



The Quebec Act: Diverse Points of View

Contributors

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Objective

Understanding the historical importance of key legislation helps students better comprehend the roots of linguistic, racial and cultural issues that continue to affect Canada. This lesson provides a meaningful way to examine issues resulting from the Quebec Act (1774) to help students understand the historical roots of Canadian bilingualism and multiculturalism policies. It explores the impact of the legislation from the points of view of a native person, a French parish priest, a seigneur, a habitant, a French fur trader and a British merchant. A goal of the lesson is to explore ways to promote greater social responsibility, learn to respect differences and understand the nature of rights and responsibilities.

 **Time** 3 hours (2 hours for preparation and 1 hour for presentations and discussion)

Materials

- Presentation Rubric
- Student Handout 1 “Responding to the Quebec Act”
- Student Handout 2 “Presentation Guide”

Getting Started

Knowledge Now

To begin this lesson, students must have a comprehensive understanding of the historical context of the enactment of the Quebec Act of 1774. Use maps, primary sources and timelines to review the main events that underscored French, British and native relations before the Quebec Act. Focus on the struggle to control Canada that characterized French/English relations between 1670 and 1773. Key points are as follows:

- The Seven Years’ War (French/Indian War as it was called in North America) ended in British victories. The subsequent conditions outlined in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) established British claims to sovereignty in the colonies and set the stage for bitter rivalries and increasing animosity in the colonies of New France. This was especially evident in the struggle for control of the fur trade.

- The French became increasingly fearful of British intentions to control and dominate them after the capture of Louisbourg, Ohio and Quebec City in 1745. This fear was compounded by the deportation of the Acadians from Nova Scotia in 1755.
- In 1763, when the Treaty of Paris officially ceded Canada to Britain, the Proclamation Act of 1763 gave the French further cause for concern. Although life under British military rule was not harsh, the British did try to assimilate the French. The Royal Proclamation abolished the French customary law, created great doubt about the future of the seigneurial regime and challenged the status of the Catholic Church and its authority to collect tithes.

Engaging Interest

Ask students to find a partner. Their task is to think of themselves as advisors to the British government and to place themselves in the historical context of 1763. Create a chart with three columns. In the first column list the various conditions of the Proclamation Act, in the second column suggest alternative actions and in the third column speculate on the consequences of the Act. What are the various ways open to the British to deal with the French? Should the British government take a hard line? Should it be accommodating? What is the best way to live in peace and harmony with people who have been defeated in battle? Ask students to prepare an official report on how the British could have dealt with the French.

Learning Activities

Use maps and appropriate textbook information to provide background information about the terms and conditions of the Quebec Act (see *Canada Revisited*, p. 84).

What Did Happen?

After experiencing problems in the Thirteen Colonies, the British realized that it was important to be seen as a friend, not a threat, to the Canadiens (French Canadians). Their recent experiences with rebellious colonists in the Thirteen Colonies and their minority presence in Quebec prompted the Quebec Act, a reversal of the Proclamation Act. To secure Canadian loyalty, they created legislation that would maintain and preserve French character and culture. This act quadrupled the size of the territory of Quebec, restored the power and authority of the Catholic Church and reestablished the seigneurial system, allowed the use of the French language to continue, permitted Roman Catholics to hold public offices and maintained French civil law. The British would still appoint a British governor and a governing council although the French were promised an elected assembly in the future.

Discuss the aims of the Quebec Act and how they might affect the following groups: native people, seigneurs (French landlords), habitants (French farmers), the French clergy (members of the Roman Catholic Church such as bishops, priests, nuns or parish priests) and British merchants. To help students focus on this task, use the following guide questions:

- Would this person generally like and support the Quebec Act? Why or why not?
- How would this person’s life be specifically affected by the Quebec Act?

With your partner, determine which the points of view each group might hold. Use Student Handout 1 “Responding to the Quebec Act.” After completion, review the charts with the class.

Presentations

This lesson culminates in student role-play presentations shown to the class. To prepare the presentations, join the pair groups together to create groups of four. Ask students to speculate about the new challenges the Quebec Act might create for native people, seigneurs, habitants, French fur traders, the French clergy and the British. Ask each student in the group to become an expert on a particular.

To do role-play presentations, ask all the students who selected the same role to form a new group. For example, all who chose to become experts on the habitant would join to form a new group. Provide time for each group to create a presentation that reflects its point of view on the Quebec Act. Focus on how the group would be affected by the Quebec Act and what their attitude would be. Presentations can feature a visual (such as a poster, mobile or collage), a story and/or a dramatic scene.

Assessment/Analysis

Check for critical thinking to see whether students understand the issue from several points of view. Use the presentation rubric (see end of this lesson) to evaluate the role-play presentations. Both the teacher and the students can complete the rubric and marks can then be combined.

Application

Most issues are complex and there is more to them than what appears on the surface. Encourage students to continuously think about why it is important to examine issues from various points of view.

Daily we read about French, English and native issues—issues that have roots in our history. It is important to study various ethnic, religious and cultural groups' points of view and their unique historical contexts to learn how they understand and interpret laws. Learning to think critically, understand and empathize rather than dismissing others' points of view can be done in most social studies classes. Use lessons such as this to remind students of the need to respect the points of view of all who are affected by an issue. Challenge them to identify legislation that they disagree with. Ask them to identify their own points of view and think about their origins.

Social Studies 8 Learner Outcomes

Topic B: Canada: History to the Twentieth Century

Analysis

- Identify and evaluate alternative answers, conclusions, solutions or decisions regarding questions and issues used for inquiry and research on the historical development of Canada
Communication
- Support a position on the historical development of Canada
Participation
- Converse with others in a variety of settings, including informal, small groups and whole-class discussions
- Observe the courtesies of group discussion (speaking in turn, using appropriate tone and giving feedback in a non-threatening manner)

- Contribute to the group and group processes (staying on topic, extending the ideas of others, paraphrasing and working toward a consensus or decision)
Attitude
- Appreciation for the way in which knowledge of the past helps them understand the present and the future
- Appreciation of British and French interaction in shaping Canada's political development
- Appreciation of the contributions of events to the development of Canada
- Willingness to consider opinions and interpretations different from their own
- Respect for democratic principles

Safe and Caring Topics and Concepts

Living Respectfully

Understanding Conflict, Peace, Justice and Violence

Examining Rights and Responsibilities

Working Cooperatively in Groups

Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice

Respecting Different Points of View Builds Community and Helps to Prevent or Resolve Conflict

Respecting Human Rights

Recognizing and Appreciating Contributions Made by Culturally Distinct Groups Builds Respect for Diversity

Resolving Conflict Peacefully

Resolving Conflicts Through Negotiation

- Describing and demonstrating a process that helps resolve conflicts in a way both sides can accept

Teaching Strategies

Go to www.sacsc.ca Click on <i>Strategies/Resources</i> for strategy descriptions	Cooperative Learning	Inquiry Learning	Direct Instruction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think-Pair-Share • Jigsaw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem Solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture

Generalization and Transfer	Peer Teaching	Empathy/Affective Education	General Teaching Activities/Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating Posters • News Centres • Interactive Bulletin Boards

Supplementary Resources

- Clark, P., and R. McKay. *Canada Revisited: A Social and Political History of Canada to 1911*. Edmonton: Arnold, 1992.

Responding to the Quebec Act

Who	Reaction	Reason
Native person		
French parish priest		
Seigneur		
Habitant		
French fur trader		
British merchant		

Presentation Rubric

Group: _____

	Wow	Very good	Not bad	Try again
Content				
The material was focused and related to the theme.				
The material was selected and presented in an interesting way.				
The material had sufficient in-depth information and substance.				
The material was clearly presented, organized and understandable.				
Presentation				
The presentation was well prepared, flowed and was not read.				
The students spoke with appropriate volume, tone and enunciation.				
The students focused on the role and stayed in character.				

Overall creativity, effort and effectiveness (list)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What I liked best about the presentation was . . .
