden. The totem pole had been taken from the Haisla in 1927.

The Na na kila Institute of the Haisla Nation explained what the return of the G’psgolox pole meant: “This totem represents so much more than just a monument; it is symbolic of our character, our integrity, our fortitude, and our identity as a nation. We are no longer frozen in time or put on display for others to see; this repatriation process reminds all that as a nation, we are present and active participants in our societies today.”

Other people affirm their cultural identity by helping others promote their culture. The Krymsky Education Society of Edmonton, for example, is an organization of Albertans of Ukrainian descent and is helping Tartar people revitalize their culture and language.

The Tartar people live in the Crimean region of Ukraine, and UNESCO — the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization — lists their language as “seriously endangered.” The language’s status as endangered results partly from the fact that, after three centuries of Russian rule, the major language in the region is Russian. At the end of World War II, the Crimean Tartar language and culture were further weakened when Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin exiled about 200 000 Tartars to Central Asia. Because there are fewer Tartar speakers today than there once were, there are not many schoolbooks in the Tartar language.

On the other side of the world, the Krymsky Education Society of Edmonton is helping revitalize the Tartar culture by producing bilingual Ukrainian and Tartar textbooks for children in the Crimea.

VOICES

One culture after another, we are all being fed into an industrial-strength blender, and we all come out changed. What would a global culture mean? It would mean that the world goes on speaking 50 major languages and hundreds of little ones, but increasingly it talks about the same things from the same perspectives in all of them.

— Gwynne Dyer, columnist and filmmaker, in *Millennium*, a series produced for CBC Radio

Cultural Revitalization — Challenges and Opportunities

Cultural revitalization is one way for a nation or a people to keep their cultural identity from being absorbed into the “industrial-strength blender” of globalization.

Douglas Cardinal’s design for the First Nations University of Canada (see Figure 4-9) preserves the past at the same time as the institution offers opportunities for future generations. The past is represented in the design of the building, which revitalizes aspects of traditional First Nations architecture.

The cultural treasures of many Aboriginal peoples have survived in museums in Canada and around the world. These objects, or artifacts, include clothing, tools, jewelry, historical documents, and photographs. Though some of these artifacts were obtained legally, others were not.

Many of the Aboriginal artifacts on display in these museums have spiritual significance to the Aboriginal people from whom they were acquired. Slowly, over the years, museums have started to return these treasures to their original owners: Aboriginal peoples.



Figure 4-9 Canadian Aboriginal architect Douglas Cardinal designed the First Nations University of Canada in Regina, Saskatchewan, in consultation with First Nations Elders. First Nations peoples run the university. How do you think this university represents both the challenges and the opportunities that First Nations young people face in a globalizing world?



Ideas

Should museums return Aboriginal artifacts to the people who originally created and used them?

The students responding to this question are Deven, who was born in India but is now a Canadian who lives in Calgary; Gord, a member of the Beaver First Nation near High Level; and Katerina, who lives in St. Albert and whose grandparents emigrated from Ukraine in 1948.

I love going to museums — you get to see the actual things that people created and used. The artifacts pull you back to the people who made them; they help you understand those people. And the artifacts in museums are well taken care of.



Deven

Of course the museums should give artifacts back. They aren't supposed to be looked at by themselves, away from the people who made them and the places that inspired them. How can you find out about a people from a museum display? If you want to know what artifacts mean, you have to listen to the people who made them.



Gord

My uncle belongs to the Krymsky Education Society. He says that when the Tartar people were expelled from the Crimea, they carried only basic necessities with them. They couldn't take their cultural treasures all the way to Central Asia. If it hadn't been for the museums, the treasures would have been lost forever.



Katerina

Your Turn

How would you respond to the question Deven, Gord, and Katerina are answering? Explain the reasons for your answer. What aspects of your own experience and your own background influence the way you respond to this question?

LADAKH — RESPONDING TO GLOBALIZATION

IMPACT

When the remote Indian region of Ladakh was opened to tourists in the early 1970s, Dolma Tsering was alarmed. Over the next decades, she watched as her fellow Ladakhis embraced the values that arrived with the tourists.

To Tsering, it seemed as if Ladakhis were slowly but surely losing their distinctive identity and culture. But then, things began to change — and today, Tsering, who leads the Women’s Alliance of Ladakh, is optimistic about her people’s ability to shape their own future in their own way.

“For a while,” Tsering told an interviewer, “we in Ladakh lost respect for ourselves and for our culture. But now we know we have no reason to feel inferior. Now we feel more confident about who we are. In fact, we know now that the world can learn a lot from us. It is important that our young people understand that. There is much that Ladakh can teach the world.”

Living in Ladakh

Located high in the Himalaya Mountains, Ladakh is part of the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. About 200 000 Ladakhis exist in one of the harshest livable environments in the world. Ladakh is covered in snow for about eight months of the year — and the extreme altitude, cold, and isolation helped create a unique, self-sufficient culture that thrived for centuries.

Figure 4-10 Ladakh Region



Ladakhis remained isolated from the outside world for much longer than most other Indigenous cultures. Before a highway was opened in 1962, the only way to reach the area was to hike through narrow mountain passes. Even after the highway was built, the Indian government barred tourists from entering Ladakh because of a continuing border dispute with neighbouring China.

Despite its isolation, Ladakh was influenced by outside forces. Both Buddhism and Islam, the chief religions of most of the people, were imported from other regions. And Ladakhi men had always travelled to sell their products — primarily jewelry, salt, and dried fruit — and to buy goods, such as sugar and tea, which they cannot grow themselves.

New Economic Opportunities

The opening of the highway brought new economic opportunities to the region. Ladakhis found much larger markets. India, for example, began to buy large amounts of barley and grain. In addition, adventure tourism and trekking brought in even more money and significantly increased the income of many Ladakhis. And cheap imported food and products have become widely available, especially in Leh, the region’s biggest town.

In addition, Amchi, a traditional herb- and mineral-based medicine, has attracted the attention of the outside world. The ancient knowledge of Amchi is now being studied by other medical systems, such as India’s, to see how it can benefit others.

Globalization Comes to Ladakh

As the world found out about Ladakh — and Ladakh found out about the world — the region faced many challenges. Helena Norberg-Hodge, a Swedish activist, was one of the first to document the effects of contact on Ladakhis. She wrote that, before the 1970s, Ladakh had developed a highly independent culture based on agriculture. People produced a surplus that they sold for enough money to buy luxuries, such as jewelry. Women were treated as equals, and children were taught skills that

enabled them to contribute through co-operation, not competition.

Although incomes in Ladakh were low by Western standards, Ladakhis believed that their quality of life was excellent. Norberg-Hodge described a villager who was confused when asked where the poor lived in his village. “We don’t have any poor people here,” he said.

Contact with Western tourists began to change this perspective. Ladakhis viewed tourists as wealthy, because they were able to travel thousands of kilometres for pleasure. As a result, many Ladakhis — especially young people — began to think of themselves as poor and primitive. They started abandoning their own traditions to imitate the dress, lifestyles, and behaviour of tourists.

Tourism also brought other challenges. Water, for example, had always been scarce in Ladakh, where people used compost toilets that require no water. But tourists demanded flush toilets, as well as water for baths and showers. This depleted the water supply, and created pollution because sewers do not exist. Waste is emptied into large cesspits, which leak into rivers and pollute underground water supplies.

Ladakhis Respond to Globalization

Many Ladakhis began taking steps to affirm and promote their culture. The Women’s Alliance, for example, is a group of Buddhist farm women who came together to preserve the region’s small-scale farming traditions. The group also tries to find solutions to environmental problems.

For many people, the key to helping Ladakhis regain a strong sense of identity lies in educating young people — in the traditional Ladakhi way. Sonam Wangchuk, for example, founded the Students’ Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh. He said that the Indian education system had failed Ladakh. This system, he said, “helped convince people here that they were backward and primitive, that their language was worthless, that their traditions were bad.”

Wangchuk said Ladakhis know that they cannot stop change. But, he added, “We must remain Ladakhis still — culturally, economically, in our hearts — and not some imitation of what we think the rest of the world is like.”



Figure 4-11 When this highway opened in 1962, it marked the beginning of the end of Ladakh’s isolation from the rest of the world.

Explorations


1. Think about what you have learned so far about measures taken by various collectives to affirm and promote their identity in a globalizing world. Prepare a list of the stakeholders involved in making decisions about revitalizing Ladakhi culture. On the list, make a point-form note about the interest of each stakeholder. Compare your list with those of others in the class and revise your list if necessary.
2. Suppose Ladakhi community leaders have asked several people to share their points of view on these questions: How should we Ladakhi respond to the situation we are facing? Should we isolate ourselves and refuse all contact? Is it even possible to “put the

genie back in the bottle”? Can we limit contact with the outside world? Or should we assimilate?

With a partner, choose one of the following characters and prepare a brief oral presentation setting out the approach this person might suggest. Be sure your character explains why his or her approach would be effective.

- a Ladakhi teenager
- a Ladakhi farm woman
- a Ladakhi mother or father
- an outside tourist operator
- another stakeholder of your choice

VOICES



We owe it to the world, and especially to ourselves, to articulate who and what we were in the past, who and what we are today, and who and what we want to become in the future.

— Jaypeetee Arnakak of Iqaluit, Inuit educator and spokesperson for Inuit traditional knowledge

Akaitapiiwa: Ancestors exhibit

In 2002, Loretta Sarah Todd, who is Métis and Cree, made a film — *Kainayssini Imanistaisiwa: The People Go On* — about the struggle of the Kainai people of Standoff, Alberta, to reclaim their ancestral treasures from museums in Canada and England. These treasures include medicine bundles made up of objects that are sacred to the Kainai people.

The film explains that during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, anthropologists expected Aboriginal languages and cultures to die. Some believed that if cultural artifacts were not taken away and put into museums, they would be lost forever.

But now, the Kainai people, who are part of the Blackfoot Nation, want their artifacts returned. They believe that restoring these artifacts to their territory in southern Alberta is an important step in revitalizing and affirming their cultural identity. The land on which they and their ancestors have lived is very important to Blackfoot people. Annabel Crop Eared Wolf explains in the film: “This is our home where our land and culture are one.” The land holds the memory of the people.

In May 2002, the Kainai people created an exhibit of 250 artifacts — lent to them by the British Museum and museums in Canada — at the Sir Alexander Galt Museum in Lethbridge. How could this be viewed as a possible first step in bringing these artifacts home?

During the month before the exhibit opened, Kainai Elders selected regalia, clothing, tools, jewelry, historical documents, and photographs for the exhibit. The Elders also helped museum staff decide on the most appropriate way to display the artifacts. In some cases, the Elders identified artifacts that belonged to specific families. This identification helped the descendants of the original owners make a direct link to their ancestors. In what ways might these links affect how some young people of the Kainai Nation see themselves?



← **Figure 4-12** Myron Beebe puts together a teepee at the Sir Alexander Galt Museum in Lethbridge, Alberta, in 2002. The teepees were set up as part of an exhibit titled *Akaitapiiwa: Ancestors*, which featured more than 200 Kainai artifacts.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

If you were to contribute artifacts to a virtual museum promoting your culture, what items would you include? Select treasures that would help your

classmates understand who your people were in the past, who they are today, and who they want to become in the future.

HOW DO GOVERNMENTS AFFIRM AND PROMOTE LANGUAGES AND CULTURES IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD?

In 1971, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as official government policy. This policy, which encourages Canada's many cultural groups to preserve, enhance, and share their heritage, was adopted by Parliament and proclaimed by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

At the time, Trudeau said that a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework is “the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians . . . National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes, and assumptions.”

Since 2003, Canadians have celebrated Multiculturalism Day on June 27. On Multiculturalism Day in 2006, Canada's governor general, Michaëlle Jean, reaffirmed the policy, saying, “Today's Canada contains the world. Rich in its demographic and cultural diversity, Canada is a model of openness and harmony in the concert of nations.”

Jean continued: “Bringing together so many cultures and perspectives certainly enriches us all, but it is also a challenge that all of humanity must now face in this age of globalization . . . Together, let us build on the strengths of our diversity and on dialogue rather than become mired in the clash of cultures.”

What do you think Jean's remarks meant? What role might your community or school play in helping citizens become stronger by affirming and promoting their various languages and cultures?

Figure 4-13 Official Languages in Selected Jurisdictions

Country or Territory	Languages
New Zealand	English and Maori
Belgium	Dutch, French, and German
India	Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, and Sanskrit (English is not an official language of India)
Canada	English and French
Northwest Territories	English, French, and languages belonging to the Dene, Inuit, and Cree language families

Web Connection

For her coat of arms, Michaëlle Jean, Canada's governor general, carefully selected elements that symbolize her identity. To find out more about Jean's heritage and the meaning of these symbols to her and her heritage, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca



Figure 4-14 Michaëlle Jean, who was born in Haiti, became the governor general of Canada in 2006. Her personal coat of arms, shown here, includes words and symbols from Africa, Haiti, and Canada, the cultures that have helped shape her identity. If you were to create a personal coat of arms to affirm your language and culture, what symbols and words would you include?



Figure 4-15 Sofia Hou, a 14-year-old student from Ottawa, won the 2006 Canada Day Poster Challenge sponsored by the federal Department of Canadian Heritage. The theme for the challenge was “Images of Canada.” Do you believe that government-sponsored competitions like this help Canadians affirm their cultures in a globalizing world?

Government Roles in Promoting Language and Culture

Around the world, various governments are developing programs, policies, and laws to protect and promote language and culture. In Canada, for example, the Official Languages Act of 1969 extended the idea of English and French as the country’s official languages. And in 1982, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms helped strengthen minority English and French language rights across the country.

Some cultural and language policies are national; others are regional. The Canada Day Poster Challenge is an example of a national initiative. In 2004, the government of the Northwest Territories introduced a policy requiring school boards to provide 90 hours of instruction in Aboriginal languages every year. Considering that many homes in the Territories have satellite dishes that beam in TV programs from around the world — and that most of these programs are in English — do you think this instruction in Aboriginal languages will be effective?

Controlling content

Much of the television that Canadians watch is produced in the United States. Some Canadians believe that this puts Canadian stories, songs, myths, and dreams at risk. As a result, Canada has passed **cultural content laws** to protect artists, performers, songs, movies, and literature.

Since 1968, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has enforced quotas for Canadian content on radio and TV. The goal of the CRTC rules is to protect and preserve Canada’s cultural identity by ensuring that Canadians hear Canadian voices and see Canadian stories. Thirty per cent of music played by Canadian radio stations and 60 per cent of programming on Canadian TV stations must be Canadian. And in Québec, the Québec Cinema Act of 1988 requires filmmakers to create and produce their films in Québec.

Many other countries have also passed laws and regulations about media content to help protect their cultural identities. The following are some examples:

- In France, theatres must show French feature films for 20 weeks a year.
- In Australia, 55 per cent of Australian television programs must be made in Australia.
- The Chinese government has created a list of about 20 000 English words that must be translated into Chinese.
- In Mexico, films from other countries may be shown with Spanish subtitles, but dubbing — adding a sound track that replaces the foreign-language dialogue with Spanish — is not allowed.

VOICES



By most counts Canada is the Death Star of cultural fortifications, bristling with regulatory armaments to preserve what little is left of its own cultural territory. But at a glance it might appear the battle is already lost. Eighty per cent of what Canadians watch on television, outside of news, comes from the United States.

— Anthony DePalma, *American journalist, in a 1999 column in the New York Times*

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Develop three criteria you could use to judge the success of a government policy or law designed to affirm and promote minority languages and cultures. One of your criteria, for example, may require you to

research historical data to answer this question: Has this law or policy really increased the promotion of minority language and culture in Canada?

BOBBY KENUAJUAK TELLING HIS PEOPLE'S STORIES

Bobby Kenuajuak, who is Inuit, was 23 years old when he received a National Film Board internship for Aboriginal filmmakers. The NFB is a federal cultural agency whose mandate is to produce and distribute films that tell Canadian stories. Kenuajuak studied at the NFB's Montréal headquarters, where he produced *My Village in Nunavik* in 1999.

Kenuajuak's film portrays life in and around his village of Puvirnituk, on Hudson Bay in northern Québec. In the film, Kenuajuak describes his heritage: "My village, Puvirnituk, is barely 60 years old, but my land is as old as time. When you hear about us in the South, it is often through stories of disaster and human suffering. While this does exist, there is far more, a kind of joy we take from being together."

The Inuit who speak in the film tell stories — in both Inuktitut and English — about who they were in the past and who they are today. They reflect on their village and their land and on issues that affect them. The film paints a vibrant picture of

the strength and humour of Kenuajuak's people as he reflects on how his own cultural experiences shaped his identity.

Today, the people of Puvirnituk live in the village most of the time. But they still go out on the land and the sea to hunt and fish to sustain both their lives and their cultural identity. "It is impossible to describe the feeling of freedom you get at sea," Kenuajuak says. "We are between sky and water on our way to another world. Each of us searches the sky for birds, imagining a great hunt . . . We are always heavy-hearted when we have to return to the village."



Figure 4-16 Since 1999, Bobby Kenuajuak (top) has been a television producer with Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated, or Voice of the North, which broadcasts radio in Inuktitut. It also produces Inuktitut TV programs, which are broadcast on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. The photograph at the bottom was taken during filming of Arpik Jam, a music festival that takes place every year in Kuujuaq, Nunavik.

HOW DO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AFFIRM AND PROMOTE LANGUAGES AND CULTURES IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD?

Web Connection

To find out more about the objectives, selection criteria, and action plans of UNESCO's Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity program, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca

Figure 4-17 This photograph shows the mask dance of the drums of the Drametse community in Bhutan. This dance is an example of what UNESCO has officially designated Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. What does “intangible” mean? Why do you think UNESCO has created a special list for “masterpieces of oral and intangible heritage”?



Around the world, various international organizations try to affirm, protect, and promote cultures, identities, and languages, in response to the effects of globalization. Some of these organizations, such as the Krymsky Education Society of Edmonton, are small community-based groups. Others, such as the United Nations and la Francophonie, are worldwide groups that include many member countries.

UNESCO, which includes 191 member states, is one of the largest international organizations promoting **cultural diversity**. In November 2001, UNESCO adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which includes this motto: The cultural wealth of the world is its diversity in dialogue. The September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States had taken place just two months earlier. UNESCO members wanted to affirm their belief that dialogue among peoples of different cultures was the best way to achieve peace around the world.

The International Network for Cultural Diversity

Some masterpieces of cultural heritage, such as buildings and monuments, are solid and permanent. But how do you promote and protect masterpieces of intangible heritage: the carnivals, songs, stories, theatre pieces, teachings, and celebrations that are part of a people's cultural identity?

In 2000, many people around the world decided that globalization was seriously threatening the intangible treasures of traditional cultures. By 2006, more than 50 countries had agreed to protect treasures like these through a UNESCO program called Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. They wanted to make sure that these masterpieces would be preserved and passed on to future generations.

Intangible masterpieces include oral traditions. In the central Asian country of Kyrgyzstan, for example, storytellers have related epics — long poems about cultural heroes and events of the past — for centuries. These epics transmit the cultural knowledge and history of the Kyrgyz people. Though there are fewer storytellers today than in the past, some Kyrgyz young people are still willing to spend the years it takes to learn these epic poems.

The masterpieces on UNESCO's list also include dances that are sacred to various peoples. In the Drametse community of Bhutan, the mask dance, which honours a Buddhist teacher who lived centuries ago, has cultural and religious significance for the Drametse people. Today, the dance represents the cultural identity of not just the Drametse but of all the people of Bhutan.

La Francophonie

In July 2001, Canada hosted the 4th Games of la Francophonie, which involved 3000 participants from 51 countries. This event is one of the few international competitions in which people vie for both cultural and athletic awards.

In September 1999, Canada hosted the 8th Francophonie Summit in Moncton, New Brunswick. A major goal of the Moncton Summit was to respond to the needs of Francophone young people. Kofi Annan, the secretary general of the United Nations at the time, opened the summit. He said that la Francophonie wanted to encourage young people to build an international community “based not simply on a common language but on a common way of thinking and a common purpose, cemented by a set of shared values and ideals.” Why do you think la Francophonie was so concerned about responding to issues that mattered to young people?

The youth delegates to the Moncton Summit had already met to discuss issues that mattered to them. In Canada, meetings had been held in Edmonton, Saint-Boniface, Sudbury, Chéticamp, Bouctouche, and Shawinigan. Finally, in Ottawa, they told ministers of the Canadian government that they were concerned about their future as Francophones in a globalizing world.

Youth delegates asked summit participants to address human rights and global citizenship issues. They said that they cared about issues that involved international co-operation and development. They were also concerned about the challenges that they and other young Francophones faced in integrating into a local or global workforce in which French was not most people’s first language.

In response to the youth delegates’ concerns about the challenges they faced when using new technologies, the Moncton Summit brought together web masters from all over the Francophone world. They discussed ways of protecting Francophone cultural identity on the Internet and helping keep globalization from turning the world into what Kofi Annan called “a

place of dreary uniformity.” At the end of the summit, la Francophonie created the Portail jeunesse, a web site that serves as a virtual meeting place for Francophone youth in countries around the world.



Figure 4-18 At the games of la Francophonie, both athletics and culture play important roles. Medals are awarded for the arts, as well as for sports. At the 2005 games in Niger, Africa, Canadian Kwaku Boateng (top) competed in the high jump, while François Lavallée and Normand Perron (bottom) competed in the storytelling category.



CHECKBACK

You read about la Francophonie in Chapter 1.

Figure 4-19 The Portail jeunesse web site was established after the Moncton Summit. Francophone youth from around the world use this portal to meet and discuss issues that concern them. How do you think this would help these young people affirm and promote their cultural identity?

The Assembly of First Nations and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



Figure 4-20 Since 1977, Wilton Littlechild, a member of the Ermineskin Cree Nation and the former MP for Wetaskiwin, has worked for Indigenous peoples' rights at the United Nations. He is the regional chief for Alberta of the Assembly of First Nations, and in 2003, the Alberta-based Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations named him the international chief of Treaty 6.

In October 2006, Indigenous peoples from around the world met in New York to try to persuade the United Nations General Assembly to adopt the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. A month later, 87 countries, including many African countries as well as Canada and the United States, voted to delay passage of the declaration. As a result, it was not adopted by the UN in 2006.

The Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper issued a statement explaining the government's reasons for voting for the delay. The statement said that parts of the declaration were "vague and ambiguous" and subject to different "and possibly competing" interpretations. The statement also said that "parts of the current Declaration could be interpreted as being inconsistent with the Canadian Constitution Act, 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and previous decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada."

Among the groups who support the declaration is the Assembly of First Nations, a Canadian group that is made up of representatives of the more than 600 First Nations across Canada. Under the umbrella of the AFN, these groups work together to achieve common goals: Aboriginal and treaty rights, self-determination, and rights over natural resources. Internationally, the AFN works with international organizations on issues such as Native culture, history, and education.

Phil Fontaine, an Anishinabé from Sagkeeng First Nation in Manitoba, was the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations in 2007. He said that the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples "affirms diverse rights regarding lands, territories and resources that are essential to the cultural identities of Indigenous peoples and the fulfilment of their basic human rights."

Web Connection



To find out more about the current status of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca



Figure 4-21 This is the logo of the Assembly of First Nations. How might this logo also represent the struggle for cultural revitalization of Indigenous peoples around the world?

In 2004, two international organizations — the Oxfam International Youth Parliament and UNESCO — asked young people in 10 countries to express their views on the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. This declaration, which was adopted by the United Nations in 2001, affirms that all the peoples of the world have distinct cultural rights.

The young people were asked: How is cultural diversity a source of your identity? How does cultural diversity foster greater dialogue among peoples of different cultures? Some of their responses follow. Each response is paired with a summary of one of the 12 articles of the declaration. The young people are identified only by the countries they represent.

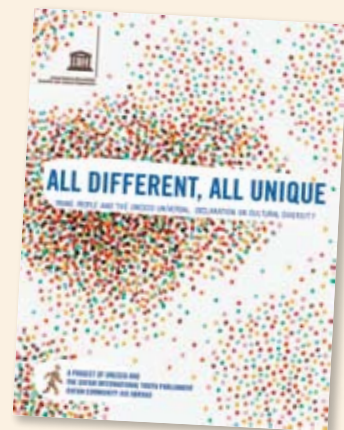


Figure 4-22 The foreword of *All Different, All Unique*, a report on how young people responded to the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, said this: “All cultures are creative and dynamic, but they are also unique, fragile and irreplaceable. A culture neglected for a single generation can be lost forever. It is therefore crucial to create a safe environment in which all cultures can develop freely.”

Colombia

Our country is rich in diversity. In Colombia, we speak Spanish. We have 65 Indigenous American languages and we also have languages spoken by people of African origin . . . Within this diversity, we young people constitute 24 per cent of the population. We have in our hands the dream to create a just country, more tolerant and respectful.

Jordan

Although globalization may benefit the world through economic growth, communication and exposure, it can also cause confusion, loss of identity, loss of cultural heterogeneity (diversity), depletion of environmental resources, anarchy, war, and world domination.

Australia

When cultural goods and services are treated as a commodity, there is a risk that they will be exploited. For example, the art of the Indigenous peoples of Australia is sometimes appropriated and sold for profit by non-Indigenous people whose sole objective is economic profit . . . The distribution of cultural goods and services must benefit the community from which they come.

Article 1

Cultural diversity is part of our common history and is shared by all of us today. Its importance should be recognised by all people today and tomorrow.

Article 2

Respect for cultural diversity is the starting point for peaceful coexistence and the inclusion of all people. It should be the basis for life in a complex and multicultural world.

Article 8

Cultures should be recognised as being valuable and unique. Thus, cultural goods and services must be treated with respect.

Explorations

1. Which of the issues raised by these young people matters most to you? Are you most concerned, for example, about Indigenous communities benefiting from the sale of their cultural goods?
2. Once you have made your choice, meet with a small group. Pool your issue selections and work together to choose one as a focus of research. Prepare a brief joint presentation that offers your informed opinion on this issue to the rest of the class.

1. Transnational corporations such as McDonald's, Coca-Cola, and Nike like to present the same "face," or identity, wherever they do business. Some people think this globalization of products and brand names threatens Indigenous and local

cultures, languages, and identities. Prepare two charts like the ones shown to summarize your ideas about whether these corporate products and logos do, in fact, present a danger. One example has been filled in. Provide at least four others in each chart.

The Danger	Why a danger?
Not in the local language	This forces people to speak English words rather than their own language when they buy the product.

The Gain	Why a gain?
Same product everywhere	It makes me feel part of a large global community all enjoying the same thing.

2. At an Oxfam International Youth Parliament, an Australian young person said, "Increased awareness of cultural diversity will decrease ignorance and stereotyping. Everyone will have the opportunity to be who they are and to see their own culture in a positive way."

In a small group, prepare for a round-table discussion of the ideas expressed in this quotation — and how they relate to globalization and your identity. During the discussion, each group member should present a short statement, then be ready to respond to questions from other group members.

As a group, develop a consensus statement that reflects your group's perspective on the ideas.

3. Read the excerpt from the poem by Tom Wayman on this page.

- a) In two or three sentences, sum up the main theme of the poem. How does this theme relate to the issues you have explored in this chapter? You may say, for example, that language — “these words” — has been handed down to you and connects you to other people like a “ball of global string.” This connects to this chapter’s exploration of responses to identity in a globalizing world.
- b) Create a display that shows the central idea of the ball of global string connecting people all over the world. Your display may include quotations, newspaper headlines, data, and photographs from a variety of sources including this textbook, newspapers, the Internet, libraries, and expert opinions. Arrange these items around the central idea, and use different-coloured wool or markers to show the links and their meanings. Include a legend, such as the following, to explain the meaning of your links:
Green — People should be very cautious about their response to this aspect of globalization. It may present dangers to languages and cultures.
Red — This aspect of globalization offers genuine opportunities for people to affirm and promote their cultural identities.
Blue — This aspect of globalization offers both challenges and opportunities.
Yellow — I’m not sure what this aspect of globalization will mean.
- c) When you present your display, explain where the items came from and why you chose to use them.

The Thread

by Tom Wayman

Moments after each of us is born
The umbilical cord is cut. But other fibres that tie us
to our parents
commence at once to stretch
into bands that feed us and join us to the rest of the
room
and beyond. We remain enmeshed our entire lives,
pulling the net this direction and that
as we travel and age, the web that holds us
flexible enough to let some of us journey to the
moon.
Yet the anchor
of each of the million cords that wrap me,
that connect me to justice and injustice,
remains that closely-wound, pulsing ball
of global string.

Even these words
were handed to me
containing the grammars and syntaxes
others built and tore down
and constructed again, new verbs
forming, and nouns
appearing in my mouth or from under my pen:
airborne seeds from elsewhere
that find root in my days
— some destructive, some helpful,
each word trailing a resilient tendril,
another thread
that weaves me and all I do
into the warp of our world.

Think about Your Challenge

Look back at the challenge for this related issue. It asks you to develop a presentation that explains your position on this issue: To what extent should globalization shape identity?

Review the material in this chapter and the activities you completed as you progressed through the chapter. Make notes about which of these could be useful in completing the challenge. Add to the list of criteria and critical questions you will use to evaluate the data you will explore and use in your presentation. Continue preparing your presentation.