

Provincial Variations on Lesson Plans for Quest - Grades 5 – 7

Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Activity 2 – Historical Problem Solving

General Goals of the Activity: Think critically, inquire, verify, justify, participate and express opinions, exchange ideas.

Specific Goals of the Activity

1. Teach students how to develop a research question, conduct research, and develop a hypothesis.
2. Help students learn to express opinions and listen to the opinions of others.
3. Help students learn more about specific topics within the Web module.

Themes/Strands

Grade 7 Social Studies

- Time, continuity and change
- Economics and resources
- Culture and community

Dimensions of Thinking

- Develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking.
- Develop skills of historical thinking.
- Demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving.
- Demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building.

Subjects

- Tradespeople in 19th-century Quebec
- Women in history
- Hierarchical relationships and power
- Tools and artifacts
- Social history
- Economic history
- Interdependence in communities

Duration of Activity: One to two 1-hour class periods

Required Equipment and Materials

1. Computer lab with one computer for every two to three students
2. Chart paper or roll of newsprint
3. Coloured markers (any type)
4. Topic list (written on the board, overhead projector, or hand-out)

Instructions for Setup

1. Divide class into small groups (two to three students) depending on your class size.
2. Provide each group with a large piece of chart paper or newsprint and two different coloured markers.

Instructions for Use

1. Have each group choose a topic from the list (below).
2. Students will work in groups to develop an historical question based on their topic. It would be helpful to review with students what makes a good research question prior to starting this activity:
 - a. Narrow down the topic: The topics on this list are broad and general, but they relate to this web module. Students will need to narrow them down to form a question to guide their research. This can be done using a brainstorming web (start with a key word, and have students think of words related to it). For example; the topic “Women in Quebec Villages” could generate words such as “teacher”, “weaver”, “farmer”, “mother”, “postmistress” etc.
 - b. Interesting questions could be: “What types of activities were done by women in the village?” or “How were women expected to behave in a 19th-century Quebec village?”
3. To help students get started, you may wish to take one topic from the list and work through the brainstorming and question-forming processes as a class.
4. After students have developed a question that they are happy with, ask them to investigate the village based on their question. Have them write down information they think could help them to answer the question on their chart paper/newsprint in point form.
5. From the information they have gathered, have each group formulate a hypothesis, or thesis statement, to answer their research question. Ask them to develop three points that prove their hypothesis.
6. Finally, in a presentation to the class, student groups will provide three proofs for their hypothesis, and explain how they developed these proofs.

Topic List

In your group, choose one topic to focus on for this activity.

1. Economic relationships
2. Men and women’s roles
3. The role of a priest and religion in the community
4. The status of different villagers based on occupation – social hierarchy
5. The role of the general store – community and economic
6. The role of the teacher and the schoolhouse
7. The farmer’s wife: challenges and way of life
8. Social activities and customs
9. Technological changes, then and now
10. Rural life, then and now