Historica Canada Education Portal

Forgotten Soldiers

Overview

Aboriginal people sacrificed much during the two World Wars, both at home and in Europe, all the while they weren't considered "people" in the eyes of Canadian law. Students will explore the issues facing Aboriginal people during the Great War and the Second World War and collaborate to create a PowerPoint or PhotoStory presentation for the school Remembrance Day Assembly.

Aims

It is expected that the student will:

- apply critical thinking (including questioning, comparing, summarizing, drawing conclusions, hypothesizing, and defending a position) to make reasoned judgments about a range of issues, situations, and topics
- demonstrate effective research skills, including accessing information, assessing information, collecting data, evaluating data, organizing information, presenting information, citing sources
- demonstrate skills and attitudes of active citizenship, including ethical behaviour, open-mindedness, respect for diversity, and collaboration
- describe challenges during the twentieth century that led to the emergence of contemporary Aboriginal leadership, including reference to Aboriginal veterans

Activities

Time Allowance: At least 5 classes

Procedures:

1. Exploring the Issues: The overarching question for this lesson is *"To what extent were Aboriginal people involved in the two World Wars?"* Brainstorm possible inquiry questions that fit into this overarching question as a class. Students may come up with questions such as:

-What did Aboriginal soldiers do in the wars?
-Were Aboriginal soldiers treated the same as non-Aboriginal soldiers?
-How did Aboriginal people enlist?
-Were there any policies that forbade Aboriginals from enlisting?
-What happened on the reserves at home during the wars?
-Were there any famous Aboriginal soldiers? Who were they?
-Were Aboriginal women involved in either war? Did they go overseas?
-What happened to the Aboriginal soldiers when they came back from war?
-What's happening now with Aboriginal veterans?

2. Research: Students will work in pairs or individually, researching an inquiry question they are interested in. Research can include, but should not be limited to the internet. Students should be encouraged to follow the historical thinking concepts:

-establish historical significance
-find and use primary source evidence

-identify continuity and change
-analyse cause and consequence
-take historical perspectives
-understand moral dimensions of history

3. Presentation: Students will work together to combine their research into a PowerPoint or PhotoStory presentation for the school Remembrance Assembly. Each inquiry question will be addressed in one or two slides. The class will work together to make sure the slides flow well together and have a soundtrack appropriate for the slide show.

4. What Next? Extensions:

- Have an elder come to class to teach students how to make a cedar rose. Create a cedar wreath as a class to lay at the cenotaph on Remembrance Day. Ensure permission is obtained and protocols have been followed.
- Invite an Aboriginal veteran to visit the class to share their stories
- Have students research local Aboriginal soldiers and create a soldier biography.
- Host a Candlelight Tribute Ceremony in memory of the Aboriginal soldiers

Required Materials:

Computer lab with internet access, PowerPoint, Photostory Projector, Laptop, and large screen for Assembly presentation

Resources

Boyden, Joseph. Three Day Road. Penguin Group Canada, 2006. (This book should only be used with older students, Grade 11-12)

Sheffield, Scott. Red Man's on the Warpath: Image of the Indian and the Second World War. Ubc Press, 2004.

Forgotten Warriors (Video). National Film Board of Canada (MGR), 1996. 51 min.

Fallen Hero: the Tommy Prince Story (Video). Filmwest Associates Distribution Ltd, 1998. 44 min.

Veteran Affairs Canada, Indigenous Soldiers: Foreign Battlefields

The Canadian Encyclopedia