

Put Your Stamp on Canada: the Development of the Welfare State

Concept(s) Historical Significance

Prepared for Grade(s) 10, 11, 12

Province BC

By Janet Thompson

Time Period(s) 1900-present

Time allotment Time Allotment: (8 x 72 minute classes)

Brief Description of the Task

The time allotment could be easily shortened to 3 - 4 lessons.

In pairs or small groups, students construct a timeline of the historical development of one aspect of Canada's Welfare State. The suggested social programs for study include Family Allowance, Medicare, Employment Insurance and the Canada Pension Plan.

Students then write a letter to Canada Post advocating the adoption of an image that portrays a historically significant event in the development of one of Canada's social programs.

Objectives for Historical Thinking

Students will:

1. Use the significance criteria as listed below to explain their choice of the most historically significant event in the development of the welfare state.

a. Resulting in Change:

Profundity • The extent to which people's lives were affected by the event/development

Quantity • How many people's lives were affected by the event/development in the past.

Durability • How long people's lives were affected by the event/development.

b. Revealing • The event/development sheds light on enduring issues in history and contemporary life.

c. Connected to a larger narrative • The event/development is embedded in a larger, meaningful narrative.

Although significance is the main concept, students will also create a timeline of the development of the welfare state in Canada that would give an opportunity to explore change and continuity and causation.

Required Knowledge & Skills

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To complete this task, students will need to have:

- an understanding of the concept of historical significance
- understanding of Canadian history from WWI to 1970 Note: if this mini unit is used as an introduction to Canadian history, lesson # 3 may need to be extended.
- ability to take notes from a text (venn diagram, two column notes)
- ability to write a persuasive letter

Detailed Instructions

To meet the outcomes of the provincial curriculum, this lesson includes steps to link welfare measures to Canadian identity.

Pre-Lesson Homework

1. Ask students to research ways in which Canada is different from and similar to the United States (e.g., death penalty, gun control, health care, military, popular entertainment, civil rights and one topic of the students' choice). Student should also record bibliographic information on their sources. Students may wish to interview someone they know who has lived in or spent a good deal of time in both countries.
2. Students record their notes in a series of venn diagrams or graphic organizer(s) of their choice.

Lesson 1

1. In groups of four, students should present their research findings in a RoundRobin format. They should then combine their information into a single graphic organizer of their choice (for example, a series of venn diagrams) on poster paper.
2. Student groups will present their ideas to the class. Explore issues related to identity and if it arises, draw attention to any connection to social programs such as medicare.

Some questions to help guide the discussion: Are the information or conclusions accurate? How might you group these similarities and differences? By culture? values? economics? and the like. Why are there similarities and differences between Canada and the U.S.? How do these similarities and differences influence our personal lives? Has Canada become more or less similar to the U.S. in the past decade? In the past 100 years? What does it mean to be Canadian? What is the Canadian identity? Is it important to have a distinct Canadian identity?

3. Have students write an "exit slip," a response in which they give a personal definition of what it means to be Canadian. Collect these.

Lesson 2

1. Discuss some of the exit slips and the student opinions on the Canadian identity and what it means to be Canadian. Draw attention to those students who mention Canada's social programs (or its designation as a welfare state) as a part of the Canadian identity.

3. Elicit prior knowledge through a carousel brainstorming activity in small groups. Students should consider the following questions: What is a social program? Give examples of social programs. Describe one social program. Discuss and summarize.

4. Distribute **BLM 1 Handout Canada a Welfare State**. Review the terminology and ask students to complete the activity. Go over the answers.

Lesson 3

1. Outline the development of social programs in Canada. Teachers may choose to "frontload" this information using a mini lecture, textbook, film, and/or primary sources. Teachers may vary the length and depth of this component of the unit depending on their students' knowledge of Canadian history. See **BLM 7 Teacher Notes** that may be used as a planning aid. Distribute **BLM 2 Handout Canada: Rise and Decline of a Welfare State** for students to refer to throughout the unit.

2. Create heterogeneous student groups of no more than four. Groups then randomly draw one Canadian social program to research. Assign each student a list of readings on their social program. See **BLM 3 Handout Reading List**.

Note: This component of the unit may require a good deal of planning on the part of the teacher if the texts referred to in **BLM 3 Handout Reading List** are not available. The BC textbooks *Counterpoints* and *Canadian Issues* and articles from the *Canadian Encyclopedia* are used here. The texts do not contain specific sections or chapters on social programs; students will need to read a few pages in several chapters. (This may be problematic for weaker students who are less able to "read between the lines" to identify the historical trends that influenced the development of their assigned social program. Yes, this is the whole point of the unit!)

3. Each student will use the reading list to create a preliminary timeline of the development of their given social program using the two column note format. This task should be completed for homework.

Lessons 4 & 5

1. Student groups will share their research and then create a timeline on the development of their assigned social program on poster paper. Provide students with a copy of the **Rubric : Timeline of a Social Program**. Students should leave ample room for the addition of images that will be provided by the teacher. Remind students that the focus of this activity is to create an informative timeline and not a "pretty poster."

2. Once a group has completed its timeline, it will select images provided by the teacher to add to their timeline. It is important that students understand that they are not required to use ALL of the images; they are simply to include the images that they feel enhance the events already on their timeline. Students will make note of any event on their timeline for which a photo has not been provided. Teachers may wish to supply an appropriate image or ask the students to find (or draw) an image for lesson #5 and the completion of the timeline.

Note: Images specifically related to the development of Canadian social programs may be difficult to find. See Teacher Notes # 2: Photo List for a list of photos that may be used from the B.C. texts *Counterpoints* and *Canadian Issues*. Teachers may wish to conduct an internet search for other images, being mindful of copyright laws. If you want to let the students find their own images, you should check these carefully as students may find ones that are anachronistic.

Lesson 6

1. Students will present their timelines to their classmates using the jigsaw format.
2. Students will submit their timelines for assessment. Use **Rubric : Timeline of a Social Program**

Lesson 7

1. Individually or in pairs, students will decide which two events in the history of the development of their social program are the most historically significant. Encourage students to think about why the events are historically significant and important. Remind them to apply the criteria for historical significance. (Did it affect a great number of people? Did it cause things to change? Do we still talk about the effects today? Are there resulting issues we're still dealing with today? Does the topic tell us something important about the time?)
2. Students will complete **BLM 4 Handout Why is it Significant?** for the selected events.
3. If necessary, teachers will lead a class discussion on the students' decisions.
4. Students will decide which event in the history of the development of their social program is the most significant.

Lesson 8

1. Assign the letter writing task: Students will use the criteria of historical significance to argue that a particular event in the history of the development of one of Canada's social programs should be commemorated on a Canadian postage stamp. Distribute **BLM 5 Handout Letter to Canada Post**, **BLM 6 Handout Letter Format** and the **Rubric for Letter to Canada Post**. You may also want to use the examples of student work.
2. Students will work on the letter writing assignment.

Outcomes

Provincial Curricular Outcomes

This task also gives students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of Provincial Curricular Outcomes (British Columbia Social Studies 11):

Students will:

1. assess the development of Canadian social programs related to the welfare state
2. represent what it means to be Canadian with reference to distinctive Canadian programs and policies
3. apply critical thinking including summarizing, drawing conclusions, and defending a position and making reasoned judgments
4. demonstrate effective written and graphic communication skills
5. demonstrate collaboration skills