

Historica Canada Education Portal

Intolerance: A Lesson Plan

Overview

This lesson explores intolerance in historic and contemporary Canada through primary and secondary source analysis. It aims to foster citizenship and education through the production of a fictional Public Service Announcement and/or journal entry.

Aims

- Inquire into examples of intolerance in Canadian societies and to anticipate future examples of intolerance
- Develop skills in document analysis and critical thinking
- Foster citizenship and an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of Canadian and global citizens

Background

This lesson plan can be adapted to any period in Canadian history depending on the case study used.

Activities

Procedures:

Introduction

Select some quotations or images that introduce the topic of injustice or intolerance in Canada (eg. Trudeau's just society, Agnes MacPhail and women's rights, A "White's Only" sign).

Discuss as a class the meaning of these statements or images.

Place reproductions of the source material around the classroom and have students select one of the sources.

Take a few minutes to evaluate the source. Ask yourself "What is happening here?" The aim here is not to have the students draw out correct conclusions but to speculate and introduce source analysis.

Have the students share their speculations. As a group discuss how they came to their conclusions and share the historical context of the source.

Development and Method

Step One: Research

Organize the students into partners or groups and provide them with primary source documents relevant to examples of intolerance in Canadian history.

Some examples could include:

- Chinese Canadian experience (head tax receipt, Right to vote, 1907

Anti-Asiatic riots)

- Jewish Canadian experience (SS St. Louis, Fascism and anti-Semitism in Canada, Mackenzie-King Diary entry, Correspondence of Cairine Wilson)
- Wartime Internment (Ukrainian, German, Italian, Japanese)
- Aboriginal Experience (Right to vote, Indian Act, Residential Schools, Treaty rights, Reserves, Cut-off Lands)
- Women (Right to Vote, Persons Case, Equality, Abuse and assault, Education)
- Immigrant experience (Komagata Maru, African and African-American Migration, Exclusion Acts, Eastern European.....)
- Francophone experience in Canada (Quebec, Acadians, Franco-Manitobans, Rebellion and Resistance)
- Religious differences in Canada (Muslim, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Atheist...)

Step Two: Analysis

Using the [attached worksheet](#), have the groups investigate and analyze their source.

As a group or class discuss how individuals at the time might have recognized the seeds of intolerance.

Step Three: Reflection

Have the individual groups synthesize their findings in the form of an interview/journal response (written, audio or video). Responses should include an emotional response to the source material.

Suggested questions for the interview/journal entries can include:

- Knowledge Level – In this source I see or read that...
- Application/Skills Level – I think this event is important because....
- Integration Level – This was a turning point because it ... After studying this topic I felt...

Step Four: Checklist

Create a class checklist identifying the seeds of intolerance common to the different examples students examined.

Step Five: The Assignment

Arrange students back into their pairs or groups. As a summative assignment have the groups create their own Public Service Announcement (poster, audio, video) using the checklist as a guideline that can be adapted. The PSA should focus on the warning signs of intolerance specific to their original source material but it should also be general in nature. Share the PSA's with the class and/or school

Extension:

Create a more in depth journal entry using the [attached guideline](#).

Required Materials:

- Poster making materials
- Video camera
- Audio recording device
- [Research dossier prepared by the teacher](#)

Resources

[Open Hearts/Closed Doors Virtual Museum](#)

[The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

[Africville - CBC Archives](#)

[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)

[UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

[Pier 21 Museum of Immigration](#)

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)