

# **Across Cultures**

## **General Lesson for the Web site**

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### **Overall Objective**

The National Film Board has a rich tradition of making films that contribute to a Canadian identity. The **Across Cultures** Web site is the Film Board's response to today's challenge of learning to live imaginatively and responsibly in a society made up of many cultures.

This general lesson uses the multimedia resources on the **Across Cultures** Web site to help students discover the challenges faced by various cultural communities and to appreciate the contributions made by them.

Group discussion, research and consensus building are the main learning strategies proposed. The lesson plans on the **Across Cultures** site meet curricular objectives relating to multiculturalism, cultural identity and cultural diversity in Canada. The activities are intended to appeal to a variety of learning styles and to develop critical thinking.

### **Grade level**

Advanced 9–12 and beyond. This unit can be adapted for younger grades and different courses of study in various Canadian provinces and territories.

### **Content Areas**

History  
Geography  
Citizenship  
Social Studies  
Politics  
Media Literacy  
Language Arts  
Health & Personal Development

Content items can be viewed online free of charge at <www.nfb.ca/acrosscultures> under the theme **General lesson for the Web site**.

### **Materials Required**

Access to a computer lab, Internet connection, data projector, flip chart paper or whiteboard, whiteboard markers, drawing paper and pencils. Materials for making collages such as old magazines, photos, quotes from the Internet, etc. Photocopies of material found in the appendix: Knowledge Organizer Chart, Viewing Assignment Worksheet, Visual Collage and Timeline Rubrics.

## Summary

After a brief overview of the materials on the **Across Cultures** site, students use a chart to activate prior knowledge about multiculturalism and cultural diversity. Then, as they view film excerpts from the NFB site, students complete a worksheet. To integrate the knowledge acquired, students make a collage to reflect and display their response to the focus questions noted in the chart. An optional activity involves drawing a cultural timeline to link past and current issues. Finally, students will collect artefacts to create a class cultural time capsule.

### Introductory Activity: (30 minutes)

The objective is to familiarize students with the **Across Cultures** site. Under the direction of the teacher, students at computer consoles will be guided through the thematic excerpts available on **Across Cultures** (see section suggesting 6 questions (themes) that students might want to explore). If there is time remaining after the exploration of the thematic excerpts and the teacher's explanation of the functionality site as well as the meaning of the themes, students can be encouraged to discover information on the site as a whole.

Each student can attempt to answer such questions as: A. What is the meaning of the title *Vox Populi*? Is it a good title for this part of the site? Why? B. Using the "suggestions" media search tool (below the player), find three photos or film clips dealing with racism. A sheet of questions should be available to each student.

### Activity 1: (30-45 minutes)

**Step 1:** To activate prior knowledge as well as set the focus for the unit, ask students to complete the K column on the Knowledge Organizer Chart. Some of this information may be incorrect or incomplete, but the process will help students clarify their understanding by the end of the activity. Definitions for these terms are on the **Across Cultures** Web site (see glossary of terms): *cultural diversity*, *cultural communities* and *multicultural*.

**Step 2:** After 5-7 minutes ask students to share what they have written in the K column. Record their responses and look for commonalities.

**Step 3:** Students should now begin to fill in the W section, listing what they need to learn about the questions posed. Partner work may be an effective way to brainstorm ideas.

### Activity 2: (45-60 minutes)

Using the Viewing Assignment Worksheet, students will use critical thinking to extrapolate relevant information from the **Across Cultures** site.

**Step 1:** Have students, in assigned groups of three, choose a theme from the Web site or have them choose one from a grab bag of titles with the names of film excerpts. Students are to examine at least three film clips from **Across Cultures** and record the information on the worksheet.

**Step 2 (10-15 minutes):** Each group should have one student recorder. As the members share their notes on the viewing worksheet, the recorder writes down the group's observations and reviews these ideas with the class. The role of the teacher is to assist the class in recognizing common themes and developing conclusions.

**Step 3** (30 minutes): In the L column of the Knowledge Organizer Chart, have students fill in what they have learned. Students should have a clear understanding of multicultural groups, cultural diversity and the contributions and challenges experienced by Canadian communities. This activity could be conducted in the next class.

**Activity 3:** (45 minutes)

Students are to create either a personal collage that represents their own sense of cultural identity or one that focuses on how Canadians have benefited from culturally diverse communities. Review the Collage Rubric before they begin so students know how grades will be assigned. Remind everyone that they will be asked to provide a verbal description of key aspects of their collage.

**Bonus Activity:** Optional Research Activity Linking the Past and the Present (90-120 minutes)

**Objective:** Using research and inquiry skills, students create a timeline of the journey that has led Canada to becoming a culturally diverse country. Many of the issues currently debated across the country have their roots in the past.

Teachers may want to adapt the assignment to meet the curriculum of their particular region and grade level. However, the timeline should include the role of Aboriginal/First Nations culture both before and after contact with the French and English, which would suggest links to current issues of Aboriginal land claims and residential schools. Other cultural policies such as the Chinese Head Tax and the 2006 attempt at resolution by the Conservative government could be topics.

Encourage students, either in partners or independently, to use the Internet and appropriate textbooks to create a timeline with at least ten significant Canadian cultural events. A useful resource is the NFB Web site **Aboriginal Perspectives** <<http://www.nfb.ca/aboriginalperspectives>>.

To guide student work, review the Timeline Rubric with the class before they begin the research.

Some other suggested Web sites:

CultureCanada

<<http://culturecanada.gc.ca>>

One Hundred Years of immigration to Canada 1901-2001

<<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/analytic/companion/etoimm/time.cfm>>

Forging Our Legacy

<<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/legacy/>>

Milestones of the 20th Century

<<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/milestones/>>

**Closure Activity** (60-90 minutes)

Students will apply the knowledge gained from the various activities to create a cultural time capsule that highlights the diversity of cultural groups in Canada. Encourage students to bring in items that best represent their ethnic family tree. Abstract concepts such as ideas, values and customs should be included also. Each item or concept should be accompanied by a brief written explanation.

Take pictures or a video of the time capsule projects. A brief summary of the class, the date and other meaningful data could be recorded by the teacher and stored with the capsule in a readily accessible location. At some point the capsule could be shared with future classes or with parent groups.

As a follow-up activity, students could be asked to reflect on the multicultural aspects of their classroom and discuss questions of cultural differences that are not being addressed. How could dialogue about these concerns be facilitated? What could be done to give voice to issues raised by cultural differences?

### **Check for Understanding**

How have Canadians benefited from culturally diverse communities? How can we ensure that all individuals and cultural communities have access to the rights, freedoms and opportunities available in Canadian society?

## APPENDIX

### Knowledge Organizer Chart

**Focus Questions:** What does the term *culture* mean to you? What is meant by *cultural diversity*? How have cultural groups contributed to the identity of Canada? What challenges have been encountered by cultural communities? What issues may a multicultural society need to address?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

K	What I Know / Think I Know	
W	What I need to Know	
L	What I Learned	

## APPENDIX

### Viewing Assignment Sheet -Through the Voices of Canadians

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Record Information from NFB excerpts and archival resources here:

Name of film or document: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual group or topic presented: \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Challenges encountered: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Write down any words or phrases of interest or that are unfamiliar:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Notes on the authenticity/accuracy of information. Does the film use actors or real people? Is it staged or edited?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments / Observations / Questions:

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX Visual Collage Rubric

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Overall Impression</b>	The collage fully communicates the author's understanding of cultural diversity and multiculturalism in a clear and creative manner.	The collage communicates some aspects of the author's understanding of cultural diversity and multiculturalism.	The collage presents words and images that relate to cultural diversity and multiculturalism but it fails to communicate the author's perspective or relies on superficial observations.	The collage does not adequately communicate the author's understanding of cultural diversity and multiculturalism.
<b>Specific Words and Images</b>	All words and images are related to the topic and enhance author's point of view.	All words and images are related to the topic and typically add to the author's point of view.	Some of the words and images relate to the topic but do not make clear the author's point of view.	Words and images do not relate to the topic or send a confusing message.
<b>Technical Construction</b>	Collage is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness.	Attention to construction is evident. The collage is attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness.	Collage shows some attention to construction. The collage is mostly attractive though it may be a bit messy.	Collage appears rushed. The collage is messy or very poorly designed. It is not appealing.

# APPENDIX

## Timeline Rubric

Name \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Content</b> x2	Events chosen are relevant and carefully selected. All significant details are included.	Most of the events are carefully chosen and accurately represent the topic.	Some events included are trivial, and major events are missing.	Many cultural events are excluded, and too many trivial events are included.
Accuracy and Sequence x2	All events contain accurate information and are in the correct sequence.	Most of the events are accurately portrayed and most are in the correct sequence.	Some of the events are accurately portrayed and some are out of sequence.	There is a lack of accuracy overall and several items are out of sequence.
Presentation / Format	The timeline is exceptionally appealing visually and is an effective learning tool.	The timeline is an attractive and useful learning tool.	The basic criteria for the timeline are met and would provide some use as a learning tool.	The timeline lacks visual appeal and would not be used as an informational tool.
Mechanics	Error free.	Errors do not hinder understanding.	Numerous errors are evident.	Errors interfere with understanding.
Requirements	All of the required content was present.	Almost all the required content was present.	At least 60% of the required content was present.	Less than 60% of the required content was present.

