Historica Canada Education Portal

Interview with a Historical Figure from New France

Overview

This lesson will guide students as they learn about a significant number of concepts and facts related to New France through the study of an historical figure.

Aims

This lesson is based on an interview format, with open-ended questions and detailed, full-sentence answers, a portrait of the person, a drawn geographical map, and a timeline (indicating important dates in the person's life and important dates in the corresponding history of the country).

Background

All too often, research projects undertaken by students consist of bits of information gleaned from here and there with no logical links to each other. As a result, students do not truly understand or assimilate the material, some of which has even occasionally been copied word for word from well-known (or obscure) works - without indicating the source,

of course! Submitting work in the form of an interview requires students to read actively and assimilate, at the very least, enough information to be able to formulate questions that correspond to the material gathered.

Activities

Time Allowance: about 5 hours

Procedures:

Break students into groups of two, and assign each group a historical figure from New France. Each two-student team reads at least two works, whether partially or entirely. The project has two parts: a written part (Part 1), and an oral presentation to the rest of the class (Part 2).

Part 1

From the works read, choose passages providing insight into the life of the individual and that individual's role in our history;

Formulate questions that correspond to the material gathered and adapt these passages to the format;

Choose an illustration of the person;

Draw a map outlining the voyages, sojourns, treks, or land owned by the person;

Create a timeline indicating three key dates from the life of the person and five dates from the history of the country (it does not matter which

events are chosen as long as the student places the individual's dates in the context of other important events in Canadian history).

Part 2

Each student is given a chart indicating the various individuals who will be introduced in a talk-show type "discussion" hosted by the instructor. The instructor may group the individuals in various ways, such as by similarities in their lives or by time period;

Only one spokesperson from each group takes part in the talk show;

It is important to highlight key information about the individuals, such as the years in which they lived, their activities, and their role in history, and to guide the class in recognizing the relationships between the individuals and their times, in order to identify the characteristics of the various periods.

Evaluation:

One mark is awarded for the written work.

Optional: a second mark may be awarded for the content of the oral presentation.

Resources

The Canadian Encyclopedia

New France (on The Canadian Encyclopedia)