

Historica Canada Education Portal

To Walk a Mile in Your Shoes

Overview

The aim of this lesson plan is to develop the concept of citizenship and immigration by requiring students to explore, reflect, and empathize with the situations and feelings that new immigrants experience. Students will be required to produce a short dramatization to demonstrate this.

Students will explore what it would feel like to be an immigrant coming into Canada. They will explore different real life situations and empathize with the frustrations, excitement, and realities of moving to a new country. To demonstrate these issues, students will work in groups to develop dramatizations that clearly illustrate the feelings of new immigrants as well as the feelings of Canadian citizens.

Aims

1. Citizenship, power, governance: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the origins, functions and sources of power, authority and governance.

2. Culture and diversity Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of culture, diversity and world-view, recognizing similarities and differences reflected in various personal, cultural, racial and ethnic perspectives.

3. Interdependence: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interdependent relationships among individuals, societies and the environment – locally, nationally, and globally- and the implications for a sustainable future.

4. People, Place and Environment: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interactions among people, places and the environment.

5. Time, Continuity, and Change: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the past and how it affects the present and the future.

Specific skills/Objectives:

In this lesson students will demonstrate:

- Collaboration
- Co-operative group work
- Participation in full project
- Process writing
- Dramatization/representing

Activities

Procedures:

Introduction:

- To introduce this activity the teacher will read to the class a selection of children's literature about immigration such as *The Lotus Seed*. (This will be the trigger.)

- After some discussion of the issue, students will be given instructions for completing the activity.

Development and Method:

- The teacher will provide students with a scenario and instructions to be used to guide the students in the completion of their project.
- Topic: Students will be given the topic, “To Walk a Mile in Your Shoes” (Citizenship for new Canadians/Immigrants)
- Task: Your project is to present a dramatization of a situation that a new Canadian might find himself/herself in. Your task is to imagine that you are an immigrant who has just arrived in Canada. You must place yourself in an activity that you would do everyday BUT you are a newly arrived immigrant. How would you feel? What would you do? The other members of your group will be Canadian citizens. How would they act? React? How would/should they treat this person? How could the way a Canadian treats a new immigrant impact their views of what it means to be a true Canadian citizen?
- Teacher will model an example as follows:

Dang is eleven years old. He has just arrived in Canada from the Sudan. He has lived in a refugee camp for most of his life and has never had the opportunity to attend school. This is his first day at “Newfoundland Academy”. When he arrives in this large brick building with kids, books, desks, etc. imagine how he would feel. Model this role play to demonstrate how Dang would function in this situation. Include other students to help portray his frustrations and their empathy.

- **Work Approach:** Divide the students into groups of three to four. Groups will brainstorm different scenarios that might be experienced by new immigrants. They will also research in the computer lab stories about immigration and immigrant experiences. From their brainstorming list and their research the group will choose a scenario to develop into a written script and a dramatization. After completing and editing their script students will gather props and organize costumes. They will be provided class time for revision and practice and preparation for their presentations. The final lesson will be the actual presentations of their dramatizations. A follow up activity to the presentations will be class discussions as well as question and answer period relating to citizenship and immigration.

Timeline/Deadline:

Day 1: -introduction to lesson -group brainstorming and planning

Day 2: -research and pre-writing

Day 3: -writing script -plan props and costumes

Day 4: -practice and revision

Day 5: -group presentation -class discussion

Resources

Required Materials:

Students will need the following materials (or equivalent) for this project:

- Cech, John. (1991) *My Grandmother's Journey*. Bradbury Press: New York.
- Garland, Sherry. (1993) *The Lotus Seed*. Harcourt Brace

Jovanovich Publishers: New York.

- Social Studies or History Textbook
- Current newspaper and magazine articles
- Props and costumes that students will gather themselves
- Computer lab
- [Citizenship and Immigration Website](#)
- [The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)
- [Passages Canada](#)