

Unit 1

Introduction: History as a Lens to the Past

Content Overview

Unit One provides students with an opportunity to explore history as a discipline - what history is, why it is important and how it is represented in many different ways. Students will recognize that history is all around them, that it is relevant to what is happening in their world today and that everything has its roots in the past. Basic historical research methods will be introduced and later practised through a variety of activities which engage students in locating information, examining and evaluating primary and secondary sources and creating historical reports. A final activity for the unit will consist of a short research project to be done in small groups. Students will undertake a study relating to some aspect of their community/region (e.g., a brief community history, an important event, an important person, an historical site or building). The skills learned in this introduction and practised during the study should be reinforced throughout the remainder of the course.

Skills Overview

1. Frame questions or hypotheses that give clear focus to an inquiry.
2. Solve problems creatively and critically.
3. Recognize significant issues and perspectives in an area of inquiry.
4. Identify sources of information relevant to the inquiry.
5. Gather, record, evaluate, and synthesize information.
6. Draw conclusions supported by the evidence.

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Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Teaching/Learning Strategies
<p>SCO 1.1 The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of history</p> <p>1.1.1 Identify historical sources (e.g., art, documents, photos, stories, artifacts, and music) in their own community. (K)</p> <p>1.1.2 Examine how historical sources (e.g., art, documents, photos, stories, artifacts, and music) are windows into the past. (A)</p> <p>1.1.3 Develop a working definition of history. (A)</p> <p>1.1.4 Distinguish between individual past and collective history. (K)</p> <p>1.1.5 Explain that history is open to interpretation. (K)</p> <p>1.1.6 Explain that historians are guided by rules of evidence. (K)</p>	<p><i>Teachers can have students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring to class historically significant objects from home. These objects may be displayed as a mini-museum of local history. (1.1.1)• Invite an archivist to visit the class to talk about the kinds of documents found in archives and how they are important to those interested in the past. (1.1.1, 1.1.2)• Brainstorm what they think history is about. Responses may be recorded on chart paper to arrive at relevant patterns and then a working definition. (1.1.3)• Examine records from the past (e.g., a biography, letter, or story) and explain whether it best reflects an individual past or collective history. (1.1.4)• Examine an historical event interpreted differently by two historians. Discuss reasons for differences in interpretation. (1.1.5, 1.1.6)

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Sample Assessment Strategies

Students may, for example,

- Use the following comparison chart to show similarities and differences that their working definition of history shares with a prescribed definition. (1.1.3)

Definition 1	Similarities	Definition 2

- Write a definition of individual past and collective history. (1.1.4)
- Compare two interpretations of the same issue or event and list the differences in views. (1.1.5)
- Use a recording sheet to organize information gained from an analysis of a family heirloom, such as a letter, a piece of clothing, photograph, and/or headstone etching (1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.1.7)

Analysis Sheet: Family Heirloom	
Question	Observations
How can the object be described?	
For what purpose was it created?	
What does the object tell us about the past?	
Is there a particular point of view portrayed by the object?	

Teacher Notes

- With reference to delineation 1.1.3, monitor student definitions for the notion that history is a study of change over time, rather than a mere study of a fixed time period in the past. History may be thought of as an inquisitive “conversation” (i.e., what, where, when, why, and how) with the past.

Agencies/Groups

City of St. John’s Archives
<http://www.city-st-john’s.nf.ca>

BBC Online, *History Trail: How to do History*
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/>

* While all web sites listed in this guide were active at the time of publication, due to the unstable nature of web sites, it is wise to check that they are still active before planning teaching/learning activities centered around them.

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<p>SCO 1.1 The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of history</p> <p>1.1.7 Infer an historical condition (e.g., economic role, social more, lifestyle, and living conditions) from an historical source. (I)</p> <p>1.1.8 Account for the differences among viewpoints on an issue. (I)</p> <p>1.1.9 Examine the role of historic sites, archives, and museums in interpreting and preserving history. (A)</p>	<p><i>Teachers can have students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select an object (e.g., tool or implement) from the mini-museum and complete an analysis using the following worksheet: (1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.1.7) <table border="1" data-bbox="841 638 1393 1339"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="841 638 1393 690">Analysis Sheet: Tool/Implement</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="841 690 1117 743">Question</th> <th data-bbox="1117 690 1393 743">Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="841 743 1117 835">How is the object constructed?</td> <td data-bbox="1117 743 1393 835"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="841 835 1117 928">Who constructed it?</td> <td data-bbox="1117 835 1393 928"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="841 928 1117 1020">Where was it kept on the owner's property?</td> <td data-bbox="1117 928 1393 1020"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="841 1020 1117 1113">How and when was it used?</td> <td data-bbox="1117 1020 1393 1113"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="841 1113 1117 1205">Who mainly used it and why?</td> <td data-bbox="1117 1113 1393 1205"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="841 1205 1117 1339">What does the object and use say about living conditions/ lifestyle?</td> <td data-bbox="1117 1205 1393 1339"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine a fairly recent provincial issue (e.g., the development of the Lower Churchill) in terms of different viewpoints. More specifically, (1.1.7; 1.1.8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the underlying issue? - What positions did key players take at the time? - What arguments were used by one side? - What arguments were used by the opposing side? - What beliefs or values were at odds in this issue? 	Analysis Sheet: Tool/Implement		Question	Information	How is the object constructed?		Who constructed it?		Where was it kept on the owner's property?		How and when was it used?		Who mainly used it and why?		What does the object and use say about living conditions/ lifestyle?	
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Sample Assessment Strategies	Teacher Notes
<p>Students may, for example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compile questions for a visit to a local/regional historical site (e.g., archaeological site, museum, archive, or virtual site). (1.1.9) For example, What is the purpose of the site? What aspects of history are presented? How is historical information presented? Does the site include primary artifacts? What kinds of information are presented?	

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Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Teaching/Learning Strategies
<p>SCO 1.2 The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of how to find out about the past</p> <p>1.2.1 Distinguish between a primary source and a secondary source. (K)</p> <p>1.2.2 Distinguish between archival material and artifacts. (K)</p> <p>1.2.3 Formulate a key question that is supported by a given source. (A)</p> <p>1.2.4 Identify other sources that relate to the key question. (A)</p> <p>1.2.5 Gather information that is significant for the question. (A)</p> <p>1.2.6 Find patterns and trends in the information. (A)</p> <p>1.2.7 Draw conclusions based on the patterns and trends in the information.(A)</p> <p>1.2.8 Present explanations or arguments in support of the key question. (A)</p>	<p><i>Teachers can have students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine two sources of historical information and explain why one is a primary source and the other is a secondary source. (1.2.1) • Use the historical method. To illustrate the historical method at the commencement of this course, the scope of the tasks for delineations 1.2.2 to 1.2.8 should be kept quite simple. For example, ask students to examine the mini-museum to identify a possible historical question. Items of clothing may spark an interest in clothing in the past. Then the teacher should guide student development of the hypothesis (e.g., everyday clothing often related to specific work tasks). Students will soon realize that they need additional sources to support their key question (e.g., old issues of mail order catalogues, photos, and oral descriptions). As they analyse the information from different sources, they will be able to see patterns among facts and ideas. These patterns will yield the conclusions to support the key question. The “publication” of their findings may be multi-formatted, e.g., an oral classroom presentation, an electronic photo-essay, or a poster-board display. (1.2.2-1.2.7)

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Sample Assessment Strategies

Students may, for example,

- Complete the following chart to demonstrate their competence with delineation 1.2.1.

Document No.	Check (✓)	
	Primary	Secondary

- Complete the following worksheet to demonstrate competence with delineations 1.2.2-1.2.8.

Worksheet Working with Historical Documents
My key question for Document No. ___ is _____.
Other documents that tell me more about my key question are _____ _____.
The other documents show me that _____ _____ _____.
I can now conclude that _____ _____ _____.

Teacher Notes

- In the assessment strategies, provide a series of documents for students to use. Assign each document a reference number. Ensure that the range of documents is comprehensive enough to support the assessment. (1.2.1-1.2.8)
- Primary sources include handwritten or typed records that have not been published - diaries or letters; items published usually after the death of their author - letters, diaries, memos, field notes, etc.; items originally intended for publication - newspapers, reports, autobiographies, etc.; objects - artifacts, tools, weapons, tombstones, photos, film, art; oral histories; interviews; music; public edifices; architecture.
- Secondary sources include books, articles, essays, and documentaries about historical events and/or people.

Print Resources

McMannus, G. And C. Wood. *Atlas of Newfoundland and Labrador. Signal Hill: An Illustrated History*

Agencies/Groups

Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives <http://www.anal.nf.ca>
 Center for Newfoundland Studies <http://www.mun.ca/library/cns/cns.html>
 Historic Sites Association of Newfoundland and Labrador <http://www.historicsites.ca>
 Provincial Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador <http://www.gov.nf.ca/panl/>
 Parks Canada <http://parkscanada.gc.ca>
 Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador <http://www.gov.nf.ca/panl>

