CLB4A – Tommy Douglas SKILL USING– Canadian Hero (Comprehending Information)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Tommy Douglas improved the well-being of all Canadians. Today, many people are still grateful for his contribution and consider him to be a Canadian hero.

Tommy Douglas was born in Scotland and, at an early age, immigrated to Canada with his parents. Tommy was just 10 years old when something happened to him that would change his life. He was in hospital again because he had a bone infection in his knee. Previously, he had had several operations to help him, but the operations were not successful. In the hospital, two different surgeons approached his parents to talk about his condition. This is what the surgeon said, "Hello, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas. You don't know me, but I'm a visiting surgeon here at the hospital. I have an offer for you that I hope you will accept. I'd like to operate on Tommy for free if you allow my students to attend the operation."

Of course, Tommy Douglas' parents accepted this surgeon's offer and his leg and life were saved. For the rest of his life, he was inspired by what the surgeon had done for him. He felt that ordinary Canadians should have the benefit of free health care. He became a Member of the Canadian Parliament in 1935 and spent his whole political life fighting for his cherished dream. As an MP from Saskatchewan, he worked hard to establish his dream of universal health care in this country. Tommy Douglas also fought for the issue of human rights. He considered the rights of the ordinary individual to be more important than monetary profits, and he never stopped fighting for those beliefs. As a result of his efforts, Canadians today receive old age pensions, social welfare, mother's allowance and universal Medicare.

But free health care was the number one issue for Mr. Douglas. In parliament, he devoted his life to arguing that every Canadian should have equal and free access to vital basic healthcare. Doctors held a strike to protest his ideas and the government in power resisted them as well. Eventually, in the 1960's, Douglas convinced the government that his health care plan was worthwhile. Finally, in 1964, free health care was available across Canada and Tommy Douglas became known as the 'father of Medicare.' Today, because of him, all Canadians still continue to receive free health care. Tommy Douglas was awarded Canada's highest honor, the Order of Canada, for his remarkable

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contribution to the well-being of all Canadians. In 2004, Canadians voted and decided that Tommy Douglas was Canada's greatest hero.

Questions:

1. Tommy Douglas immigrated to Canada from what country?

_____

2. Where did Tommy Douglas have an infection?

a. in his knee

b. in his arm

c. in his foot

3. The first surgeon suggested amputating (cutting off) Tommy's leg because his parents didn't have enough money to pay for a specialist to see him.

a. True

b. False

4. The surgeon said he would operate for free if ...

a. his students could attend the operation

b. Tommy would fight for universal health care

5. When did Tommy Douglas become a Member of Parliament (MP)?

_____

6. Tommy Douglas was an MP for what province? _____

7. When did free health care become available in Canada?

_____

8. What do you think about Mr. Douglas? _____

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