



## **Title: A Question of Self-Rule**

**Grade Level:** 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>

**Overview:** The lesson offers students comparison case studies to explore the concept of sovereignty as it applies to the contemporary regional conflicts of sovereignty for Canada's province of Quebec and self-declared independence for the region of Kosovo. Extension of the lesson requires students to make comparisons of contemporary struggles over sovereignty to the American colonies' declaration and movement toward independence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Geographic Elements and Standards:**

#### Element 2. Places and Regions

STANDARD 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.

#### Element 4. Human Systems

STANDARD 10: The characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

STANDARD 13: How forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.

### **PASS Standards:**

- 2.2 Identify examples of and reasons for conflict and cooperation among groups, societies, countries, and regions.
- 4.1 Compare and contrast common characteristics of world cultures (e.g., language, ethnic heritage, religion, political philosophy, shared history, social systems, and economic systems).
- 4.4 Recognize and explain the impact of ethnic diversity within countries and major cultural regions.
- 6.2 Explain the influence of geographic features on the development of historic events and movements.
- 6.3 Analyze local, regional, national, and world policies and problems having spatial dimensions.

### **Geographic Themes:** Region, Place

### **Objectives:**

Students will develop skills necessary to examine contemporary examples of conflicts motivated by human desire for self-determination

**Time Frame:** 2 class periods of 45 minutes

### **Resources Needed:**

Student Handouts: Episodic Organizer (blank form)

Episodic Organizer (directions on overhead transparency)

Case Studies- "Question of Sovereignty- Quebec" and

"Independence for a New Nation- Kosovo"

Venn Diagram- "Cause/Impact/Predictions"

Poem for Two Voices (template)

ABC News Videoclips- "U.N. Mission to Kosovo" and "Kosovo Declares Independence"

## Procedure:

1. Introduce the concept of sovereignty by showing the ABC News videoclip, "Kosovo Declares Independence" previewing the clip by asking the question, "Why do people seek to form a new nation?" As students watch the clip and try to identify three elements of the situation: the cause of the conflict, the impact the conflict is having on the entire region, and reaction by outsiders to the idea of a new nation in Europe. Share responses. (If desired, watch the clip an additional time and try to discover additional information.)
2. Inform students that they will be comparing the situation in Kosovo to another move toward self-rule closer to home- the attempt to gain sovereignty for French-speaking Quebec.
3. Divide the class into halves. Give to each student in one half a blank copy of the Episodic Organizer and the Case Study reading "Independence for a New Nation." Give to each student in the other half a blank copy of the Episodic Organizer and the Case Study reading "Question of Sovereignty-Quebec." Using an overhead transparency of directions, instruct students how they will create their own Episodic Organizer of the events occurring in Kosovo and Quebec today. Give time for students to complete their organizers and share their results with the class. (Option: Teachers may wish to post two large episodic organizers on the classroom walls and fill in the organizers together, as students report their findings.)
4. Rearrange students into pairs, giving each pair a copy of the Venn Diagram. Give time for students to analyze what they have learned about the similarities and differences between the movements toward independence in Quebec and Kosovo. Allow time for students to share their findings. (Option: Teachers may wish to chart the results of student comparisons on an overhead transparency, creating a classroom Venn Diagram.)
5. Conduct a class discussion regarding their investigations, asking the following questions,
  - "Are regional conflicts caused by simple motivations of either a political, economic, or cultural nature, or are most conflicts a result of multiple causations?"
  - "What is the likelihood that self-rule will be achieved in both Quebec and Kosovo?"
  - "What role do other nations' people and governments play in the success of independence for either Quebec or Kosovo?"(Teachers may wish to preview the last question by showing the videoclip, "U.N. Mission to Kosovo.")

## Assessment:

Students will work in pairs to create their own poem from two perspectives involved in either the struggle for sovereignty of Quebec or independence for Kosovo. Volunteers should be encouraged to read their poems aloud to the class.

## Extension:

Students will naturally connect contemporary struggles for self-rule to the United States' own declaration and war for independence. If desired, teachers may require students to create a three-way Venn Diagram, comparing events in twenty-first century Quebec and Kosovo to their understandings of the American colonies' movement toward independence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## Question of Sovereignty-QUEBEC

### **CONFLICT:**

The Quebec sovereignty movement is a political movement aimed at either attaining independent statehood (sovereignty) or some degree of greater political autonomy for the Canadian province of Quebec. Since polling has begun, support for sovereignty in Quebec has traditionally rested between 40% and 56%.

While the most apparent reason for separatism is Quebec having a predominantly French-speaking majority, as compared to the rest of Canada which consists of all but English-dominant provinces, the origin of the movement is more complex.



With a sovereign state, Quebec believes that its people will be better equipped to foster their own economic, social, and cultural development. The idea of sovereignty for Quebec is based on historical evidence that Quebecers are a people *and* a political nation.

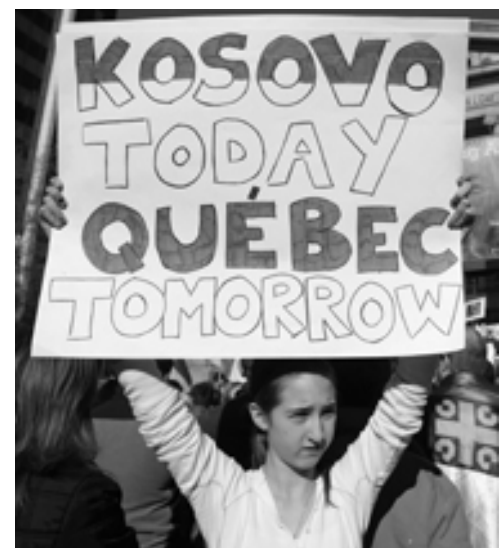
Although Quebec independence is a political question, cultural concerns are also at the root of the desire for independence. The central cultural argument of the separatists is that only sovereignty can adequately ensure the survival of the French language in North America, allowing Quebecers to establish their nationality and preserve their cultural identity.

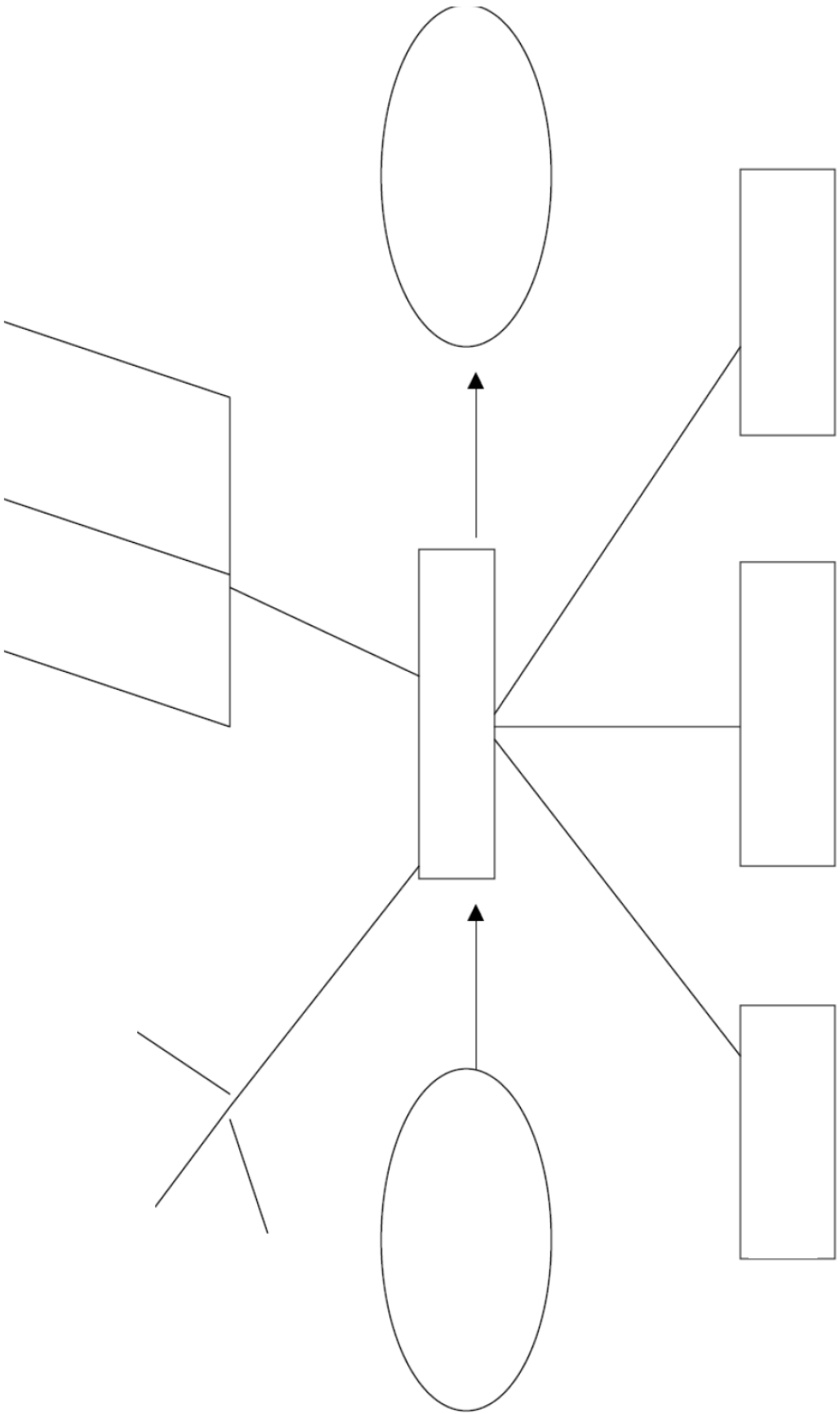
In a 1995 referendum (vote of the people), the English-speaking minority in Quebec overwhelmingly (about 90%) rejected sovereignty. By contrast almost 60 per cent of "francophones" voted for independence. While opponents of sovereignty were pleased with their referendum victories, most recognized that there are still deep divides in the relationship between Quebec and the rest of Canada.

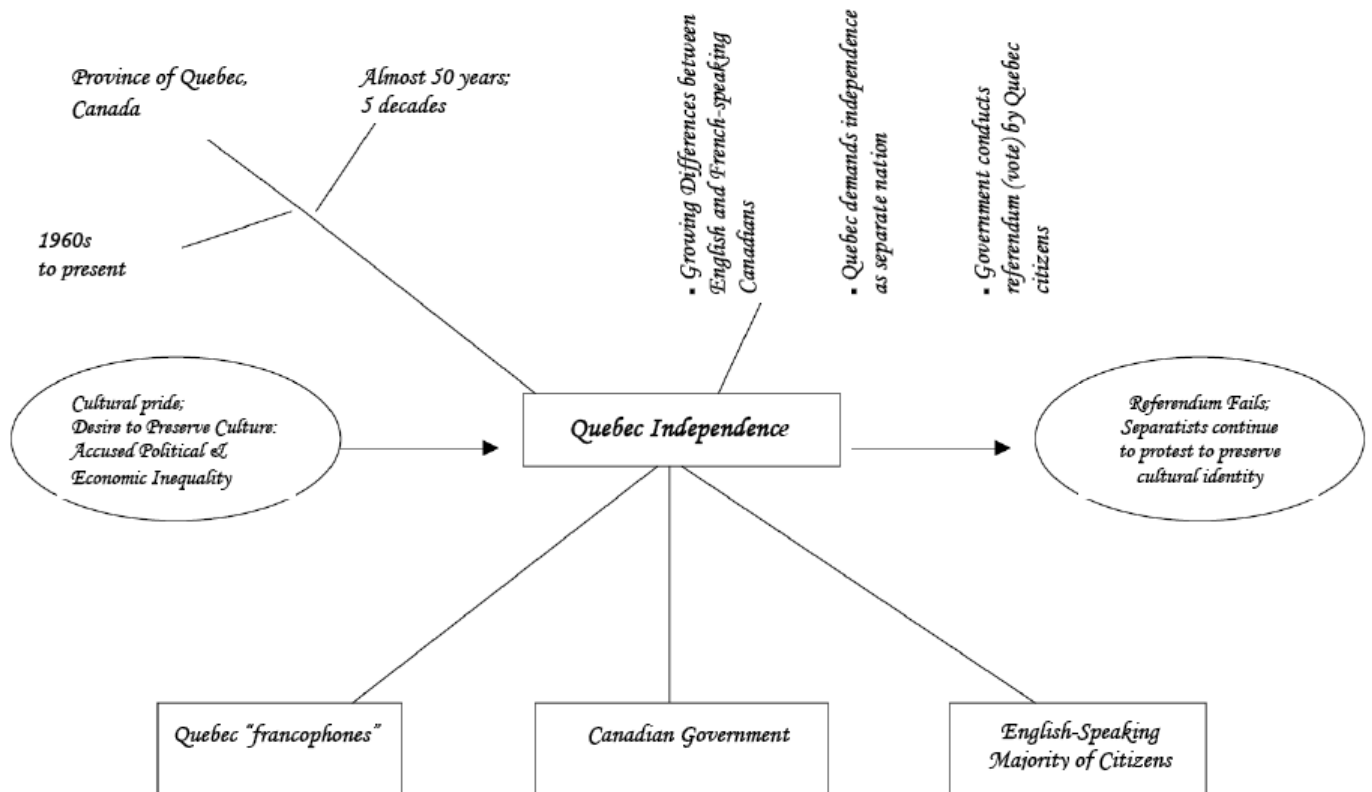
### **Recent Events:**

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, the federal parliament enacted the Official Languages Act, making both French and English official languages throughout Canada. This law resulted in real efforts to improve accessibility to French services from the federal government. French language education is now being made available to francophones in many communities in Canada. On the other hand, official bilingualism has prompted criticism in the other regions of Canada.

In 2008, Kosovo, a province of Serbia, declared its independence. Canada argued that Kosovo was a special case unlike that of Quebec, but separatists argued that Quebec has the same right to independence as Kosovo. Canada recognized Kosovo, while claiming that this decision had "no bearing" on independence or sovereignty for Quebec.







# Independence for a New Nation-KOSOVO

## Conflict:

The Kosovo Declaration of Independence was an act of the Provisional Self-Government Assembly of Kosovo, adopted in February, 2008, which declared Kosovo to be independent from Serbia.

Serbia intends to seek international support for its stance that Kosovo independence is "illegal" at the gathering of the United Nations General Assembly in New York this September.

## Background:

When the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was established after World War II, with Serbia as one of its six republics, Kosovo was made an autonomous region.

Its gradual development of autonomy was strengthened by the growth of Albanian nationalism. During the 1980s Kosovo Albanians continued their quest for a "Greater Albania" by attacking Slavic civilians and destroying Serbian Orthodox churches. A state of emergency and harsh security rules were imposed by the Serbian government.



Kosovo remained largely peaceful through the wars of the early 1990s, although the severity of the Serbian regime in Kosovo was widely criticized by the international community and human rights groups.

In 1999, the wars ended with Serbia agreeing to allow peacekeepers into Kosovo, handing over its governance to the United Nations.

In March, 2004, serious unrest in Kosovo led to the destruction of 35 Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries in the province, as Albanians started pogroms against the Serbs. Several thousand Serbs have left their Kosovo homes to seek refuge.

- Serbia: Ethnic Composition – Slavic; Language- Serbian; Religion- Orthodox Christianity
- Kosovo: Ethnic composition- Albanian (Indo-European); Language- Albanian; Religions- Islam and Christianity

## Recent Events:

As of April 2008, the new Republic has adopted a constitution, protecting minority rights and providing for a representative government with guaranteed ethnic representation.

The newly proclaimed republic has not been seated at the United Nations; it is believed that any application for UN membership would be vetoed by Russia, although its independence has been recognized by 47 UN member states. Russia has even threatened to recognize the breakaway state of Ossetia in Georgia as a retaliation for Kosovo's independence.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, issued a statement that avoided taking sides and urged all parties "to refrain from any actions of statements that could endanger peace, incite violence or jeopardize security in Kosovo or the region."

The bishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church states that "Serbia should buy state of the art weapons from Russia and call on Russia to send volunteers to establish a military presence in Serbia."



United States President George W. Bush welcomed the declaration of independence stating: "We have strongly supported Kosovo's independence. We are heartened by the fact that the Kosovo government has clearly proclaimed its willingness and its desire to support Serbian rights in Kosovo."

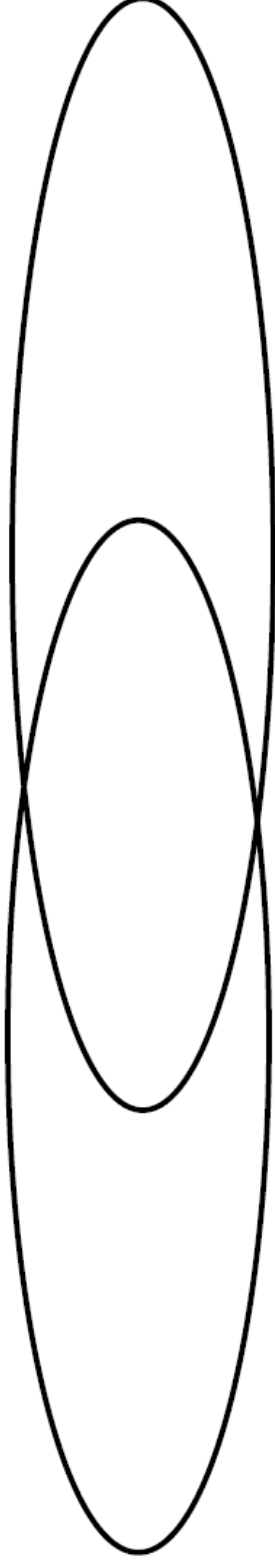
The Prime Minister of Serbia has blamed the United States for "violating international order for its own military interests."

Shortly before Kosovo's declaration of independence, the European Union approved deployment of a non-military 2,000-member peacekeeping mission.

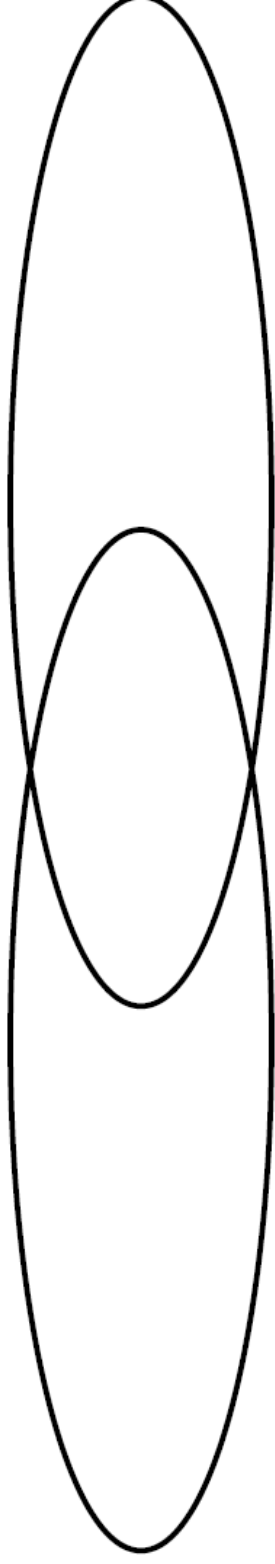
**KOSOVO**

**QUEBEC**

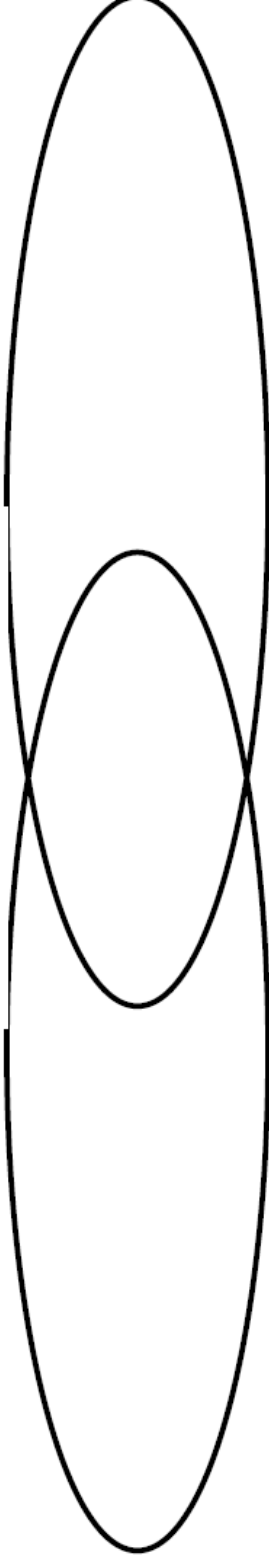
**Causes of the Conflict:**



**Impact on Region:**



**Prediction for Resolution?**





## POEM FOR TWO VOICES

### **Overview:**

Encouraging exchange of ideas and active debates of opposing viewpoints is one of the strongest, most memorable instructional strategies, according to recent research. One method for combining creative writing with the study of factual events in a history, geography, or economics class is use of the **"Poem for Two Voices."** This strategy requires students to put themselves into another person's "shoes" in another time or place, inquiring as to what that individual might say if we could listen to a debate between him/her and an individual from his/her opposing point of view.

This strategy can be an effective follow-up to the analysis of primary sources expressing two opposing viewpoints, asking students to quote from the source or rephrase it in their own words, as they write the "poem."

Student poems also make for good classroom performances and readers' theatres, involving groups of students or the entire class.

### **Procedure:**

1. Engage students in a study of two points of view toward an historic or contemporary event. Ask students to jot down important reasoning behind the differing perspectives, which they will later use for reference when writing their "Poems for Two Voices."
2. Introduce students to the strategy by showing them a sample of a Poem for Two Voices or assigning them to read a sample aloud, as a class. *(See sample below.)*
3. Assign students into pairs. Each member of the pair is to represent one of two opposing viewpoints. Together, the pair will create a "Poem for Two Voices," writing statements from their own perspectives AND finding common ground for statements made by both perspectives.

**POEM for TWO VOICES in CONFLICT:**

<i>I am</i>		<i>I am</i>
<i>This conflict is about</i>	<i>We agree that</i>	<i>This conflict is about</i>
<i>I believe that the other side</i>	<i>We agree that</i>	<i>I believe that the other side</i>
<i>This conflict has resulted in</i>	<i>We agree that</i>	<i>This conflict has resulted in</i>
<i>I think action should be taken by/to</i>		<i>I think action should be taken by/to</i>

**UNITED STATES' Struggle for Independence**

**Commonalities?**

**KOSOVO**

**QUEBEC**

