Analyzing Canada's Foreign Policy

1. Review Canada's foreign policy as presented on Foreign Affairs Canada's website. Take notes on the major aspects of Canada's foreign policy. What are your reactions to these fundamental components of Canada's foreign policy?

One can use a continuum to analyse the goals of a person or a country's foreign policy – as shown below:

Self-interest Altruism

Self-interest - Selfish or excessive regard for one's personal advantage or interest.
Altruism - Unselfish concern for the welfare of others; selflessness.

Think about how it applies to you as an individual (e.g. performing community service, giving money to charity, helping older relatives).

2. Where would you place yourself on this continuum?

Think about the goals of Canada's foreign policy as presented in class and the fundamental components of Canada's foreign policy as viewed on Foreign Affairs Canada's website.

3. Where would you place Canadian foreign policy on this continuum?

There are many examples around the world where governments profess altruism when actually a great deal of self-interest is (also) at work.

4. In small groups, you will be given a particular way to analyze Canadian foreign policy, and will be applying these theories to various situations. Try to explain clearly to the rest of the class how a person would see each of these situations from the perspective of the theory you analyzed.

5. Which of the theories is the most convincing to you personally? Without discussing it with your classmates, write on a half sheet of paper which theory you find the most convincing, including at least one solid reason and one piece of evidence. The half sheets will then be posted in respective columns on the board so that everyone can see at a glance the general range of opinion within the class.