

# Across Cultures

## Unit Guide for the Theme

### How do we reach out?

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#### Overall Objective

This unit encourages students to examine the challenges that new immigrants face upon arrival to Canada. Students examine support systems within their own cultural community as well as those provided by the Canadian government.

#### Grade levels

Advanced 9–12 and beyond. This unit can be adapted to younger grades and different courses of study in various Canadian provinces and territories.

#### Content Areas

History  
Social Sciences  
Citizenship  
English  
Language Arts

#### Content items used

NFB Film Excerpts:

*Opre Roma*, 1999, excerpt 1 (37 min 44 s – 40 min 25 s)  
*Your Country, My Country*, 1993, excerpt 2 (3 min 45 s – 5 min 30 s)  
*My Floating World*, 1979, excerpt 3 (6 min 15 s – 8 min 10 s)  
*Pies*, 2004, excerpt 4 (9 min 14 s – 11 min 47 s)  
*20 Years Later*, 1977, excerpt 5 (34 min 15 s – 35 min 53 s)  
*Shepherd's Pie and Sushi*, 1998, excerpt 6 (23 min 4 s – 24 min 14 s)  
*Bronwen and Yaffa*, 1996, excerpt 7 (23 min 40 s – 26 min 29 s)

NB: Content items can be viewed online free of charge at < [www.nfb.ca/acrosscultures](http://www.nfb.ca/acrosscultures) > in the theme **How do we reach out?**

#### Materials Required

Access to a computer lab, Internet connection, digital camera, flip chart paper or whiteboard, drawing paper and pencils.

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## Summary

This theme explores difficulties encountered by new immigrants to Canada as they strive to overcome stereotypes and gain acceptance in their new country through inter and intra-cultural communication. The film excerpts provide insight into the impact of negative perceptions on cultural communities. Students will examine the kind of assistance that would help new immigrants integrate into Canadian society, while maintaining and promoting their cultural distinctiveness.

## Introductory Activity (25 minutes)

Ask students to relate any experiences travelling in other countries. Did they have any significant contact with the local population? What aided or hindered these interactions? Did they have difficulty functioning in a foreign place and why?

## Activity 1: Cultural Community Centre (120 minutes)

### Step 1:

- In small groups, have the students discuss the difficulties new immigrants might encounter upon their arrival to Canada. What challenges do they face integrating into Canadian society? One student should be a recorder for each group. A list should be kept on a whiteboard or flip chart as ideas are discussed and refined.
- View each film excerpt. Each group should choose an excerpt and comment on the stereotyping, discrimination or misconception raised, as well as the cultural pride and curiosity portrayed. Have the groups discuss how a dialogue between different groups would help dispel misconceptions as well as lead to more cross-cultural understanding.
- Give each group an opportunity to present the main ideas that were reviewed by their team. Compare and contrast the issues different communities raise.

### Step 2:

- Ask each group to choose a cultural community portrayed in the film excerpts or one they are interested in. They are to research the services offered through community centres to newly arrived immigrants and members of that specific cultural community.
- Many cultural centres have Web sites (links below) that will help students do their research. A local directory may also allow the students to contact the community centres directly. (See References and Resources.)

### Step 3:

- Based on their discussions and research, have each team prepare a brochure for a community centre, highlighting the services and advice offered to new immigrants.
- The brochure should include the goal of the centre, a description of activities and services, possible guest speaker, volunteer bureau information, contact information, etc. Depending on the availability of materials, this brochure can be written up and formatted with a computer, or presented on drawing paper.

**ACTIVITY 2: Welcoming Class** (90 minutes)**Step 1:**

- As a class, brainstorm the services students believe the government of Canada should provide for new immigrants.
- The Web sites in the References and Resources section will give information about becoming a Canadian citizen.

**Step 2:**

- A welcoming class can be organized by a school to help make integration easier for new students arriving from a foreign country. Have the students discuss what they feel would be necessary for new immigrants to function in the school and their community. In partners, have the students write the outline for a curriculum that establishes goals focused on teaching these new students the coping skills for successfully integrating into their new surroundings.
- The curriculum outline should incorporate language, history and citizenship knowledge, everyday life skills, topics of importance to teenagers and bridge-building activities.

**Bonus Activity: Multicultural Day** (120 minutes)

- Organize a cultural fair in your classroom. Students can represent their own cultural background, or be assigned another if more diversity is needed. This activity can be done with more than one group.
- Each cultural group can set up a desk in the classroom. To exhibit and educate others about their culture, they can bring in traditional clothing and cuisine, music, pictures, maps, posters, flags and literature.
- If more classes are participating, then the displays would be spread out into other classrooms, or take place in one larger common room.
- Encourage parents to come and view the fair. Since food may be involved, the activity could be scheduled close to the lunch period.
- Students should not only station their own displays, but also visit other ones. A team could take photos of the event and then do a PowerPoint presentation.

**Closure Activity** (30 minutes)

Encourage students to share their community brochures and welcoming class ideas with their schoolmates and parents.

**Check for Understanding**

Allow the students to provide feedback on their activities. Leave them with the question “How does intercultural communication foster a stronger Canadian society?”

## Evaluation Rubric

### Cultural Community Centre and Welcoming Class

Name:

| Criteria                 | Not Meeting Expectations                                 | Minimally Meets Expectations                                     | Fully Meets Expectations                                      | Exceeds Expectations  |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Knowledge/ Understanding | Demonstrates limited scope and depth                     | Demonstrates some scope and depth                                | Demonstrates considerable scope and depth                     | Demonstrates thorough scope and depth                               |
| Communication skills     | Communicates research results with limited effectiveness | Communicates research results with some effectiveness            | Communicates research results with considerable effectiveness | Communicates research results with a high degree of effectiveness   |
| Application              | Applies ideas with limited effectiveness                 | Applies ideas with some effectiveness                            | Applies ideas with considerable effectiveness                 | Applies ideas with a high degree of effectiveness                   |
| Writing                  | Superficial; grammatical errors impede meaning           | Fairly clear and limited exposition with some grammatical errors | Clear exposition with few grammatical errors                  | Engaging, clear, and detailed exposition with no grammatical errors |

## References and Resources

**Archival Images:** The Across Cultures Web site, under the theme **How do we reach out?**, also contains excerpts from NFB and CBC archives, along with photographs and illustrations of artefacts. You might want to integrate some of these items into your planning.

### Links to Canadian Immigration Support Services

Citizenship Test: <[www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/mul\\_ser\\_citizenship\\_test.jsp](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/mul_ser_citizenship_test.jsp)>

Citizenship and Immigration Canada: <[www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/index.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/index.html)>

### Links to Cultural Community Centres

Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto: <[www.cccgt.org/F.cgi/\(en\)/abtccc.html](http://www.cccgt.org/F.cgi/(en)/abtccc.html)>

Winnipeg Chinese Cultural & Community Centre: <[www.wcccc.ca/](http://www.wcccc.ca/)>

Montreal Jewish Community Centre: <[www.ymywha.com/site/english/index.php](http://www.ymywha.com/site/english/index.php)>

The Jamaican (Ottawa) Community Association: <[www.joca.ca](http://www.joca.ca)>

Vancouver Italian Cultural Centre: <[www.italianculturalcentre.ca](http://www.italianculturalcentre.ca)>

Montreal Community Centres: <[www.toutmontreal.com/english/communau/ethniques.html](http://www.toutmontreal.com/english/communau/ethniques.html)>

**Text Resource:** Any recommended text for Social Studies.

## Appendix

Film excerpt questions in the **How do we reach out?** theme.

*Pies*, 2004 (9 min 14 s – 11 min 47 s)

What are some behaviours of the poorer peasant woman that can be classified as reinforcing stereotypes?

*Opre Roma*, 1999 (37 min 44 s – 40 min 25 s)

According to author Ronald Lee, what misguided characterizations of the Roma have been published in Canadian media?

*Shepherd's Pie and Sushi*, 1998 (23 min 04 s – 24 min 14 s)

Why is hockey effective at bridging different cultural communities?

*Bronwen and Yaffa*, 1996 (23 min 40 s – 26 min 29 s)

Why do you think it is important to support Scott to overcome his previous racist attitudes?

*Your Country, My Country*, 1993 (3 min 45 s – 5 min 30 s)

What conclusions did the young boy in *Your Country, My Country* make about his fellow student?

*My Floating World*, 1979 (6 min 15 s – 8 min 10 s)

What characteristics of the highlighted Montreal neighbourhood helped draw in and inspire the narrator in *My Floating World*?

*20 Years Later*, 1977 (34 min 15 s – 35 min 53 s)

What challenges have francophone Jews faced in Quebec due to instances of religious profiling?