

Rebellions of 1837 - Exploring Cause and Consequence

Concept(s) Cause and Consequence

Exemplary example of Cause and Consequence

Prepared for Grade(s) 7

Province AB

Time Period(s) 1800-1900

Time allotment 5 x 50 minutes

Brief Description of the Task

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In this lesson, students work in small groups to explore the causes and consequences of the Rebellions of 1837. To do this, students use mock newspaper articles that are constructed to highlight the events leading up to the Rebellions, the events of the Rebellions, and their aftermath. Students are guided through this exploration through a series of self-directed activities that has them explore the central concepts related to causes and consequences. Students construct links between events to develop an understanding that significant historical events occur as a result of a complex interaction of seemingly unrelated actions.

Objectives

Historical Thinking Objectives:

1. Students should have an understanding of the historical thinking concepts of historical significance and cause and consequence.
2. Students will be able to distinguish causes from antecedent events and consequences from after the fact events in relation to the Rebellions of 1837.
3. Students will be able to determine and rank direct and indirect links to the causes of the Rebellions of 1837.

Required Knowledge & Skills

Students should have a basic understanding of the structure of the governments of Upper and Lower Canada. Specifically students should know that there was an elected legislature (only men with property could vote) along with appointed legislative and executive councils. The final decision in all political matters lay with the governor in Lower Canada and the lieutenant governor in Upper Canada. These councils were made up of businessmen or members of the clergy who had great influence.

It was not a government that can be considered responsible because the governor did not have to follow the wishes of the legislative assembly.

Detailed Instructions

Materials

- Handouts - mock newspaper articles (ATT 1); Rebellions of 1837 - Exploring Cause and Consequence (ATT 2)
- scissors
- glue sticks
- poster paper
- sticky notes (optional)

Steps

1. Divide students into groups of three and distribute both sets of handouts to each student (ATTs 1 and 2). Review the second paragraph of this document to set up the task. Explain that the newspaper articles are not real but are mock articles constructed to briefly highlight events that took place during this time period.

2. Give students time to cut out articles and place in chronological order. Students should read all of the articles once they are in order to develop a broad understanding of the events and the historical context (about 45 - 55 minutes).

3. Review the differences between cause, antecedent event, consequences and after the fact event. Page 37 - 38 in Teaching About Historical Thinking provides a good example using the events from the fairy tale Cinderella (see ATT 3).

The following steps are all part of the attached handout that students can work through in their groups.

4. Students should use their mock newspaper articles to develop and categorize the list of cause, antecedent event, consequences or after the fact event. This step is undertaken so that students begin to see that there is a historical context in which events take place (antecedents). Students should look for relationships between the events they list as causes (some events take place in Lower Canada, some events take place in Upper Canada).

5. Possible categorization:

Causes could include: 2, 5, 6, 15 (this is a cause of the Rebellion in Upper Canada), 21, 23, 25, 26, 27

Antecedent events could include: 1, 4, 11, 24, 25, 28, 29

Consequences could include: 10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 30

After the fact event could include: 12, 19, 22,

6. Students then try to organize the causes and antecedents thematically. Two themes are provided. Students should come up with several other themes that they think contributed to the Rebellions. Students should differentiate between themes related to Upper Canada and those that are related to Lower Canada.

7. To develop an understanding of the complex interaction of causes and antecedents each group will develop a web that diagrams the interaction of events that caused the Rebellions of 1837. Students should be encouraged to divide up events that occurred in Lower Canada and events that occur in Upper Canada. In addition, students should look for relationships between these events.

This web should be done in the handout and then could be put on a sheet of poster paper to be posted around the class to allow students to see how other groups interpreted the interaction. Possible themes around which to organize the diagram include problems with government, political favoritism, fear of US, growing violence, concerns of the Parti Patriote and the economic environment. Extension: give students sticky notes and have them post questions or comments on the posters. Each group must then respond to the questions.

8. Students examine the articles to determine what roles various individuals played in the Rebellions. These individuals are categorized as supporters of the government and rebels. Students should be encouraged to see that the actions of the individuals had both intended and unintended consequences. The purpose of this section is to develop an understanding of human agency.

9. Students will analyze the antecedent events to determine the economic and political conditions of the era to develop a deeper understanding of the historical context of the Rebellions.

10. To examine consequences, students will use the articles to develop a list of possible consequences that they can directly link to the Rebellions of 1837 and after the fact events that they can indirectly link to the Rebellions of 1837. Two themes of possible direct consequences are punishments and political outcomes. Note: As the focus of this activity is about the political consequences students should focus on the political consequences of the Rebellions.

11. Students will then rank the impact on Canada of each event that resulted from the Rebellions using a scale from -5 (very negative impact) to + 5 (very positive impact). Students must explain their rankings. For instance, does it mainly impact a family, the politics of the country, Canadian identity or the type of government Canada has.

12. To conclude the investigation, students develop an essay in which they are asked to suppose that several events leading to the Rebellions did not occur. Students are asked to identify the event(s) that did not occur and specify the short and long term consequences of this change on Canada. They should consider how the new series of events might impact Canadian identity, government structure, active citizenship, desire for independence from Britain, the economy or various other aspects of Canada in the past or present.

Outcomes

Historical Thinking Skills:

- develop an understanding of cause, antecedent event, consequence and after the fact event.

- differentiate cause, antecedent event, consequence and after the fact event related to the Rebellions of 1837.
- determine and rank direct and indirect links to the causes of the Rebellions of 1837.
- determine and rank direct and indirect consequences of the Rebellions of 1837.

Alberta Program of Studies

- analyze the Rebellions of 1837, placing people and events in a context of time and place
- assess, critically, how political, economic and military events contributed to the
- foundations of Canada (ABED Specific Knowledge and Understanding Outcome 7.1.6)
- construct an understanding about how the Act of Union of 1840 was an attempt to resolve the issues raised by the 1837 and 1838 Rebellions in Lower Canada and Upper Canada. (ABED Specific Knowledge and Understanding Outcome 7.1.6.8)