

# CHC2P Unit 4: 1960s-1980s: A Nation's Challenges

## Activity 2: Canadian Identity: Symbols

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### Overview

In this activity, you will we will discuss the important symbols of Canadian identity that became part of our culture in the 1960's.

### Lesson

#### *Canadian Symbols*

A flag, a piece of music, and a name can help a nation's people become aware of their identity. The government of Prime Minister Lester Pearson approached these issues in the 1960s.

#### *Before the Maple Leaf: The Red Ensign*



The following words are from the statement of a supporter of the Red Ensign, in 1964:

"A flag must show the traditions of a country. Canada has a strong British past and that past must be reflected in its flag. Canada's flag is the Red Ensign. The Union Jack - in the top left corner - is prominent in the design, because Canada inherited its legal and political systems, as well as dominant language, from England."

"In the crest at the right are the three joined maple leaves that represent the three founding peoples: Natives, French and British. Canadian men and women in two World Wars died fighting for this flag. We cannot get rid of it and replace it with Pearson's rag."

#### *Canada's Flag: The Maple Leaf*



The following words are from the statement of a supporter of the Maple Leaf, in 1964:

"Canada is almost 100 years old. It is time to cut the apron strings that tie us to Britain. We don't want a flag that is the flag of another country. Canada is a country of many different peoples and no one nationality should be featured prominently on our flag."

"Francophones need to feel proud of their country. They cannot feel proud of a flag that represents the country that defeated them. I love the Maple Leaf flag. Red and white are Canada's colours, the eleven-point maple leaf represents the ten provinces and the federal government, and the bars on each side represent the oceans on each shore of our country."

### ***Our Flag, Our Anthem, Our Day***

After 33 days of debate, the Maple Leaf flag was adopted, and it was officially proclaimed Canada's flag on February 15, 1965.

The Pearson government also recommended that "O Canada" be the national anthem, in place of "God Save the Queen." This move did not become official until 1980. The word "Royal" was removed from a number of Canadian institutions. For example, The Royal Mail became Canada Post.

Another Liberal government - the government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau - added to Canada's growth as an independent nation by bringing the constitution home from England in 1982. Trudeau's government added the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom to the constitution - now known as the Canada Act, 1982.

## **Assignment**

1. Bias may be described as a particular point of view that is one-sided. Most historical and political statements contain a degree of bias. In some statements, it is easier to detect bias than in others. Examine the statement of a supporter of the Red Ensign in 1964. In what sense does this statement contain bias and what is the bias?
2. Sometimes bias comes across in language. What specific words used by the supporter of the Red Ensign show bias?
3. Examine the statement of a supporter of the new Maple Leaf flag in 1964. In what sense does this statement contain bias and what is the bias?
4. Sometimes bias comes across in language. What specific words used by the supporter of the Maple Leaf flag show bias?
5. You have completed some research on Tommy Douglas. Write two sentences in which you show your bias regarding Tommy Douglas.