

AGPI GUIDED READING ACTIVITY

5 Question: Read through the Freedom House report. What has been the overall trend in the last 5 years? 10 years? 50 years? Why do you think this is?

6 Question: How has freedom, democracy and pluralism fostered peaceful coexistence? Can you find an example where it hasn't?

The world needs more Canada — now more than ever: Canada must turn its attention to being a significant international voice for freedom and humanity

If there is any truth to the age old saying that those who forget the past are destined to repeat it, remembrance and national pride are integral to ensuring a better, more peaceful world for future generations. But we take our freedom for granted and in this pandemic-laden world, where everyone is hunkered down behind screens, it is easy to forget what truly matters — kindness and compassion. These are Canadian values, and they are values that our country can, and should, promote around the world.

In this day and age — when morality is defined by self-need, when [hypocrisy](#) in the name of human rights has turned the world upside down, when individualism has overtaken community and when the underpinnings of freedom and democracy have been eroded — the need to remember who we are and what we stand for is urgent.

Democracy is in jeopardy. The [Arab Spring](#) brought hope for a better world. But 10 years on, we have a genocide in [Syria](#), turmoil in [Libya](#) and [Tunisia](#) and near-disaster in [Egypt](#). America tried to bring democracy to [Iraq](#) by toppling Saddam Hussein, but that too proved to be a disaster. The Middle East, in other words, is back to square one.

Now, China has taken restrictive measures against Hong Kong; Russia has arrested a leading opposition leader; and a United Nations fact-finding mission underscored serious concerns about rights abuses in Venezuela. [Freedom House](#) says that “authoritarian actors grew bolder during 2020 as major democracies turned inward, contributing to the 15th consecutive year of decline in global freedom.”

As the pandemic rages on, governments are increasingly employing violence against their own citizens and dissenters living abroad. An

Iranian-Canadian dissenter recently confided to me that he fears for his life. The [Jamal Khashoggi](#) murder in the Saudi Embassy in Turkey accentuates the reality of extrajudicial state killings.

Freedom, democracy and [pluralism](#) help foster peaceful societies, and they are worth preserving. Our system, though imperfect, has wiped out centuries of oppression, slavery, war and conflict. In contrast, in failed states and dictatorships that turn a blind eye to, or actively participate in, atrocities, terrorist groups like [ISIL](#) are once again growing in strength and wreaking havoc on villages. Organizations like [Boko Haram](#) continue to kidnap young boys and girls, turning them into child soldiers.

The handful of leading democratic states like the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, France, Germany and Israel stand between us and them. These countries, and many others, are responsible for the advancement of health, science, education and technology, and offer a standard of living and a way of life that is the envy of billions of people worldwide. This is why Western countries generally enjoy an inflow of immigrants who desire the personal fulfillment and prosperity that freedom offers.

Canada must turn its attention to being a significant international voice for freedom and humanity. We must be a voice for the oppressed and the destitute. We must project and promote democratic programs and projects. And we must use our strong brand to make peace and promote human rights around the world. I worry because the pandemic has made us more insular. Yet the world needs more Canada now more than ever. Our brand of freedom is welcoming and inclusive. It is time to step out into the sunlight and make the world a better place. We can do this.

2 Question: Question: Look at the current members and chairs of the UNSC. What is meant by “hypocrisy in the name of human rights has turned the world upside down”?

4 Question: Why is “The Middle East back to square on”?

9 Key Words (define and explain)

- Pluralism
- Destitute
- Morality
- Dissidents
- Extrajudicial
- Insular
- Hypocrisy
- MENA counties

7 Question: Terms like push and pull factors help understand the motivation of migration. Given that most immigrants to Canada are coming from Asia and the MENA, what might be some of their push factors?

8 Question: At an international level, what is Canada's brand?

1 Question: Canadian values are listed as fairness, inclusions, democracy, economic security, safety, sustainability, diversity and equity. Given this list, where do you think our country can improve?

3 Question: What does the author mean by “democracy is in jeopardy”?
