

The Historical Significance of General Sir Isaac Brock: Part I

by Elizabeth Freeman-Shaw

Suggested grade level: Intermediate/Senior

Suggested time: 1 class period

Brief Description of the Task

In this lesson students will explore how historical significance is established through a topical activity on 2012 Olympians.

Historical Thinking Concepts

- Historical Significance

Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- participate in an activity that allows them to understand the concept of **historical significance**

Materials

Each student will need copies of Worksheets 1 and 2 (Appendices 1 and 2).

Prior Knowledge

It would be an asset for students to be familiar with:

1. The concept of **historical significance** (See The Historical Thinking Project website, <http://www.historicalthinking.ca/concept/historical-significance>)

Assessment

Students may be evaluated based on the work completed with:

- Worksheet 1: Who will be most remembered?
- Worksheet 2: Placemat collaboration

Detailed Lesson Plan

Focus Questions: What determines who is remembered? (Who is historically significant?)

Part 1: Minds On - Establishing Historical Significance

1. In order to build familiarity with the concept of historical significance (or who is more remembered) the teacher should begin with an activity with a familiar context. In this case, the “minds on” activity that has been selected deals with the London 2012 Olympics.
2. Using a variety of strategies, the teacher should develop a list of who might be considered significant Olympians from the 2012 Games.
3. Using a placemat strategy (Appendix 1), students should first individually brainstorm their favourite Olympians. Once they have done this, as a group they must go through their individual lists and narrow their choices to establish a common list of 5. While doing so, have the students record the criteria they used to make this selection.

As a whole class, each group should share their Top 5 list and the criteria they used to make their selections. The teacher should record the criteria for students to refer to as the lesson progresses.

Keep in mind that when the students move on to the historical part of the lesson they will need to be guided to a set of criteria to determine **historical significance**. Criteria established by The Historical Thinking Project state that an event or person had historical significance if:

- a) Change was a Result
(Whether the event or individual had deep consequences for many people; affected many people; and whether the consequences of this lasted for a long period of time.)
- b) The Event or Person’s impact is Revealing
(Sheds some light on an aspect of the past; helps us understand the past in a new way.)

4. Either using the student generated list, or a preselected teacher generated list, students should view a Youtube clip or some other streaming video on each of the athletes and/or read short news articles that will provide a deeper background on each individual. Remind them that they are trying to determine the significance of these individual Olympians.

5. Have students individually, or in pairs, complete Worksheet 2: 2012 Olympians: Who will be most remembered? (Appendix 2).

6. Using this (and the placemat discussion) build on the students understanding of the various reasons why an individual might be considered significant.

Some examples include:

- Deep consequences of the individual's performance
- He or she affected many people (e.g., the Canadian response to the success of the women's soccer team)
- Lasting consequences (based on speculation at this point)
- How the person is revealing (e.g., first Paralympic runner to compete in Olympic games)

7. The teacher may collect Worksheet 1 for assessment to determine readiness to transition to the activity on Brock.

Teacher References

Sample articles on some significant London Olympians for background, if required.

Gabby Douglas, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/08/07/opinion/hilliard-gabby-douglas/index.html>

Oscar Pistorious,

<http://www2.journalnow.com/sports/2012/aug/05/wssport07-pistorius-changes-his-own-legacy-ar-2493119/>

Usain Bolt,

http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2012/olympics/2012/writers/tim_la_yden/08/05/usain-bolt-wins-100-meters/index.html

Christine Sinclair, <http://ca.sports.yahoo.com/blogs/eh-game/christine-sinclair-last-canada-olympic-hero-215346684.html>

Michael Phelps, <http://sports.nationalpost.com/2012/08/02/michael-phelps-olympic-legacy-open-to-debate/>

Sarah Attar, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2185402/Olympics-2012-Standing-ovation-hijab-wearing-Saudi-woman-athlete-finished-800m-lap-behind.html?ITO=1490>

Teachers may also visit, or have students visit, the website of The Historical Thinking Project for strategies to help students make these connections and better understand the concept of historical significance (www.historicalthinking.ca).

Clips of Olympic moments can be found at, <http://www.ctvolympics.ca/>

Worksheet 1:

2012 Olympians: Who will be most remembered?

Olympian	Contribution	Reasons for "significance"	Rating & Reason
Gabby Douglas			
Michael Phelps			
Christine Sinclair			
Oscar Pistorious			
Usain Bolt			

Worksheet 2: Placemat



Lesson 11, Appendices