

Historica Canada Education Portal

Tell me a story: Childhood Memories of the Second World War

Overview

Students will interview relatives for their childhood memories of the Second World War. The relatives should have been near the ages of the students during the War. After the interview, students will provide a first person written account in postcard format with a prepared charcoal drawing or an archival photograph to represent the memoire. The students will learn interview techniques, creating a postcard, an art medium, and importantly family lore.

Aims

To learn interview techniques, how to create a computer generated postcard, and work with the charcoal art medium.

Activities

Procedures:

Explore the background history of Canada's role in the Second World War.

Have a discussion on what life was like for their relatives during the war. Use wartime songs, pictures, and stories.

Teach and/or review Questioning Techniques. Practice with their peers using their lifetime or sports events as subject-matter to practice the technique.

Teach and/or review interview techniques. Discuss whether one could use video, audio recording, paper and pencil to make a record of the interview. Talk to the students about how to make their subjects feel comfortable and alert them to sensitivities that may illicit poor memories for some relatives. Set the interview assignment due in approximately 3-4 days. This assignment works well over a long weekend.

Research the internet for archival photos to assist in presentation. Alert students to newspaper and book research possibilities for other photos.

Introduce the students to Creating Post Cards from the Past. Lead them through the instructions and give time for them to create postcards to share with their classmates and relatives.

Discuss voice and how they should pretend to be their relative and write in the first person for their story. Give computer time to type their story.

If available, teachers can bring in a Guest Artist to teach charcoal techniques and practice using them. They may even start their own drawing to accompany their postcard from the past with the artist being available to assist.

Scan in charcoal drawings or archival photo, if the student is not happy

with their representation. As scanning will take time, students could also learn and play traditional games that were played during the 1940s.

Resources

[The Second World War - The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

[The Second World War Timeline - The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

[Wartime Home Front - The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)