**ON THESE PAGES, please provide notation that shows evidence of your thinking, questioning and connecting WHILE you read (text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world), along with your best attempts at figuring out unknown words in context. Then, complete the Food for Thought section at the end.**

**Why the Youth Vote Is Going Viral**

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By Brigette DePape The Blog: *huffingtonpost.ca*

Four years ago, I held up a sign in Parliament that said "Stop Harper." On that day, I felt hopeless, scared and alone.

Today, I feel a sense of hope.

Let's start with the [71 per cent spike](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/more-than-36-million-voters-cast-ballots-at-advance-polls/article26793342/) in advance voter turnout. Add to that the [70,000 students who voted](http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-election-2015-voting-students-1.3263621) at campus polling stations and friendship centres. And [studies show](https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/research-backed-ways-get-out-vote) that if people know others are voting, they are more likely to vote too.

And that was just the beginning.

I was at Simon Fraser University on Friday during the convocation ceremony. A man in cap and gown held a sign saying "Vote for Change" and another young woman crossed the stage with a "Stop Harper" sign.

Mrs. Universe Ashley Callingbull from the Cree Nation has called [on people to vote out Harper](http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/09/01/mrs-universe-calls-for-first-nations-to-vote-out-harper.html) and for action for missing and murdered Indigenous women, and her call is being answered. Young people are at the front lines of organizing [Indigenous Rock the Vote](http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/rock-the-vote-first-nations-1.3266798) events, from voter ID clinics in Winnipeg to round-dances at the SkyTrain station in Vancouver.

My generation has been accused of being glued to our devices, but we are also using them to bring about change. Inspired by [Rick Mercer's rant,](http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/election-canada-mercer-1.3266244) 140,000 people, including me, have changed our profile pictures to "I will vote on October 19th." My Facebook newsfeed is full of photos of friends proudly stating they've already voted.

I laughed when a friend said "I voted, but didn't take a selfie. Does it still count?"

For nine years, we have lived under a Harper government -- the only government most of my generation has ever known. During this time, our leaders have ignored youth unemployment, climate change, and student debt.

I almost didn't vote in the last election because I figured it wouldn't make a difference.

I feel entirely different this time around. I'm encouraged to know that [80 per cent of young people think a change in government](http://abacusdata.ca/canadian-politics-a-generational-divide/) would be a good idea. I voted in advance polls with a good friend and it felt awesome!

The Conservatives have the money. But we have the numbers. Do you know how many people voted Conservative last time? 5.7 million. Do you know how many eligible voters age 18-30 there are? 5.8 million. It's also encouraging to know that my generation is more likely to vote progressively.

That's why the government passed the Unfair Elections Act to make it more difficult for us to vote. When someone tries to take something from us, however, we want it even more.

In the last few weeks, I've seen students across the country "[Storm the Dorm](http://www.canadianprogressiveworld.com/2015/09/09/brigette-depape-students-storm-the-dorm-to-rock-the-oct-19-vote/)" in residences to get out the vote, beginning on October 5th to promote the first day of campus polling. Students will storm the dorm once again on the big day.

Perhaps most meaningful to me is what happened when I went home to Winnipeg. My cousin, who is 18, pledged to vote for change, breaking the habit of many generations of voting Conservative.

To all those who said "the youth vote is dead" -- I believe that our generation will prove you wrong.

Brigette DePape is the Youth Vote campaigner for the Council of Canadians.

**Food for thought:**

1. **How would you describe the voice and/or tone of this piece? Is it a style that appeals to you? Explain clearly why or why not. (Analyzing)**
2. **If you could vote in this election (assuming you’re not 18 yet), for which party would you vote? Why? (Evaluating)**