

Unit Title: Aboriginal Issues in Canada

Time Frame: 5 Lessons, 6 – 8 classes of 75 minutes

Unit Developer(s): Garth Chalmers

Developed for Course Name and Course Code: CGC1D - Geography of Canada, Grade 9, Academic

Strand(s) and Curriculum Learning Expectations Addressed:

Geographic Foundations: Space and Systems Strand

SSV.02 – demonstrate an understanding of the regional diversity of Canada's natural and human systems

SSV.03 – analyse local and regional factors that affect Canada's natural and human systems

SS2.02 – illustrate and explain the regional distribution patterns of various peoples across Canada (e.g., Aboriginal peoples, Francophones, immigrant groups)

SS3.01 – identify criteria with which to evaluate the effect of government land use policy on planning in the local community

SS3.02 – compare different ways of providing human systems (e.g., transportation, social services, resource management, political structures) for a territory (e.g., Nunavut) and areas in southern Canada

Understanding and Managing Change Strand

UMV.02 – predict how current or anticipated changes in the geography of Canada will affect the country's future economic, social, and environmental well-being

UMV.03 – explain how global economic and environmental factors affect individual choices

UM1.01 – recognize the similarities among cultures and the need to respect cultural differences

UM2.01 – analyse different perspectives on a geographic issue (e.g., clear-cutting, waste disposal, urban sprawl) and present arguments supporting a point of view

Methods of Geographic Inquiry and Communication Strand

MIV.02 – analyse and interpret data gathered in inquiries into the geography of Canada, using a variety of methods and geotechnologies

MIV.03 – communicate the results of geographic inquiries, using appropriate terms and concepts and a variety of forms and techniques

MI2.03 – use graphic organizers (e.g., semantic webs, timelines, future wheels, analogy charts, Venn diagrams) to clarify and interpret geographic information

MI2.05 – use appropriate statistical methods (e.g., calculate averages, medians, correlations) and categories of data (e.g., population distribution, density, migration rates) in geographic analysis, observing accepted conventions

MI2.06 – provide appropriate and sufficient geographic evidence and well-reasoned arguments, to support opinions and conclusions

MI3.01 – communicate the results of geographic inquiries, for different audiences and purposes, using a variety of forms (e.g., reports, role plays, presentations, essays) and including geographic visual supports, both conventional (e.g., photographs, charts, graphs, models, organizers, diagrams, maps) and geotechnological (e.g., computer-generated maps and graphs, aerial photographs, satellite images)

Desired Results

Unit Description:

In this unit students will have an opportunity to investigate some of the many issues faced by Aboriginal people in Canada as well as learn where the various native groups live. It will include a discussion of the history of the relationship between Aboriginal people and Canada (whether under British rule or modern day government) in order to understand the root of many of the issues. Specific focus will be given to access to health care, access to education, substance abuse, teen pregnancy and suicide, poverty and low living standards and limited economic opportunity.

Enduring Understandings / Learning:

The students will gain an understanding of the implications of past events on contemporary Aboriginal society; they will gain a sense of the complexity of Aboriginal issues and the solutions to those issues; they will analyse and interpret statistics and graphs; they will synthesize their own ideas through discussion and debate with other students and teacher led discussions; and they will write an editorial that evaluates the process of negotiating a resolution.

Assessment Tasks

Performance Tasks and Other Evidence That Will Demonstrate the Knowledge and Skills Acquired:

1. Student will create a series of graphs illustrating the distribution of Aboriginal people in Canada.
2. Students will create and examine a series of population pyramids in order to demonstrate their understanding of this graphical representation and issues within the Aboriginal population.
3. Students will write a newspaper editorial in which they will reflect on the process of negotiating a Charter aimed at resolving Aboriginal issues in Canada.
4. Students deliver a brief presentation during a simulated Town Hall meeting and submit other relevant pieces during the simulation, all of which may be evaluated. (See the Appendix 5 for the student hand out.)

Assessment Criteria:

1. *Graphs:* Diagnostic – Check for completion and understanding. The aim is for students to understand this graphic representation and demonstrate their ability to apply the information through a series of questions.
2. *Pyramids:* Diagnostic – Check for completion and understanding. The aim is for students to demonstrate that they understand the difference between the various pyramids shapes and that they are able to interpret the implications.
3. *Editorial:* Summative – An Evaluation Rubric is provided. The goal is for students to reflect on the town hall and negotiation process as well as analyse the issues and solutions reached.
4. *Presentation etc.:* To be determined by the individual teacher.

Unit Planning Notes**Prior Learning Necessary (if any):**

The students would benefit from:

- reading the relevant chapter in their grade 9 Geography textbook;
- skills developed in prior issues based discussions in which debate is encouraged and in which they develop and express their own perspective;
- graphing skills (population pyramids, bar charts etc.) and the ability to interpret the results;
- understanding of the concept of stakeholder.

Preparation Notes (if any):

PowerPoint – I have included a basic PowerPoint presentation that follows the 5 lessons and contains some of the answers (sample charts). For many of the discussion questions, there is not a right or wrong response so I have not included notes on these.

Lesson 1 – You will need:

- Class set of copies of “Backgrounder” and “Task 1” instructions (Appendix 1)
- Graph paper
- **Note:** The numbers in table 1.2 do not always agree because “Multiple other communities” has been omitted and as a result of data from multiple years (depending on availability from Statistics Canada)

Lesson 2 – You will need:

- Class set of copies of “Backgrounder” and “Task 1”, “Task 2” and “Task 3” instructions (Appendix 2)
- Access to internet for viewing videos (or computer and projector for viewing online videos as a class)

Lesson 3 – You will need:

- Class set of copies of all 6 tasks and selected readings (Appendix 3)
- Access to internet so that students can complete some further reading of articles

Lesson 4 – You will need:

Part 1

- Set of “Issues Cards” cut out so each student receives one (Appendix 4.1)
- Copy of “Questions to Consider for All Groups” on overhead or projected (Appendix 4.2)

Part 2

- Class set of copies of the Activity Sheet – What is Your Perception? (Appendix 4.3)
- Issue question/statement on overhead or projected (Appendix 4.4)
- Debrief questions on overhead or projected (Appendix 4.5)

Lesson 5 – You will need:

- Class set of copies of the Student Instructions (Appendix 5.1)
- Stakeholder groups listed on overhead or projected (Appendix 5.1)
- Copies of the stakeholder group descriptions cut out so that each stakeholder group can only read their own (Appendix 5.2)

- Copy of the Issues of Priority ranking sheet - one per group (Appendix 5.3)
- Blank copy of “The Charter” (Appendix 5.3)
- Class set of copies of the editorial assignment and rubric (Appendix 5.4)
- Class set of copies of the additional evaluation materials (Appendix 5.5)

Learning Plan

Lesson 1 - Understanding Aboriginal Canadian Demographics (40 – 60 minutes)

1. Hand out backgrounder and worksheet 1.1 (Appendix 1)
2. Read through the introductory material on the backgrounder as a class (or assign the students to read it) and have a brief discussion regarding the importance of understanding the issues and challenges facing Canada’s Aboriginal people; this is a good opportunity to explain why the students need to understand the history and why they need to have a sense of the distribution of Aboriginal people in Canada (10 – 15 minutes)
3. Assign worksheet 1.1 (Appendix 1) for the students to complete independently (25 – 30 minutes)
4. Take up the questions on the worksheet (10 – 15 minutes)

Notes: *If you wish to speed things along, you may provide the graphs or allow students to use computers, however, I find it useful to have students work through the numbers themselves (some interesting questions arise).
The teacher may elect to move on to Lesson 2 if time permits because it could require more than one 75 minute class.*

Lesson 2 - How the Issues Developed (1 – 1½ periods)

1. Hand out the 4 page backgrounder sheet (Appendix 2)

Part A (15 – 20 minutes)

2. Read through “Part A - The Reserve System” with the class and ask them to respond to the questions at the end of that section on their own (10 minutes)
3. Discuss the questions in a Socratic fashion with the whole class (5 – 10 minutes)

Part B (40 – 50 minutes)

4. Read through “Part B – The Residential Schools” with the students (5 minutes)
5. Show some of the CBC archive videos (time will be depend on how long you wish to spend on this)
6. Discuss the questions at the end of each video selected (time will vary)
7. Ask students to discuss the Task 2 discussion questions and share with the class (10 minutes)

Part C (15 – 20 minutes)

8. Read through the backgrounder material with the students (5 minutes)
9. As a class discuss the questions at the end of this section (10 – 15 minutes)

Lesson 3 - Current Issues Facing Aboriginal Canadians (2 periods)

1. Hand out the entire package (Appendix 3) to each student, and explain that in this lesson they will be using some case studies to better understand some of the issues faced by Aboriginal people in Canada. (10 minutes)

Part 1 (40 - 50 minutes)

2. Explain Part 1 and remind students how to make a population pyramid.
3. Hand out the population pyramid template.
4. Encourage students to share the work on the pyramids if time is short, so that they can see all of the pyramids.
5. Give students 5 – 10 minutes to discuss the questions and the comparisons of the four pyramids and discuss the results as a class.

Part 2 (70 – 90 minutes)

6. Instruct the students to read each case and respond to the questions as well as watch the various archive videos and read some of the various other sources available online. Depending on the nature of the class, the teacher may wish to assign one case at a time and conduct a summary discussion of each case study before proceeding OR assign all of the work and conduct a summary discussion at the end.

Note: *If the teacher is showing the videos to the entire class, then it is recommended that the class work through one case at a time rather than assigning all at once.*

7. Encourage students to work and discuss in small groups. The teacher may wish to assign specific groupings or simply instruct students to “Talk to your elbow partner” etc.

Lesson 4 - The Issues – Your Perspective (1 period)

Note: *In this lesson, a number of issues will be discussed by the students and the students will have an opportunity to identify their own perspective and discuss their ideas with others who have the same and differing perspectives. The materials are available in Appendices 4.1 - 4.5.*

Part 1 – Discussing the Issues In-Depth (30 - 40 minutes)

1. Read through the list of issues with the students:
 - substance abuse
 - poor education
 - limited access to good health care
 - poor housing
 - poverty, unemployment and limited opportunity
 - teen pregnancy and suicide
 - loss of culture and connection to the past
2. Instructions for the Group Discussion
 - Distribute one issue card (Appendix 4.1 – Issues Cards) to each group of students (groups of 3 – 4 recommended).
 - Ask students to read the brief description of the issue and make sure everyone in the group understands the issue.
 - Ask groups to discuss the discussion questions (Appendix 4.2 – Questions to Consider) and have students

discuss and record their group's responses to the questions.

- Inform the students that once they have discussed and recorded their answers, one reporter from each group will read their issue card to the class to allow the large group to hear the various issues the Aboriginal people face. The reporter should then give a 3 minute summary of the discussion from the group.
- Once all groups have presented, the teacher/facilitator should provide a summarized list of the issues and encourage students to make a brief note about the impacts and possible solutions.
- As a class, discuss what the students perceive to be the most important challenges of the issues discussed.

Part 2 – What is Your Perception? (20 – 30 minutes)

3. Give each student “Activity Sheet 4.1 - What is Your Perception?” (Appendix 4.3) and a pencil. Read aloud one of the issues statements provided (Appendix 4.4), the statement may also be written on the board or chart paper in order that the students have a visual reference throughout the activity. The teacher facilitator may wish to create their own issues statement.
4. Ask the students to reflect on the statement for one-two minutes. They should then select their position with regard to the statement. Their position should be one of the following (you may wish to write these on the board):
 - 1) Strongly agree
 - 2) Agree
 - 3) Neutral/not sure
 - 4) Disagree
 - 5) Strongly disagree
5. Ask the students to write their chosen position on their card, based on their own feelings and opinions and then have them circulate as directed below. As the students work through the activity, remind students that their position may in fact change and if so, they should record their new position on their index card.
 - Students should first find another person who has written the same position as they have. Give the students two to three minutes to discuss their positions with each other and the reason why they chose this stance.
 - Once they have had an opportunity to discuss with a like-minded student, ask the students to find someone who has an index card with a position one step away from their own. That is to say, if a student has a card indicating "agree", that student should look for someone who has written "strongly agree" (1 step above) or "neutral/not sure" (1 step below). Again, give the students two to three minutes to discuss their differing points of view on the statement. It is at this time that a student may be convinced to change their position based on another's argument or discussion.
 - Ask the students to find someone with an index card two or three steps away from their own position (their newest position if they in fact changed their mind) on the statement. Give students two to three minutes to discuss the statement from their respective positions again.
 - Ask the students to return to the first person they talked to. Give students two to three minutes to discuss if their original positions on the statement have changed or not.
 - For their notes and as a recall exercise, students should summarize the arguments they have heard throughout the activity on the Activity Sheet (Appendix 4.3).

Part 3 – Debrief (10 – 15 minutes)

6. In order to wrap up the exercise, lead a class discussion on the issue(s) statement(s). You can ask questions such as those in Appendix 4.5.

Note: *Teachers may wish to extend this activity by repeating Part 2 using a different issues statement.*

Lesson 5 - Town Hall Meeting – Charter for Addressing the Issues Facing Aboriginal Canadians (2 periods)

1. Hand out and read through the student instruction sheet with the students (Appendix 5.1). Explain that they will be taking on the role of a stakeholder and ensure that they understand the scoring system as well as what a stakeholder is. (10 minutes)
2. Divide the class into stakeholder groups (3 – 4 four per group) and assign them a role (Appendix 5.2). Encourage each group to read their stakeholder description and discuss their understanding of their role. (5 minutes)
3. Hand out the Issues of Priority (IOP) Sheet (Appendix 5.3) to each group and give them time to determine their group's IOPs. (10 – 15 minutes)
4. Explain to the students how the conference/negotiations will run OR allow them to propose a method for voting and writing the charter points. You may wish to give them time to mingle in order to talk to other groups, and then convene a large group meeting. Ultimately, a vote or some other form of consensus will be needed in order to add an item to the charter. (60 – 100 minutes – this can take a long time if the discussion is good, so a second period should be allocated)
5. Handout the Editorial Assignment and Rubric. (Appendix 5.4)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Understanding Aboriginal Canadian Demographics

Appendix 2 – How the Issues Developed

Appendix 3 – Current Issues Facing Aboriginal Canadians

Appendix 4.1 – Issues Cards

Appendix 4.2 – Questions to Consider

Appendix 4.3 – What is Your Perception

Appendix 4.4 – Issues Statements

Appendix 4.5 – Debrief Questions

Appendix 5.1 – Student Instructions

Appendix 5.2 – Interest Group Profiles

Appendix 5.3 – Issues of Priority Ranking Sheet and Charter

Appendix 5.4 – Editorial Assignment

Appendix 5.5 – Additional Town Hall Evaluation Criteria

Other Possible Course Applications

- This unit could easily be adapted to be used in Canadian and World Issues (CGW4U). Modifications may be to focus on Aboriginal people from all over the world rather than just Canada. In addition, an increased level of research for the town hall in lesson 5 would increase the academic level of the material.
- Other modifications can be made at various points. Teachers may wish to provide all the graphical representations that the students are assigned to create themselves in order to reduce the time this unit takes and to allow for more time to discuss. Furthermore, I recommend that teachers provide more back ground information where they can through online sources or newspaper articles.