

Documentary Lens Lesson Plan for *Newfoundland: Atlantic Province*

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Curriculum Connections

Newfoundland: Atlantic Province is an 18-minute documentary made in 1949 on the occasion of Newfoundland becoming Canada's tenth province. The film was designed to present the new province and its rich natural resources to the rest of Canada.

The film provides not only educational information about Newfoundland but also plunges students into the world of the late 1940s.

Lesson Objectives

Students will prepare an argument to convince the premiers of Canada's other provinces that Newfoundland's entry into Confederation will be beneficial to the entire country. The activity is aimed at students in senior high (Cycle 2 in Quebec), is most relevant to Social Sciences and Language Arts programs, and is designed to be completed over the course of a week.

Canadian Social Studies Themes in *Newfoundland: Atlantic Province*

Themes/Aspects/ Key Concepts	Links to <i>Newfoundland: Atlantic Province</i>
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1949, what did the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation mean for Canada? • Before Confederation, was Newfoundland a separate country? • Why was Newfoundland's becoming a province important for Canada?
Multiple Perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was this film made? • Who was its target audience? • What were the intentions underlying the narrator's words?
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1949, how did the life of a typical Newfoundlander compare to the life of a typical Canadian?
Power, Authority and Governance	<p>At the start of this documentary, Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent asserts that the union between Canada and Newfoundland will not diminish either one's distinctive identity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of this statement? Would the union of Newfoundland with Canada necessarily lead to assimilation? • What was the impact of Confederation on Newfoundland's decision-making powers, given that it was a small territory joining a much larger country? • Newfoundland's entry into Canada was an important chapter in the country's history. How did Newfoundlanders' decision enhance Canada's road to greater independence from Britain?

Themes/Aspects/ Key Concepts	Links to <i>Newfoundland: Atlantic Province</i>
People and Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the addition of a new province change life in Canada from 1949 to 1959? • In your opinion, are there any similarities between the founding of Canada and the creation of the European Union?
Culture and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What similarities does the documentary show between the cultures of Newfoundlanders and of people in the rest of Canada? • What do you think Newfoundland brings to the rest of Canada in cultural terms?
Economy and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When it comes to economics and natural resources, what did Canada gain by welcoming Newfoundland into Confederation? • What impact did Newfoundland's becoming a part of Canada have on relations between Canada and the United States, as well as other nations in the Americas?

Assessment Strategies (Outcomes and Expectations)

This lesson allows for evaluation of three of the four cross-curricular competencies set out in the Quebec Education Program: communication, intellectual, and methodological.

To evaluate students' competency in communication, the teacher should read each group's texts and determine whether the points are well argued and clear. After all, they have to convince nine premiers!

Another possible method of evaluation is to distribute the texts anonymously among the class as a whole. Students could then determine which of their peers' arguments are the most convincing. This method exposes students to a greater range of points of view, enriching their understanding.

To evaluate competency in the intellectual field, teachers should look at the quality of information and language, the structure of the arguments, and the quality of students' reflections. The project should encourage originality, highlighting students' abilities to think creatively.

At the same time, teachers can look at the project's methodology, ensuring that information is used appropriately and is properly referenced through footnotes and bibliography. The presentation should follow specific rules related to a title page, be neatly typed and proofread. Respect for deadlines can provide another element for evaluation as well.

Activities for *Newfoundland: Atlantic Province*

ACTIVITY 1: Before Viewing the Film

It would be useful to first determine how much students know about Newfoundland. Ask:

- When did Newfoundland enter Confederation?
- What are the province's chief natural resources?
- What are its tourist attractions?
- Why is Newfoundland important for Canada?

The discussion does not have to be extensive. Its purpose is simply to assess students' knowledge.

ACTIVITY 2: Post-viewing

Following the screening, students should address the following broad question:

What have been the positive effects of Newfoundland's entry into Confederation on both Newfoundland and Canada?

In groups of four, students should attempt to answer the question, based on the film and the questions in the grid above (showing links to Canadian social studies). They can also use any other relevant research tools (such as the library or the Internet).

ACTIVITY 3: Developing Comprehension and Skills

For this activity, groups could take on the role of Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent in 1948, when he finds himself at a crucial point in the development of Canada. St-Laurent wants to follow in the footsteps of the Fathers of Confederation, bringing a tenth province into the fold. In order to accomplish this goal, he must convince the premiers of the nine provinces that Newfoundland's entry into Confederation will be beneficial to the whole country.

Ask students to write three to four pages in which they develop the case St-Laurent will make to the provinces. Here are some guidelines.

Social Sciences

- Students' arguments should demonstrate knowledge of geography and history.
- Students should show a thorough understanding of the subject.
- The originality of students' arguments and points of view is important.

Language Arts

- The text should follow the rules for persuasive writing, as set out in their course of study.
- Quality of language is important as well.