Introduction: Media, Popular Culture, and You

**Mass Media includes a large number of products such as: newspapers, magazines, TV shows, films, music videos, posters, CDs, advertising, the Internet, radio, etc.**

To begin our study of media, we must first begin a conversation about media. Please take a few minutes to think about the following questions and write your answers down on this sheet. Try to be specific with examples. Be prepared to share some of your responses with the class as a whole.

1. What types of media appeal to you the most? What media do you dislike? Why?
2. Has any information you’ve received from media angered you? Elaborate. Did it anger you enough to cause you to do something about it?
3. Have you ever received media information that made you feel really good?
4. Do you feel that you are represented (race, age, gender, religion, talents, abilities, weaknesses, or background) in the medias you consume?
5. Do you think certain people are stereotyped in the media? Who? How? Are positive stereotypes okay?
6. What are some of your favorite **popular culture\*** artifacts? (\*Popular culture includes Barbie dolls, fashion fads, gossip about stars, the mall, video games, TV sitcoms, movies and souvenirs from rock concerts (and so much more). “In the simplest terms, popular culture is best thought of as mainstream culture- the arts, artifacts, entertainment, fads, and beliefs and values shared by large segments of the society.” –The Popular Culture Reader, 1983)
7. Brainstorm a list of images that represent Canadian popular culture. Include Canadian TV and radio programs, celebrities, sports figures, historical figures, literature, and even items sold in souvenir shops. Can you spot any Canadian stereotypes? If so, how accurately do these stereotypes represent Canada?