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/.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

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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.

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)
THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- **Themes**: Socially conscious living, values and ethics, community
- **Course Connections**: English, Social Sciences and the Humanities

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. Should Family Day be a national holiday? Explain.
6. What are the emotional impacts of a happy family on children? Consider short- and long-term impacts.

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 describe their family to a partner and to discuss the similarities and differences between their family and their partner’s family?

As a class, discuss: Is there a standard definition of the term “family”? Has the meaning of “family” changed as societal norms change? Who creates a family?

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

In small groups, ask students to discuss the questions: If the definition of “family” changes based on societal beliefs and customs, why is it important to create family traditions? What is the effect of collaboratively participating in a familial tradition?

Have groups share their discussions with the class.

Ask students to reflect on their own family traditions. What traditions do families establish? How are these traditions created? For example, a family will always have a turkey dinner for Christmas and the whole family will collectively create the dinner together.

In small groups, ask students to create a short awareness video or fact sheet about the importance of family traditions in creating a positive family culture.

In a presentation, students should discuss:

- How and why family traditions are created?
- Why each family has unique traditions?
- The social and emotional importance of a positive family culture for the development of a child.
- How can families create new traditions that include giving back to the community to make local and global change?

Share the fact sheets and videos with the class and school community. Encourage students to discuss the importance of family traditions in creating a positive family culture 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/)