

## **Schooling Then and Now**

**Concept(s)** Continuity and Change, Primary Source Evidence, Ethical Dimensions of History

**Prepared for Grade(s)** 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

**Province** NB

**By** Alan Sears

**Time Period(s)** 1800-1900

**Time allotment** 3 x 60 minutes; if fewer documents are used or with older grades, this could be 2 x 60 mins.

### **Brief Description of the Task**

In this lesson students interpret primary source documents such as a floor plan, first person accounts, and school inspector's report to understand schooling in 19th century New Brunswick and compare it to schooling today. Particular attention is given to examination of the curriculum, discipline and classroom management, class composition, and teachers. At the conclusion of the series of lessons, students consider "In what ways is education in New Brunswick better or worse today than in the 19th Century?"

### **Objectives for Historical Thinking**

#### **Evidence**

1. Students will "read" a variety of primary sources, both traces and accounts, for information (evidence).
2. Students will assess the credibility and limitations of various types of primary sources (evidence).
3. Students will use the information gathered from primary sources to construct an account of schooling in 19th century New Brunswick (evidence).

#### **Continuity and Change**

4. Students will identify key elements of continuity and change between education in NB in the 19th century and contemporary times (continuity and change).

#### **Ethical Dimension**

5. Students will make judgements about the appropriateness of teacher treatment of students in the context of the 19th Century (ethical dimension).

#### **Required Knowledge & Skills**

This is designed to be a preliminary exploration of the use of evidence and does not require particular background.

## Detailed Instructions

1. Have students draw a floor plan of the first school they can remember attending or the school they currently attend.
2. Provide students with a copy of the drawing of a New Brunswick School circa 1870 (**ATT 1 Johnson school drawing**) and working in groups get them to fill out **ATT 6 student handout 1 Interpreting the Drawing**. As a class discuss work done on the handout.
3. Provide students with a copy of M.V. Johnson's reminiscence titled "School" (**ATT 2 First person account of school**) and working in groups have them work on the activities on **ATT 7 student handout 2 Intepreting a Written Document**. Note: Melissa V. Johnson attended school in Stanley NB circa 1870. The reminiscences used here were written for her grandchildren when she was in her 70s.
4. Ask students to brainstorm both the reasons why students are disciplined or punished in schools today as well as what form discipline and punishments take.
5. Have students read M.V. Johnson's account titled "The Master" (**ATT 3**) and list reasons for punishments/discipline in M.V. Johnson's school. Have students complete **ATT 7 student handout 2 Intepreting a Written Document** using this account.
6. Using **ATT 4 Report on Teacher Return** have the students complete another copy of **ATT 7** and discuss. Particularly focus on the difference between a personal remembrance and a government document.
7. Using **ATT 5 Instruction to Inspectors** have the students complete a copy of **ATT 7** and discuss. Focus on moving from an individual report on a single teacher to a compilation of reports from around the province.
8. With reference to all the evidence have students complete **ATT 8 Student Handout 3 Assessing Continuity and Change**.
9. Working alone or in groups students should construct an account of schooling in 19th Century NB and how it is similar to or different from education in NB today. The accounts should make reference to the sources to support points and give attention to such things as the curriculum, discipline and classroom management, class composition, and teachers. The accounts should also address the question, In what ways is education in NB better or worse today than in the 19th Century?