

Historica Canada Education Portal

Six-String Nation Guitar

Overview

Inspired by the Six String Nation Guitar, students will produce something (quilt, boat, sculpture) made up of significant historical materials in their locale. Students are to document their research and produce a visual documentary that tells the story of their product.

Aims

Students will use the following skills in this project

- Story-telling/creating a narrative
- Research skills
- Critical judgment
- Creativity
- Synthesis
- Cooperation
- Interviewing
- Film-Production

Background

CBC radio host Jowi Taylor and master guitar craftsman Luthier George Rizsanyi realized a decade old dream to build a six string “nation” guitar. A special guitar built from a patchwork of Canadian history, bits and pieces from historic sites, it tells a unique story of Canada. They collected wood, bone and metal, from every corner of the country. Some examples of materials used are wood from Gretzky’s hockey stick, Trudeau’s paddle, and the Golden Spruce, an important spiritual tree for the Haida Gwaii of B.C.

Activities

Procedures:

Trigger: Students will be made aware of the Six String Nation Guitar project through press clippings, video clips, and a documentary.

Introductory Activity: Students will be divided up and asked to research some of the materials used in the making of the guitar. Essentially, they will be answering the question: Why was this piece significant enough to be included in the production of the guitar? Students will give a brief presentation of the importance of their assigned topic.

Main Activity: In groups, students will engage in a lengthy project where they will decide on something to produce and seek out the materials from their locale. The pieces used in their project must have historical significance in their community. Students will document this project by taping interviews, discoveries, and reflections in a documentary showing their journey to completion. The length for the activity will likely be a whole semester so it would be started at the beginning of the semester.

Step One: Students could be grouped (3-4 per group) according to interest. It is up to the teacher to make sure groups are balanced and everyone is included. Some may be interested in doing a quilt, while others a sculpture. You can choose whatever artistic format you have an interest in.

Step Two: Students are to brainstorm what type of product they want to produce and what historical elements they could include in the production.

Step Three: At this point it would be good to expose students to local history books, local museums, and local historical experts.

Step Four: Students seek out pieces for their product and research the historical significance of each.

Step Five: Students produce a visual presentation of their project (documentary or power point) .

Step Six: Present the final product and visual presentation.

Required Materials:

- digital video camera or digital camera
- access to Windows Movie Maker, Power Point or Slideshow
- materials for product (to be found by students) - materials to assemble product (dependent on choice of project)
- articles related to Guitar
- documentary “The Canadian Guitar”

Resources

[The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

[The Six String Nation Guitar](#)