The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom. In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

Core Skill Sets: These icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at www.WE.org/we-at-school/we-schools/learning-framework/.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Four provinces have a Family Day holiday—Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Saskatchewan. Alberta was the first to establish the holiday in 1990, followed by Saskatchewan in 2007, Ontario in 2008 and finally B.C. in 2013. (TimeandDate.com)
- In Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan, the holiday is on the third Monday in February. In B.C. it is on the second Monday in February. (TimeandDate.com)
- Manitoba and PEI also have holidays in February. In Manitoba, it’s called Louis Riel Day in honour of the Metis leader. In PEI, the holiday is called Islander Day. (TimeandDate.com)
- Because Family Day is a provincially-established holiday, not a national one, federal civil servants—people who work for the Government of Canada—do not get the day off, even if they live in those provinces. (StatutoryHolidays.com)
- According to the 2011 census, there are more than nine million families in Canada. (Statistics Canada)
- Approximately 16 percent of Canadian families are single parent families—12.8 percent are female single parents, and 3.5 percent are male single parents. (Statistics Canada)
- Only 39 percent of families counted by the census were couples with children living at home. (Statistics Canada)
- The average number of children per family in Canada is just one. (Statistics Canada)
- Almost five percent of Canadian children live in a multigenerational household—with their parents and at least one grandparent. (Statistics Canada)
- 64,575 families counted by the 2011 census had same-sex parents, an increase of 42 percent from the previous census in 2006. (Statistics Canada)

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom. In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

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KEY TERMS

**Tradition**—Customs, beliefs or stories that are passed down from generation to generation.

**Statutory holiday**—A holiday where employers are required by law to give their employees the day off. If an employee must work that day, the employer must give some form of compensation like extra pay or time off on a different day.
THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

• **Themes:** Activism, socially conscious living, values and ethics, global issues, local issues  
• **Course Connections:** Language, Social Studies, The Arts

MATERIALS

• Front board  
• Paper and writing utensils  
• Computer/tablet with Internet access

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

• Understand the importance of establishing family traditions to create a positive family culture  
• Create a family tradition that includes giving back to the community

DISCUSS

1. Why was Family Day established as a holiday in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario?  
2. What is a family?  
3. What are some of your family traditions?  
4. Why is it important to create family traditions?  
5. Why is Family Day, not a national holiday?

DIVE DEEPER

Remind students that each family is different. Every family is made up of a combination of people with different personalities and features who may or may not be related. Ask students to individually draw their families.

Ask students to compare the drawing of their family with a partner. Discuss, what are the similarities and differences between their family and their partner’s family? Ask students, what they have learned about family?

As a class, read the *Global Voices* article “Giving back is a family affair” and discuss the questions above.

Distribute chart paper and markers. In small groups, ask students to create a column for each person in their group. Ask each student to individually create a list of ways their family gives back to the community throughout the year. Note: some families may not already participate in the “act of giving” throughout the year. Encourage these students to partner with a peer during the activity. Compare your list to other students in the group.

Are there any similar acts of giving that all families participate in throughout the year? Why is this activity the most popular?

Remind students that the article suggests ways families can give back to the community each year on Family Day to create a tradition of giving on the holiday. In small groups or individually, ask students to think about how their family can participate in the act of giving on Family Day and create a tradition.

Ask students to create a poster, digital presentation (Sway, PowerPoint), artistic representation (drawing, painting) or written presentation (journal, reflection) of how their family can start a new tradition to give back to their local or global community on Family Day.

In the presentation discuss:

• What the act of giving will involve?  
• Who this act of giving affects?  
• Why will it become a family tradition?  
• How will the act of giving benefit the family?

Encourage students to take this idea home and discuss it with their families. Ask students to report back after the Family Day weekend, to see if students have started a new tradition of giving back on this holiday.

RESOURCES

WE Families [www.we.org/we-families/](http://www.we.org/we-families/)