
GRADE 8: HISTORY – THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CANADA: USING COINS TO TEACH HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

ABSTRACT:

In the Grade 8 History strand, students will explore the concept of historical significance through the analysis of coins and bank notes as a medium for commemorating famous Canadians. The historical inquiry process will be used to engage students in the study of a famous Canadian of their choice from the early 1900s. Students will apply the three categories of historical significance (prominence, consequence, and revealing), as developed by the Critically Thinking Consortium, to write a short report about their subject; they will then develop criteria for an effective coin or bank note design, and create their own commemorative currency.

Language Literacy Focus: Writing, Media Literacy

SOCIAL STUDIES STRAND / RELEVANT GUIDING QUESTION(S):

- What are some ways in which different people respond to challenges and create change?
- What role has diversity played in the development of Canada?
- How do the conventions and techniques of coin and bank note design create meaning? ?

LEARNING GOALS

In History, students will:

LG1 determine the importance of Canadians from 1890 to 1914, using credible primary and secondary sources as evidence (**historical significance**)

LG2 explain how various people help us understand the past and present (**historical significance**)

LG3 assess the impact of people in the past and on the present (**historical significance**)

LG4 evaluate how the importance of people may shift for various people and over time (**historical significance**)

In Language Arts (Writing), students will:

LG5 gather information from a variety of sources to support their ideas.

LG6 group main ideas into units to become paragraphs in a report.

In Language Arts (Media Literacy), students will:

LG7 explain how the conventions and techniques of coins and bank notes are used to create meaning.

LG8 create a coin or bank note, using appropriate conventions and techniques, and reflect on and identify their strengths as media creators.

Prior Knowledge and Concepts

- It would help for students to be familiar with the historical inquiry process
- Background knowledge of the history of Canada from 1890 to 1914 would be an asset
- It would also help to familiarize students with the historical significance categories (mentioned below), using a subject more familiar to students, before having them apply the categories to subjects from 1890 to 1914

A. Instructional Strategy: Demonstration/Class Discussion

1. Show students a few pictures of coins and bank notes that commemorate the work and life of an important Canadian, for example, Alexander Graham Bell. (See resources for a link). (The Canadian Mint issued a 14 karat gold coin in 1997, and the Royal Bank of Scotland made a 1 pound note in the same year.)

Ask students what they know about Alexander Graham Bell, and why people would create a coin to commemorate him.

2. Have students work in groups of 4 or 5. Distribute several adhesive notes to each group, and ask students to record criteria for effective coins or bank notes. Then have each group choose 5 or 6 of the most important criteria.

3. Ask one student from each group to present their criteria to the class, and have them add their criteria to a poster or chart. Invite students to cluster the criteria so that they form 5 or 6 groups or 'categories'. Circle the groups and have the students choose a name for each category. Common suggestions might include: coin/bank note information, significant person details, currency/value, anti-counterfeit techniques/authenticity, and/or appearance/design.

Assessment Suggestions: Circulate and discuss criteria with groups to ensure a variety of criteria will be presented. Also talk students through the thinking process necessary to identify where each criterion should go on the class poster so that they form natural clusters and help with making the categories. (LG 7)

B. Student Activities: Historical Inquiry/Gallery Walk

1. Explain to students that they will conduct research on a historically significant Canadian from 1890-1914. It may be helpful to provide them with a list of possibilities (see **BLM 1**). Before having students engage in their research, explain to students the three categories of historical significance: prominence, consequence, and revealing (as shown on **BLM 2**). Their report must include details on each category of significance. Set success criteria with students to inform assessment. (Note: it might be helpful to teach the concept of historical significance prior to this lesson by allowing students, in groups, to choose a person from any time in history that they are familiar with, and then having them record details about that person's significance using the three categories.) (**Formulate questions**)

Assessment Suggestions: Conference with students to ensure understanding of the three categories. Begin recording feedback in the right-hand column of **BLM 2**. (**LG 1,2,3,4**)

2. Allow students time to research their historically significant Canadian, using **BLM 2**. Circulate and conference regularly with students. As students research their significant Canadian, have them keep a list of other Canadians they come across or think of who have not made it onto bank notes. Ask them to think about whose perspective is represented and whose is not. Ask students what this tells us about the values of Canada. (**Gather and Organize; Interpret and Analyze; Evaluate and Draw Conclusions**)

Assessment Suggestions: Conference with students, ensuring they are collecting pertinent information and record feedback in the right-hand column of **BLM 2**. (**LG 5,6**)

3. Students are to create a design for a coin or a bank note commemorating their historically significant Canadian. They must also summarize their findings on **BLM 2** in three paragraphs including information on prominence, consequence, and revealing. Allow students time to provide each other with comments and suggestions on the top portion of **BLM 3**. (**Communicate**)

Assessment Suggestions: Monitor students, and ensure that they get feedback from each other about their coins or bank notes. (**LG 8**)

4. Post the bank notes on the walls of the classroom or hallway. Have students take turns standing beside their 'design proposal' and presenting their coin/bank note to the class. (**Communicate**)

Assessment Suggestions: Commemorative Coin/Bank Note Rubric (on **BLM 3**)

A note about assessment: The achievement chart on pages 32 and 33 of the Ontario Curriculum Social Studies document and the achievement chart on pages 20 and 21 of the Ontario Language curriculum will prove helpful when assessing the various components of these activities.

EXTENSION

Students could discuss in their groups which Canadian studied is the most historically significant. The 'group' winners could then be presented to the whole class, and a class vote be taken to determine the most significant Canadian (from that time period).

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

History: Canada, 1890-1914: A Changing society

Application: B1

Inquiry: B2

Understanding of Historical Context: B3

Language Arts:

Oral: 2

Reading: 1

Writing: 1, 2

Media Literacy: 2, 3, 4

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

History:

Application: B1.1, B1.2, B1.3

Inquiry: B2.1, B2.2, B2.4, B2.5, B2.6

Understanding Context: B3.1, B3.5

Language:



Oral Communication: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7
Reading: 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.9
Writing: 1.3, 1.5, 2.1

OTHER RESOURCES

Alexander Graham Bell coin and bank note:

<http://www.ewh.ieee.org/reg/7/diglib/library/bell/bell.htm>

http://weightoncoin.co.uk/index.php?main_page=popup_image&pID=290&zenid=25946c4d3971bf7d4fa03d9517d21f33

Other images of the same coin/bank note may be found on the Canadian Mint and Bank of Canada archives at:

www.mint.ca

<http://www.currencymuseum.ca/>

Teacher resources for historical thinking and inquiry-based learning include:

Mike Bowman, et. al. (2008), *Exemplars in Historical Thinking: 20th Century Canada* (The Critical Thinking Consortium).

Mike Denos and Roland Case (2006), *Teaching about Historical Thinking* (The Critical Thinking Consortium).

Peter Seixas and Tom Morton (2013), *The Big Six: Historical Thinking Concepts* (Nelson).

Jennifer Watt and Jill Colyer (2014), *IQ: A Practical Guide to Inquiry-Based Learning* (Oxford)