

Across Cultures

Unit Guide for the Theme

How have we contributed to Canada?

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Overall Objective

This unit will challenge students to examine and evaluate the impact of cultural diversity on their communities and on Canadian life in general.

Grade level

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

Content Areas

History
Geography
Citizenship
Social Studies
Politics
Media Literacy

Content items used

NFB Film excerpts:

Lost Dreams, 1999 (3 min 32 s – 5 min 14 s)

The Third Heaven, 1998 (22 min 20 s – 26 min 59 s)

The Road Taken, 1996 (3 min 36 s – 5 min 51 s)

No Time to Stop, 1990 (22 min 11 s – 24 min 33 s)

Bamboo, Lions and Dragons, 1981 (7 min 34 s – 19 min 45 s)

My Floating World, 1979 (17 min 40 s – 20 min 15 s)

Jews of Winnipeg, 1974 (18 min 20 s – 19 min 44 s)

Content items can be viewed online free of charge at <www.nfb.ca/acrosscultures> under the theme **How have we contributed to Canada?**

Materials Required

(Teachers can select an option based on available materials.)

Option A: Laptop & Projector

Option B: Computer lab

Chart paper, whiteboard, poster board, and student selected art media.

Summary

Using film excerpts, photo archives and school and community archival material, this unit asks students to examine the impact of cultural diversity on Canadian communities, from both a historical and contemporary perspective. In addressing the issues surrounding cultural diversity, students will discover the many positive impacts of cultural diversity, such as language and religious tolerance and racial harmony, particularly in their school, local community and in Canada as a nation.

Introductory Activity (20 minutes)

Ask students to define cultural diversity. In heterogeneous groups of three, students can discuss the term in relation to their hometown. Encourage them to think about the various cultures that make up their school and community and how each one has shaped community life. Each group should name a reporter to summarize the discussion. These ideas can be shared with the whole class.

Activity 1: Film Montage: How Cultural Diversity Has Influenced Canadian Life (80 minutes)

Step 1 (10 minutes):

Divide students into heterogeneous groups of three. Provide large sheets of paper to each group.

Assign each group the thematic query: “To what extent has cultural diversity influenced our school, our local community and Canada as a nation?”

On a **specifications sheet**, provide:

a) Task description: In teams of three, using the resources provided, students construct a model or prepare a poster that represents a “story map” of a particular culture. It must integrate elements of geography, history and culture. Each team must find a way to present their project in an engaging way to the rest of the class. In addition to the model or poster, there should be a written text that helps to tell the story.

Students will be assessed on:

- i) Scope, accuracy and research (notes to be handed in after oral presentation)
- ii) Detail, originality and critical understanding
- iii) Oral presentation

b) Research resources, emphasizing the resources in their community: the school library, school annuals, local community centres, churches, cemetery, community leaders, parents, etc.

c) Assessment rubrics for self, peer and teacher evaluation.

Step 2 (35 minutes):

- Assign one film excerpt question per group. See the appendix for the list of questions. These questions are also available in the question panel associated with each excerpt in the **How have we contributed to Canada?** theme.
- Show each film excerpt, asking groups to take notes on their film excerpt question and pay particular attention to the cultural group represented in the film, where they came from and when they came to Canada.
- Each group responds to their question in two to three paragraphs, adding a visual of what they consider to be the major idea.

Step 3 (35 minutes):

- Groups will then “carousel”: each team will move around the room and respond to other groups with comments and questions.
- Ask the groups to list the five major ideas from the films.

Students, working in groups, will then conduct research on cultural diversity at the local level for homework and in subsequent lessons work on the design of their presentations.

Activity 2: The Influence of Cultural Diversity on the Local Level (80 minutes)

This activity is primarily discussion to clarify the nature, history and impact of cultural diversity in the local school and community, drawing upon the film clip activity, student research, experience and opinions.

Step 1 (20 minutes): What cultures are present in the local community and how has this changed over time? Have students discuss this in small groups and record their findings. The information will have been researched for homework and will also largely be based on community observations. The group can record their discussion and observations in a variety of formats from graphic organizers to webbing, charts and Venn diagrams.

Step 2 (30 minutes): Separate myth from fact: In a class discussion, ask students to consider what views have sufficient support and what views should be discarded. This will lead to discarding any notions that cannot be supported by reason or evidence; i.e., bias or prejudicial views. Students will then identify five significant trends or contributions of cultural diversity, supported by at least one local or national individual or group example.

Step 3 (20 minutes): In the last part of the activity, have students work together on their presentations with a scheduled 5-minute peer view and critique opportunity.

Step 4 (10 minutes): Assign each group the homework task of conducting national-level research on the particular culture represented in their film excerpt.

Activity 3: The Impact of Cultural Diversity at the National Level (80 minutes)

Step 1 (40 minutes): Using the example of the culture represented in their film excerpt and their research, students discuss how cultural diversity has influenced Canada as a nation. In the case of British Columbia, for instance, you could discuss:

- i) The “relocation” of Japanese Canadians from B.C. to southern Alberta in the 1940s.
- ii) The forced expulsion of Ugandan Indians in the 1970s.
- iii) Hong Kong Chinese immigration to Vancouver in the 1990s.

Talk about the reasons for the movement of these peoples, the diverse nature of the various cultures, and the effect of certain incidents on Canadian law, human rights and society. In this discussion, students should be expected to take notes and provide an analytical response to each case. Students should make the connection between the struggles of certain cultural groups and the extension of human rights for all Canadians.

Step 2 (40 minutes): In the remainder of the period, the teams should be completing their presentations, leaving only the finishing touches for homework. If they plan to complete the bonus activity, they should also rehearse their oral presentations for the next class.

Bonus Activity: Presentation of Team Projects (80 minutes)

Students present their projects to the class. Make sure there is time for peer discussion and evaluation. A teacher evaluation can be based on the attached evaluation criteria grid.

Closure Activity (20 minutes)

Show the film excerpts one more time and encourage the students to discuss what they learned about cultural diversity and its positive impact on their communities. Display the projects in the school display cases.

Check for Understanding

Ask students to consider the future cultural shape of their community. What cultural changes do they believe may occur in the coming years?

Evaluation Rubric

| Criteria | Not Meeting Expectations | Minimally Meets Expectations | Fully Meets Expectations | Exceeds Expectations |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Knowledge/ Understanding | Demonstrates limited scope and depth | Demonstrates some scope and depth | Demonstrates considerable scope and depth | Demonstrates thorough scope and depth |
| Critical Thinking | Demonstrates no critique | Demonstrates some critique | Demonstrates competent critical analysis | Demonstrates insightful and original critical analysis. |
| Communication skills | Communicates research results with limited effectiveness | Communicates research results with some effectiveness | Communicates research results with considerable effectiveness | Communicates research results with a high degree of effectiveness |
| Application | Makes connections with limited effectiveness | Makes connections with some effectiveness | Makes connections with considerable effectiveness | Makes connections with a high degree of effectiveness |
| Graphics | Limited appeal with little relevance | Somewhat engaging and relevant | Engaging and enriches understanding | Exceedingly engaging and rich in detail |
| Writing | Superficial; grammatical errors impede meaning | Fairly clear and limited exposition with some grammatical errors | Clear exposition with few grammatical errors | Engaging, clear, and detailed exposition with no grammatical errors. |

References and Resources

Archival Images: The Across Cultures Web site, under the theme **How have we contributed to Canada?**, also contains excerpts from NFB and CBC archives, along with photographs and illustrations of artefacts. You might want to integrate some of these items into your planning.

Online Resources:

Statistics Canada <www.statcan.ca/english/Estat/licence.htm>

The Canadian Encyclopedia <www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com>

Canadian Museum of Civilization <www.civilization.ca>

Archives Canada <www.archivescanada.ca>

Text Resource: Any recommended text for Social Studies.

Appendix

Film excerpt questions in the **How have we contributed to Canada?** theme.

Lost Dreams, 1999 (3 min 32 s – 5 min 14 s)

Describe the causes, course and conclusion of the Winnipeg General Strike as described by the young Ukrainian-Canadian woman and why the concerns of the working class transcended cultural differences.

The Third Heaven, 1998 (22 min 20 s – 26 min 59 s)

Compare immigration and Canadian society in the early 20th century with today. Do you think that policies should encourage people of means to immigrate to avoid the country from supporting poor people?

The Road Taken, 1996 (3 min 36 s – 5 min 51 s)

How did Sealy's father influence his music?

No Time to Stop, 1990 (22 min 11 s – 24 min 33 s)

Why did Onyejekwe have to be careful in her efforts to unionize her fellow workers in the struggle to improve working conditions?

Bamboo, Lions and Tigers, 1981 (7 min 34 s – 19 min 45 s)

Why did economic and professional opportunities open up for Chinese Canadians when they were finally given the vote after World War II?

My Floating World, 1979 (17 min 40 s – 20 min 15 s)

What was Tanobe's initial impressions of rural and working-class Quebec and how do you think this influenced her art?

Jews of Winnipeg, 1974 (18 min 20 s – 19 min 44 s)

Why do you think we honour generals and politicians as opposed to ordinary people who have benefited our communities, such as the Jewish community of Winnipeg?