



Chapter

# 2

# Expressing Canadian Culture and Identity

## Chapter Focus

If you're like most teenagers, your identity, your sense of who you are, is in the process of developing and changing. As a child, you started learning how to think, speak, and act by observing the people closest to you. They gave you the tools to express your needs and thoughts using language. They taught you that you belong not only to your family, but to a culture, a nation, and a community. They helped shape your individual and collective identities.

As you have grown older, you have become more aware of the broader world around you. You have begun to form your own identity, which you express through the way you dress, the music you listen to, the way you speak, and what you believe.

In today's globalizing world, the influences on your identity seem endless. Through technology, information and ideas are exchanged all the time. You are highly aware of values, beliefs, and cultural practices from around the globe, even if you never leave your home. How might this affect your identity?

## Chapter Issue

In this chapter, you will have opportunities to examine the difference between individual and collective identities, and look at how global interactions can shape your sense of who you are.

You will also have a chance to look at how groups work to maintain and preserve their identities in the face of pressures from globalization. As you read about these specific examples, you can focus on the Chapter Issue: *How does increased global interaction affect our individual and collective identities?* Answering this question will help you develop a response to the Main Issue for Part 1: *Should globalization shape identity?*



**Figure 2-1** This graphic identifies some common aspects of identity. What does each one mean to you? Brainstorm ways in which people, languages, movies, music, **attire**, **traditions**, and beliefs from around the world have affected your identity.

## Key Terms

- attire
- tradition
- bias
- individual identity
- collective identity
- linguistic identity
- Canadien (Canadienne)
- Elder
- role models
- HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)
- AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)
- Francophone
- Anglophone
- multiculturalism

**attire** clothing, jewellery, and other forms of body decoration

**tradition** ideas, practices, beliefs, knowledge, and customs that are passed down through a family, group, culture, or religion

## Analyze Sources



### SKILL PATH

**How does increased global interaction affect our individual and collective identities?** To really “see” this or any other issue, you have to look beyond your own experiences. You can seek out points of view: what various individuals believe to be true based on their personal experience. You can seek out perspectives: what various peoples believe to be true based on their collective experiences. Looking at all sides of an issue is part of your job as a researcher.

At the same time, you should look for authoritative articles from academics, journalists, and other experts. These tend to be interpretations or arguments based on the writer’s assessment of the facts, points of view, and perspectives he or she has encountered about the topic or issue. An expert’s opinion is one form of point of view.

Part of your job as a researcher is to choose the most authoritative sources. By making sure your sources are credible, your own position will also be credible. A source is credible if it offers information, arguments, or ideas that are verifiable, relevant, accurate, and convincing.

**Your Task:** Use the library or Internet to find a recent news article, personal essay, or website that presents an informed opinion on at least one of the expressions of identity listed in Figure 2-1 (the arts, religion, spirituality, relationship to land, traditions, role models, language, and attire). When you find a suitable article, note the date of first publication, the author, the name of the original publication, and where the article was written. Then follow the steps below to analyze its credibility.

#### Spotting the Best Sources

Some of the best articles are those for which the author has interviewed the most authoritative individuals in a community, for example, a respected Elder. Recorded interviews, documentaries, and oral traditional stories also provide excellent information directly from a first-hand authentic source.

### Step 1

#### Check Out the Author and Source

- Is the author well known and respected? Is he or she connected to any organizations that might influence his or her ability to look fairly at all sides of an issue?
- Where and when was the piece published? If the piece was published in the past, does it offer a useful historical analysis, or is it out of date?
- If the article comes from an online publication, how reliable is the site? Is it a private site owned by one person, or is it a public site supported by an institution such as a national newspaper, a university, or a government body?

### Step 2

#### Identify Points of View or Perspectives Presented by the Author

A fair presentation of an issue is one that presents various views about an issue rather than just one.

- Does the author identify or quote the perspectives of a variety of peoples with a variety of experiences with the issue or topic? People who provide perspectives could include a recognized Elder, a union representative, a respected academic from the group, and a government representative.
- Does the author identify or quote the points of view of individuals with a variety of experiences with the issue or topic?
- List the points of view and perspectives included in the article. Then list those left out.

### Step 3

#### Look for Bias

**Bias** means that the author has an obvious preference for one way of looking at the issue. A biased author is one who fails to consider several sides to the topic or issue under discussion. Here are some ways to look for bias.

- Question the author's arguments.
- Seek out a variety of perspectives or points of view on the same issue—what is the author *not* telling you?
- Look for “loaded” words or images that carry strong emotional weight. For example, in the sentence “Many teenagers waste hours online,” the word *waste* reveals the author's bias. On the other hand, “Many teenagers spend hours online” does not carry the same emotional charge—the author is simply stating a fact.

### Step 4

#### Verify Facts

Facts are the foundation of information writing. Authors should supported their arguments with accurate, verifiable facts. Here are some ways to check the accuracy of information.

- Check if the author has provided sources for all statements of fact. This includes data in tables, graphs, and maps, as well as statements within the text itself. Verify that the source of the information is reliable.
- If the author does not provide a source, try to verify the fact by finding it in another source.
- Be especially careful to check facts you find on the Internet. Websites vary greatly in their reliability.

**bias** an inclination that makes it difficult to judge fairly

## Our Individual and Collective Identities

### Question for Inquiry

- What are individual and collective identities?

Do you think Canadians are experiencing an identity crisis? Why or why not? ▼

### The Great Canadian Identity Crisis

By Scott Carpenter

What is a Canadian? Canadians have been asking themselves this very question for as long as we have existed as a country; and as long as we have existed the question has never been answered.

*Le Québécois Libre*, 8–21 January, 2000

**Figure 2-2** What expressions of collective identity do you see in this image? What expressions of individual identity do you see? ▶



Who are you?

You could respond to this question by simply stating your name—asserting your **individual identity** as a single, unique person with your own views, habits, likes, and dislikes.

Or, you could answer the question by stating that you are a Canadian, a Ukrainian-Canadian, or a Calgarian. You might also choose to identify yourself as a member of a political party, a teenager, a student, an environmentalist, or a member of a particular religion. Each of these labels places you as part of a larger group, or **collective identity**.

What is the relationship between your individual and collective identities? Let's look at an example. One way that people express their individual identities is through what they wear. You select items of clothing, jewellery, and other aspects of your attire based on your individual preferences. You may choose to dye your hair or change your hairstyle in order to tell people something about yourself.

But your choices of attire are also influenced by the groups to which you belong. For example, you probably pay at least some attention to what other teenagers are wearing, and try to choose clothes that will tell other teenagers something about who you are.

Here's another aspect of identity to consider. What language did you learn first, when you were a baby? Whatever language it was, it has likely had an effect on your individual and collective identities. Different languages communicate different ways of seeing the world. Some ideas and understandings of the world cannot be translated into another language. So the language you learn as a child becomes part of who you are and how you see things. You will look at this idea more closely when you consider the Québécois identity in Canada.

So now you have an idea of how elements of your identity can be affected by many things. Aspects of your individual identity and of your collective identities are connected, shaping who you are and how you see the world. In the next section, you'll consider how identities can be shaped by globalization.

**individual identity** the group of characteristics and values people use to define themselves as individuals

**collective identity** the common characteristics and values used to define a group



**Figure 2-3** There are many forms of individual and collective identity; this Venn diagram includes just a few. It shows how both collective and individual identities make up who a person is. Collective and individual identities may be related (e.g., “environmentalist” and “I took part in a river clean-up.”). What relationships exist in your individual and collective identities?

## Explore the Issues

- 1 Analyze and Discuss.** Is there such a thing as a one-size-fits-all Canadian identity? Is there one way of speaking, thinking, acting, and dressing that truly reflects what a Canadian is? Or are there instead many ways of being Canadian? Discuss with your classmates and try to come up with a definition or statement of what it means to be Canadian.
- 2 Draw a Concept Web and Diagram.**
  - a)** How many aspects of identity can you think of that make up your individual identity? Create a concept

web to explore various ways you express who you are. Use any or all of the expressions of identity listed in Figure 2-1 on page 22, or think of others.

- b)** Choose at least three of these expressions of identity and describe how they are part of your collective identities as well.
- c)** Now draw a diagram showing how your collective and individual identities relate and interconnect. Figure 2-3 shows an example of what one person's diagram might look like.

# Globalization and Identity

Question  
for  
Inquiry

- In what ways could globalization shape our identities?

## Modern believers

By Michael Adams

... Traditionally, of course, most Canadians have sought meaning through organized religion. But attendance at religious services has been in decline since the middle of the last century and now only about one in five Canadians attends a weekly religious service....

*Marketing, April 10, 2006*

## Canuck coolness

By Rob Gersbeck

For many years, Canadians have defined their culture by one simple benchmark: "It's not American." However, with countless U.S. TV channels available in Canada and easy access to the Internet, one might assume that today's media-saturated Canadian youth are

becoming more American in their attitudes and everyday life.

Apparently not. Young Canadians are in fact taking fewer of their cultural cues from the United States, according to recent research....

*ROB Marketing, September 19, 2005*

What do these articles suggest about how Canadians' expressions of identity have changed over time?

Before you can decide whether globalization *should* shape identities, you need to explore what effects it has on people. One way to get a sense of the impact of globalization on our identities is to look at how our sense of who we are has changed over time.

How might your great-grandparents have described themselves when they were your age? Did they see themselves as Canadians? There is a good chance they were living in a different country. And even if they were living here, their idea of what it means to be Canadian might have been different from yours. For the first few decades of the 20th century, the population was much less diverse than it is today. At that time, a large influx of immigrants moved here from Britain, and they felt a historical connection to that country.

In addition, your great-grandparents would not have had access to global youth culture through the Internet and mass media. They likely shared the same world view, religion, way of dressing, language, and culture as most of the people living in their local community.

You, on the other hand, may interact daily with people on the other side of the world via chat rooms. You are surrounded by music, films, and television shows from the United States and elsewhere. You can eat in any number of restaurants that feature foods from around the globe. The stores in which you shop contain goods from faraway places. As well, you live in a country that has not only encouraged immigration, but has tried to encourage those who come here to retain their cultural and linguistic identities while still becoming Canadians.

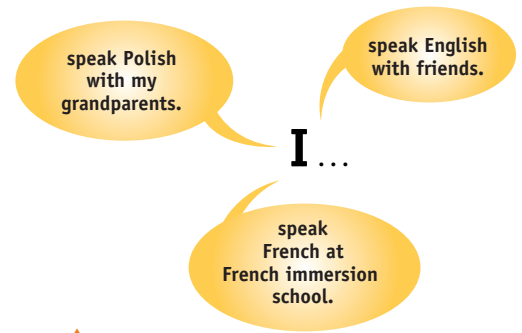
**linguistic identity** the collective identity of a people who speak the same language

## READING GUIDE

Try skimming over the rest of this chapter before you read it. Look over each page quickly without reading every word. Note the headings and subheadings, and look briefly at any images or graphics. How does skimming help you become a more effective reader?

All of these differences between your experience and that of your great-grandparents can be connected to globalization. The question is, how exactly does globalization affect people's identities? Since globalization provides more opportunities for cultures and peoples to interact, perhaps it can be a creative force. After all, you do have more options than your great-grandparents had when it comes to choosing how you will dress, what you will eat, and what traditions or spiritual path you will follow.

On the other hand, your great-grandparents might have had an easier time figuring out who they were and what their place in the world was. There were fewer outside pressures or forces for them to deal with. The choices you are presented with today can be confusing. Let's look at one group, the Métis, to see how globalization has affected them in the past.



**Figure 2-4** What is your linguistic identity?

## The Métis Identity

There is no better example of the creative effect of globalization on identities than the experience of the Métis. The first Métis were the children of First Nations women and French traders and explorers, who began arriving in North America in the 1500s and 1600s. Later, there were intermarriages between First Nations and English and Scottish traders and explorers as well. At first, the children of these unions tended to become part of their mothers' culture. But over time, they began to see themselves as different from both their First Nations and European ancestors. They began to see themselves as a distinct people.

Because many Métis could speak both French (or later English) and a First Nations language and were comfortable in both cultures, they had an important role to play in the fur trade and as guides and translators for European traders and explorers.

Métis settlements were formed, first around the Great Lakes region and then farther west. The Métis people developed a distinct collective identity, based originally on their shared way of life and marriages within their own communities. They also developed their own language, Michif [mee-SHEEF], a blend of French and Cree languages.



### FastFacts

The Métis are one of three main groups of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. These three groups contain a diversity of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. A large percentage of Métis have French origins. Why do Métis consider themselves distinct from other peoples?

**Canadien (Canadienne)** Francophone descendant of the colonists of New France living anywhere in North America, including the West (in use until about 1914)

**Figure 2-5** Some expressions of Métis identity include their delicate beadwork and woven sashes like the one shown on the left. Steve Powley is shown wearing the Métis sash in 2003. It was originally used as a belt and a rope by the Métis' **Canadien** ancestors, and was later adopted by the Métis. Powley wore the sash during a Supreme Court case examining Métis hunting rights. Which aspects of identity shown in Figure 2-1 do these expressions relate to?



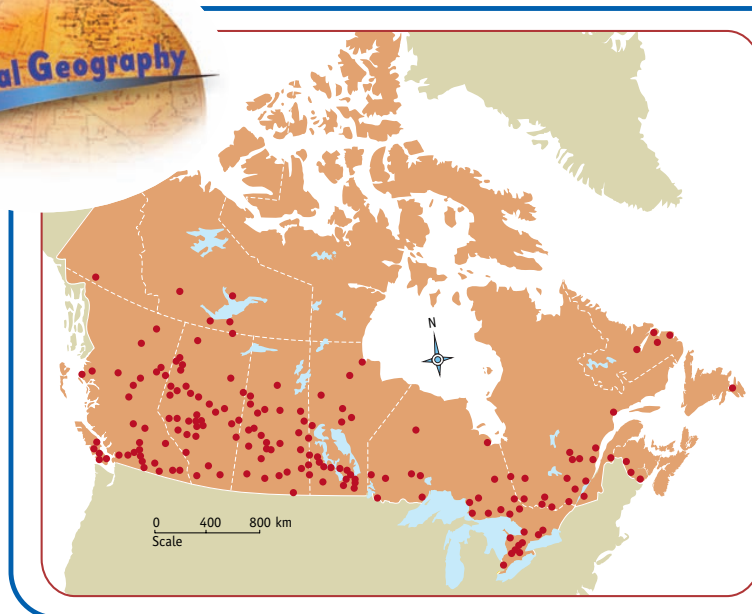
**Figure 2-6** Two defining moments in the creation of a strong Métis identity were the Red River Resistance of 1869 and the North-West Resistance of 1885. (You will read more about the Red River Resistance in Chapter 9.) The government eventually sent in troops, and the Métis leader Louis Riel, seen here addressing the jury during his trial, was hanged for treason (disloyalty to one's country). Why do you think the Métis still consider Riel to be a symbol of their collective identity?

### FastFacts

In 1870, the population of Manitoba was 12 228. Of these people, almost 10 000 were Métis.

Global contact has affected the Métis identity. As more and more newcomers arrived in traditional Métis territory (what is now Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta), the Métis fought to assert their rights to the land, their languages, and their religion. Eventually, the government offered the Métis vouchers, called scrip, which entitled them to a certain amount of land or the equivalent in money. In exchange, each individual had to agree to give up his or her Aboriginal title to the land. This cleared the way for European newcomers to move into the West. However, the system did not give the Métis the opportunity to purchase large tracts of land as a group. Each individual or family had to compete with the growing homesteader population for the best plots. Many families found themselves isolated from their community on poor-quality land that was not easy to farm. For this and other reasons, some chose to sell or trade their scrip. The Métis people lost most of their land. With the loss of a land base, they also lost their political strength. Their sense of collective identity was not lost but it did suffer; they dispersed northward and westward.

Today, Métis communities across Canada are strong and vibrant. This strength has largely resulted from cultural revitalization and the development of Métis organizations and councils. The Métis live in cities, communities, and rural areas across the country, including eight settlements in Alberta where, as a collective, they own the land. Their identity today is built in part on their common past, but also on the ongoing battle they have waged to assert their rights as a people.



- 1 Analyze the information on this map. What geographic reasons could make it challenging for the Métis to maintain their collective identity?
- 2 What technological and political means could be used to overcome these geographic challenges?
- 3 Name another group that might benefit from these forces of globalization in maintaining their collective identity.

**Figure 2-7** Distribution of Métis communities in Canada, 1996

## Explore the Issues

- 1 Express Your Thoughts.** Can you think of a time when you worked with a group to resist some larger force or authority? For example, have you ever joined a cause or worked with others to protest against something you thought was unfair? Or perhaps you joined an anti-bully campaign at your school. If so, how was your sense of identity as a group shaped by this experience? Write a personal reflection or poem, or create an illustration to express your thoughts about groups.
- 2 Discuss and Compare.** In what ways are our collective Canadian identities shaped through our interactions with the United States? In what ways do we resist American influence? Discuss these two aspects of Canadian identity with a partner or in a small group. Compare your answers with those of another pair or group, and discuss any similarities or differences.
- 3 Illustrate Information.**
  - a)** Find or draw an image to illustrate how each of the following global forces has shaped the Métis identity. Include a caption for each of your images.
    - trade
    - intermarriage
    - conflict
    - immigration
  - b)** In what ways have any of these forces had an impact on your own identity or your family's identity?

## Maintaining and Promoting Identities

### Question for Inquiry

- In what ways could people maintain and promote their identities in a globalizing world?

What two aspects of globalization are addressed in these articles? What influence have they had on the expressions of identity of the people involved?

### Internet brings Canadian Aboriginal culture to classrooms

By Sonya Procenko

Children in classrooms around the world will soon be learning about their counterparts in Canada's Aboriginal community by clicking on the Internet. Kidlink, one of the world's largest online communities for youth, plans to host web pages featuring Canadian Aboriginal cultures and languages.

Canadian Press, April 18, 2000

### Back in pole position

By Darah Hansen

Gerald Amos had expected to cry Wednesday. After all, it was to be an emotional day—the day the G'psgolox totem pole, stolen from the Haisla people of Kitimat nearly 80 years ago and shipped to Sweden, finally returned home to B.C. What he wasn't prepared for, however, was how soon and how frequent the tears would flow.

"I woke up this morning thinking of my grandmother,

who is now gone, and my father and my mother," Amos said....

Placing a hand on his shoulder, Haisla Elder Louisa Smith gently acknowledged Amos's feelings.

"I always said that [the totem pole] has an invisible umbilical cord attached to my ancestors," Smith said. "Through the old pole we've connected to our past, to our families who have long gone before us."

Vancouver Sun, April 17, 2006



## READING GUIDE

When you come across three or four paragraphs in a row without any headings between them, pause every now and then to make sure you understand what you are reading.

**role models** people who inspire us in such a way that we try to live and act like they do

Have you ever felt that you had to give up some aspect of your identity in order to fit in with a group? For example, at one time or another, you may have felt pressured to dress, act, or speak in a certain way in order to fit in. You may not have liked giving up other practices or interests, but reasoned that you would gain more by joining the group than you would by following your own path. Perhaps you felt that no one else shared your interests and points of view, and it was too difficult to go it alone.

It's not easy to resist a dominant group or way of doing things. This is true for collective identities as well. Some groups have found it difficult to maintain their distinct identities because of growing pressure from outside forces.

An important part of preserving a collective identity is the ability to pass aspects of that identity on to the next generation. As you saw earlier, in your great-grandparents' day, young people often followed tradition in choosing their identities. With the increasing reach of media such as television and the Internet, however, today's young people have access to ways of life, beliefs, and **role models** from all over the world, instead of

## Voices

### Passing On Traditions

Many traditions are carried on informally, but in some societies specific community members are in charge of protecting and passing on traditions. The Dene [DEN-ay] of the Northwest Territories rely on **Elders** to maintain and share their knowledge of traditions with their communities. These Elders ensure that traditions will be respected and carried into the future. Here is how Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Minister of State for Northern Development, describes the importance of Elders in her upbringing.

*I firmly believe the traditional teachings of our ancestors are our greatest resource in life. I know from my own personal experience that maintaining our identity and self-esteem are absolutely dependent on the roots of our community life, and the teachings of our ancestors.*

*I grew up in a very small Dene community in the Northwest Territories, called Tulita. I had a lot of encouragement, emotional support, and guidance from my family members and Elders in my community as I worked to achieve my goals.*

*This encouragement helped me to pursue my education and to become a teacher. When I went back to work in the North, I tried to pass on to my students the positive attitudes and ideas that my family and community had taught me.*

Source: Speaking Notes for the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Minister of State (Northern Development) at the Métis Settlements Youth and Elders Conference, Fishing Lake, Alberta, August 5, 2004.



**Figure 2-8** Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Minister of State for Northern Development. How important do you think it is for young people to see their own cultures reflected in the media and political institutions of the country?

**Elder** member of a First Nations, Métis, Inuit, or Indigenous community who is respected for his or her knowledge, wisdom, or experience

- 1 How do you think globalization might affect the role of Elders in Dene communities?
- 2 Who or what fulfills the role of protecting and passing on traditions in your life? How important are these influences in helping you form your identity?

just from their own culture. For example, Bono is the lead singer of the Irish band U2. He has worked hard to convince politicians around the world to do something about the HIV/AIDS crisis and debt crisis in less developed countries. This rock star's political activism has inspired young people worldwide, not just in his homeland of Ireland.

While there are some obvious benefits to having more choices, minority groups have pointed out that there are also drawbacks. What happens if you do not see your culture reflected in media? How might this affect your sense of identity? What if one culture or group has more money or power than others and therefore is more appealing to young people, who may choose not to be part of a minority? You can read more about the importance of role models in the Voices feature on the previous page.

## Preserving Linguistic Identity

What role does language play in your identity? If you are an English speaker, this may not be a question you have thought about very much. That's because, in most of Canada, English is the language of the majority. But if you speak French or a heritage language, you may have a lot more to say about how language affects who you are. Here is what one teenager had to say about the role languages play in identity:

*I have ... come to the conclusion that my identity does not have to be static. ... A part of me is expressed through speaking Spanish and singing Spanish songs which is not expressed through speaking English or playing classical music ... each language I speak and each music tradition I engage in carries with it a different world of meanings.*

Source: Student respondent, quoted in J. Smolicz et al., "Border crossing in multicultural Australia: A study of cultural valence," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1998.

In a globalizing world that depends on efficient communication, English is quickly becoming a global language. It is now the most widely spoken language on earth. English is the language of business and trade. It is also the dominant language for mass communications technologies such as the Internet. French is also thriving globally. It is one of only four languages that have official status in more than twenty countries. Some French groups, however, including the Québécois and Francophone minorities in other parts of Canada, could feel threatened by the global dominance of English because of their geographic isolation.

Francophone heritage is an important part of Canadian identity. The French were the first Europeans to explore and establish communities, beginning around the 16th century. With the First Nations peoples, who were already here, and the British peoples who came later, the French (who later called themselves *Canadiens*), established Canada's foundations and identity. That historic fact is part of the reason why French is one of the two official languages of Canada. Official bilingualism is part of Canadian identity.

**HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)** an incurable disease, transmitted through bodily fluids, that destroys a person's immune system

**AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)** the final stage of HIV, in which the human immune system collapses, placing people at greater risk of infection by life-threatening diseases

**Web Link**

Go to the *Living in a Globalizing World* website and follow the links to a site that describes a program to recognize young Métis role models. How effective do you think these awards might be in promoting Métis identity?

**Web Link**

Go to the *Living in a Globalizing World* website and follow the links to sites about efforts to revive the Métis language, Michif. How did globalization contribute to the language's decline? How might global forces help revive it?

## Fast Facts

There are **Francophone** minorities in every province and territory in Canada other than Québec, where Francophones are the majority. Although they share a common language, each of these communities has developed a distinct identity and culture. You will read more about some of these communities in later chapters.

**Francophone** a person whose first language is French

**Figure 2-9** Some highlights of Canadian law and policies related to official bilingualism. How does each of these affect your life? ▶

**Crunchy-0's**  
Croque-D'Avoine

Labels on all products must be in French and English.

**BIENVENUE!**  
**WELCOME!**

Canadians can communicate with the federal government in French or English.

**What does official bilingualism mean?**

The federal government is responsible for supporting "the development of English and French linguistic minority communities."

Federal law courts operate in both languages.

### FastFacts

New Brunswick is the only province or territory that has adopted official bilingualism at the provincial level. Do you think the other provinces should adopt official bilingualism? Why or why not?

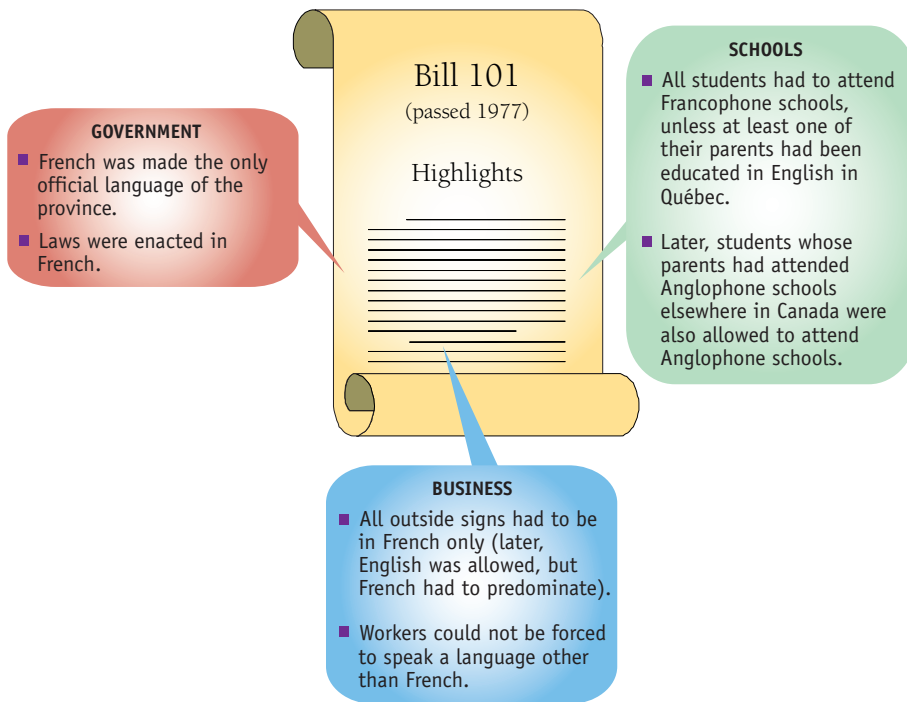
**Anglophone** a person whose first language is English

Some critics claim that official bilingualism is too costly or that it is ineffective. But many **Anglophone** Canadians support it, as do many Francophone Canadians. This is evidenced by the large number of students enrolled in French immersion schools or programs in many provinces. The existence of national associations such as Canadian Parents for French (which encourages the learning of French as a second language) is further evidence of support for bilingualism. For Francophones and Anglophones alike, whether they are majority or minority in their province, official language legislation and policies show evidence of respect for their language. Additionally, these laws give them the tools to promote the vitality of their communities.

### The Charter of the French Language

Even in Québec, where the majority of the population speaks French, there have been concerns that the global dominance of English may threaten the survival of the language. Before 1977, many new immigrants to Québec, when given the choice, chose to learn English rather than French, and to have their children educated in English as well.

To address these problems and to strengthen the French language in the province, the Québec government in 1977 passed Bill 101, a law that became known as the French Language Charter. The law made French the official language of the province, and imposed strict rules about the use of English or other languages on signs, in schools, and in business. The main elements of Bill 101 are outlined in Figure 2-10.



**READING GUIDE**

Tables and diagrams usually provide more information about the main ideas in nearby text. How does the diagram in Figure 2-10 relate to the ideas in the paragraph it follows?

**Figure 2-10** Highlights of Québec’s French Language Charter. Why do you think Québécois identity is so deeply rooted in language?

The language laws in Québec provoked a lot of angry criticism from Anglophones in the province and in the rest of Canada. Over time, the Supreme Court found that some aspects of Bill 101—especially the sign laws—contradicted the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Many Québécois, however, point out that the laws have had a positive influence on their language. For example, most businesses now operate in French, ensuring that Francophones can both work and live in a Francophone environment. As well, Québécois arts have flourished, from books to television shows to films. Movies like *Les Invasions Barbares* have received huge audience support not only in Québec but around the world. Locally produced soap operas, called *téléromans*, are extremely popular, with two-thirds of all Québécois tuning in. Here is how one Québécois historian described the impact of these made-in-Québec dramas:

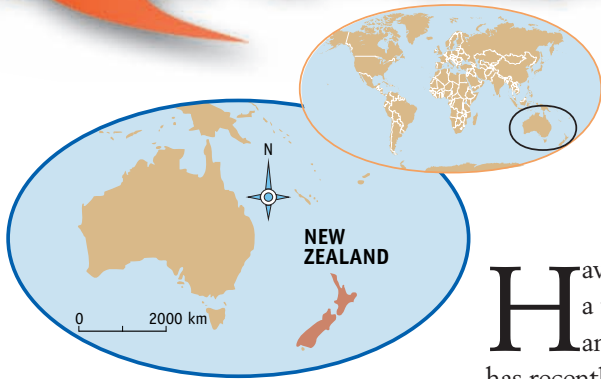
*It’s a phenomenon, almost a social phenomenon, these téléromans. They presented the people with a portrait of a society, and the people said, “Ah, look, that’s what we’re like!” They recognized themselves.*

Source: Denis Vaugeois, quoted in “The French Connection,” BBC News. Translated from online program transcript, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/french\\_connection/transcript.rtf](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/french_connection/transcript.rtf).



**Figure 2-11** Robert Lepage is an author, actor, and film director from Québec whose work has received international acclaim. How does the success of Québécois artists reinforce collective identity in Québec?

# Global Connections



**Figure 2-12** New Zealand is located in the southern hemisphere.

## Fast Facts

It is estimated that more than a third of North Americans between the ages of 25 and 29 have a tattoo. Why do you think tattooing is so popular among young people?



**Figure 2-13** A woman shows her tattoo to her friends. List three reasons why she may have decided to get a tattoo.

## The Traditional Art of Ta Moko

**H**ave you ever considered getting a tattoo? Tattooing is an ancient form of body art that has recently enjoyed increased interest in North America and elsewhere.

Why do people get tattoos? There are probably as many answers as there are people. For some, tattoos mark important events. Canadian Olympic athlete Émilie Mondor was almost as famous for her tattoos as she was for her accomplishments in distance running. Mondor had four tattoos, and each one commemorated a significant milestone—getting accepted into a university program, placing 10th at the world cross-country championships, making the national team participating in the Commonwealth Games, and becoming the first Canadian woman to run the 5000 metre race in under 15 minutes.

For others, a tattoo may be a way of getting attention, or a way of expressing their personal identity or taste.

*There isn't really any meaning for me. It's all about artistic expression. People are always looking for meaning in tattoos, that there is some story behind it. For me there isn't. [It's] just about the art—I got my tattoos, I'm excited about them, I love them.*

*My tattoo is 10 years old, nearly 11 now, and I wanted to have something that lasts forever. And it's a rose because I like flowers.... Tattoos are personal.*

Source for both quotations:  
Unnamed woman with a rose tattoo in British Columbia, CBC News In Depth, "Tattoo: Skin Deep," <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/tattoo/skindeep.html>.

While, in North America, tattooing may be largely a statement of individual identity, in many of the cultures in which tattooing originated, body art is a deeply spiritual statement of collective identity. In New Zealand, some Maori people traditionally carved elaborate designs into their skin—a practice called ta moko. The lines told the story of their Maori ancestry as well as expressing each wearer's unique identity.

Ta moko designs have deep social and spiritual significance for the Maori. Traditionally, only individuals who were considered worthy were allowed to wear a moko. The candidate had to go through a long process before being given permission by the *iwi* (tribe).<sup>\*</sup> Choosing the design also took a great deal of thought and consultation.

For decades, the practice of ta moko was banned in New Zealand, as part of a general effort

<sup>\*</sup> The word *iwi* is translated as "tribe" in New Zealand. In Canada, Indigenous groups are referred to as nations, not tribes.

on the part of missionaries and European colonial authorities to suppress traditional Maori culture. Today, however, some Maori are returning to ta moko as a way of reclaiming their heritage. Here is how Pouroto Ngaropo, a spokesperson for the Ngati Awa tribe, describes his moko:

*Not everyone can wear one. I had to get permission from the Elders in my clan. And I prayed to my ancestral spirits to grant me the strength to wear a moko. My moko reflects 480 years of my ancestral line. The four lines drawn from my nose symbolize the four canoes that came to Aotearoa [New Zealand]. The two circles on the sides depict my father's and mother's family histories. The lines connect me with my clans, tribal dwellings, canoes and tribes, to the knowledge of nature and to the eternal significance of our culture.*

Source: Quoted in Paul Ward, "Moko," *NZ Edge*, April 2002, <http://www.nzedge.com/features/ar-moko.html>.

Over the past decade, ta moko designs have also drawn global attention, as part of the renewed interest in tattooing and body art in general. Several fashion designers have used moko-style designs on their models. Stylized versions of moko tattoos have also appeared in Nike ads and on the bodies of celebrities such as boxer Mike Tyson.

Reactions among Maori to this global interest in moko designs varies. Some, like Pouroto Ngaropo, feel that it is disrespectful to use moko without understanding and respecting its deep cultural and spiritual significance. They feel that non-Maoris who copy ta moko designs for the sake of fashion are weakening the significance of ta moko for the Maori collective identity. Others, like Maori Member of Parliament John Tamihere, feel that the global attention and appreciation for moko will strengthen Maori identity by putting it front and centre on the world stage.



**Figure 2-14** John Heeney is a Maori tradesperson with an authentic moko. How does the significance of ta moko for the Maori differ from the North American attitudes toward tattoos expressed earlier? To what extent do you think these differences get lost when art forms or expressions of identity are adopted by other cultures?

- 1 Imagine that a Canadian rock star visiting New Zealand asks a Maori ta moko artist to carve a moko into his skin, using traditional designs. He is willing to pay a lot of money. What might the ta moko artist say? Either write a conversation between the rock star and the moko artist or write a monologue in which you express the conflicting thoughts of the moko artist when presented with this offer.
- 2 Create a catalogue of symbols, clothing styles, jewellery, decorations, or cultural expressions that North Americans have adopted (or "borrowed") from other cultures. Use photographs from magazines, store advertisements, images of celebrities or fashion models, or even pictures or drawings of people you know. Include a caption or annotation with each image describing what you know about the background of each article and whether you feel this borrowing is fair to the culture or people who originated the style.



To see some sample letters to the editor, search the phrase “sample letter to the editor” on the Internet.

**multiculturalism** a policy that supports respect for a diversity of languages, beliefs, traditions, values, religions, and other aspects of culture

Do you ever feel like no one listens to your ideas because you are young? A newspaper’s editorial page gives citizens of all ages a chance to express their opinions and concerns. By writing a letter to the editor, you can call attention to issues you

care about.

- a) Choose an issue related to globalization and identity. You could use the examples given in this textbook or respond to a news article that catches your eye.
- b) Create an argument about the issue. Find facts and opinions to support your argument.
- c) Draft a practice letter about your issue to the editor of your school paper or a local newspaper.
- d) Read your letter aloud in class so that your classmates can respond.

## Explore the Issues

### 1 **Examine Role Models.**

- a) Choose four media figures whom you consider to be personal role models.
- b) Combine your list of role models with those of other people in the class.
- c) How many of the people on the list are Canadian?
- d) How many are visible minorities (that is, members of ethnic groups within a society that look different from the majority)?
- e) What might this indicate about role models and identity in a globalizing world?

### 2 **Consider Other Perspectives.** Canada is a pluralistic society, so it supports **multiculturalism**. This means that new Canadians can retain their beliefs, traditions, values, languages, and religions after becoming Canadian citizens. Because Canada is a pluralistic society, founded in diversity, Canadians try to respect equally people of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Some other countries encourage immigrants to give up their old ways and adopt the existing culture of their new home. These countries argue that maintaining ties to other cultures weakens the collective identity of the country.

Write a letter to the editor explaining your point of view on pluralism. Has it weakened Canada’s collective

identity? Has it created a unique Canadian identity based on appreciation of diversity? Are both of these arguments valid? Be sure to back up your argument with examples.

### 3 **Investigate and Draw Conclusions.** One way that people preserve their identities in a globalizing world is by forming local, national, and international associations with like-minded people. Some examples of these groups operating at the federal level include the Métis National Council, the Assembly of First Nations, La Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, and the Chinese Cultural Association.

- a) Identify one of these organizations that operates at the national or international level. Prepare a report or display that explains
  - who belongs to the organization
  - what its objectives are
  - at least one successful campaign, action, or co-operative project in which the group has been involved
- b) Based on what you have learned, how effective do you think organizations like this one are in preserving and maintaining people’s collective identities?

# Chapter Summary and Reflection

## Apply and Extend Ideas

- 1 a) Conduct a survey to find out how people in your school define their identities. Here is a sample of the question you might ask:
    - Rank each of the following in terms of how important it is to how you define your identity. Rank the label that is most important to your identity as 1, and the label that is least important to you as 4.Do you see yourself as
    - an individual?      • a global citizen?
    - a youth?            • in some other way?
    - a Canadian?b) Compare your results with those of others. Present the results as a pie graph or bar graph, or use another graphic form.
  - c) What conclusions can you draw from this data about global influences on your identity?
- 2 a) Work in groups of three for this activity. Each member of the group will discuss globalization and identity from the perspective of one of the groups you have discussed in this chapter: the Métis, the Québécois, and the Maori of New Zealand. What might each of these groups agree on with regard to the effects of global interaction on their collective identities? What unique insights might each of them add to the discussion?
  - b) After the conversation, reflect on what you have learned. Did looking at the issue from different perspectives help you make up your own mind about the issue?

## Practise Your Skill

- 3 a) Globalization can be an emotional issue and many people have strong biases for or against it. Find three websites that relate to some aspect of globalization. Use the three steps outlined in this chapter's Skill Path to assess the credibility of these websites. **SKILL PATH**
- b) Create a list ranking the three sites from most reliable to least reliable. Include a brief explanation of your rankings.

- c) Combine your list with those of others in your class to create a Web Guide to Globalization. Organize the sites in your guide in a logical way, and include headings (for example, "Globalization and Culture," "Economic Globalization").

## Focus on Inquiry

- 4 Whenever you research a topic or issue, you are conducting a research inquiry. For example, Activity 3 on the previous page, in which you researched various organizations, is a research inquiry. View the graphic One Model for Inquiry on the inside front cover of this book. This graphic shows one approach for conducting a research inquiry. Review the steps in each of the six phases.
  - a) Which steps do you think you will be good at? This may indicate your strengths as a researcher.
  - b) Identify the steps that are new to you or those that provide opportunities for improvement.
  - c) You conducted several inquiries in this chapter about collective and individual identities. Evaluate your effectiveness in sharing your findings in one of these inquiries.

## Reflect on the Chapter Issue

In this chapter, you investigated a few of the ways that globalization affects various aspects of our identities, from the languages we speak to the ways we express ourselves through art. You have seen ways that global interactions and global media can be both supportive of and destructive to people's identities. Now you are ready to respond to the Chapter Issue: *How does increased global interaction affect our individual and collective identities?* Review the chapter materials as well as your own research to identify two perspectives on this issue. Write these up in a chart. Record the sources you used to identify each perspective. Also list one way that you could respond to each impact. Present your findings in a class discussion about the Chapter Issue. This exploration will help you to continue to develop a personal point of view about the Main Issue for Part 1: *Should globalization shape identity?* **SKILL PATH**