



***The following introductory lesson plan is excerpted from a larger unit plan.** It may be taught as part of the Grade 7/8 Ontario Social Studies curriculum as an extension on a lesson on early explorers (Aboriginal and European) and the utility of the canoe in early Canada, or as part of the Grade 10 Canadian History course in relation to the 1990s and modern Canada.*

Highlights of the Unit Plan: Looking at the Canoe as a Uniquely Canadian Cultural Object

- Includes focuses on the Dogrib (NWT), Cree, Inuit, Oji-Cree, Mohawk, and Metis
- Is cross-disciplinary / cross-curricular (English, history, sociology, political)
- Has room for student choice and student-centered learning
- Is highly differentiated with visual, audio, kinesthetic / hands-on components, etc.
- Involves the community, whenever possible
- Highlights social justice, land & treaty rights, and current events
- Combines multiple points in history to highlight the immediacy of the canoe as an instrument of travel, survival, culture & change
- Culturally responsive, empowering, multidimensional
- Encourages students to know and appreciate their own and others' cultural heritages

Can a Canoe Change the World? (Introductory Lesson)

Learning outcomes

By the end of this lesson, students will have:

- Considered the transforming world, compared time periods, particularly transportation / technology
- Thought critically about the power people have to change their world in seemingly small ways
- Learned about the historic Cree and Inuit “Odeyak voyage” as an example of peaceful resistance

Success Criteria

Students will successfully demonstrate learning by:

- Participating in brainstorming in their learning groups
- Participating in open class discussion
- Drawing or writing a representation / reflection on the Odeyak voyage

Lesson Body

1. **Inclusion Activity / Comparing Time Periods: “Our World is Changing”** (p. 398, *High School Learning Communities*) In their learning groups, have students brainstorm and write lists of how the world has changed since their parents (or grandparents) were born. Give the groups five minutes to brainstorm with one student acting as assigned recorder. Meet as a community and have groups discuss some of the changes that have made an impact on their lives.
2. **Four Corners: What do you think was the most important Canadian invention?** Give students 4 options (e.g. canoe, snowshoes, etc.) corresponding to the four corners of the room. Have students discuss why they chose the object they did.
3. **The Canoe as a tool for social justice** Let students know that for the next few classes we will focus on the canoe and the ways it helped to shape Canadian history. Begin with a modern connection – the 25th anniversary of the historic Odeyak Voyage. Give students a brief overview of the voyage.
4. **CBC As it Happens audio clip**– Play the clip of the interview with one of the original paddlers for students. Project images of the voyage so that students have some visuals to connect to the audio. If students would like to draw their own representation of the voyage as they listen, encourage this.
5. **Reading: Nation News article "A quarter century after the Odeyak"**(<http://www.nationnews.ca/a-quarter-century-after-the-odeyak/>) Depending on students’ reading levels and comfort level with reading aloud, either 1) have students read the article together in their learning group, taking turns reading aloud OR 2) read the article aloud as a class with help from volunteer student readers. Have students write down answers or verbally respond to some reading comprehension / review questions such as: Why do you think the Odeyak Voyage was such a

Materials & Resources

- Markers
- Chart paper
- Audio projection (speakers /computer /projector)

Key concepts

Canoe
Social Justice
Odeyak Voyage

Learning Components:

- *Group development*
- *Reflective practice*
- *Cooperative learning*

Assessment opportunities

Diagnostic assessment: teacher will assess what students know about the history of the canoe in Canada as an introductory lesson to a larger unit that will connect the canoe to early Canadian history (esp. exploration and First Peoples) in future lessons

Assessment for learning: teacher will monitor student progress throughout the group activities

success? How was the Odeyak an example of cultural cooperation?

6. ***The Canoe as a Symbol for Protection of the Land / Powerful Tool for Change*** -- Project the following quotation from the article on screen: *“The Journey of the Odeyak is hugely important,” Pashagumskum said. “It’s a symbol of how seriously we take our role as stewards of the land. It also shows how important our voice can be on an international stage and level. It shows how we’ll always work toward protecting the environment. It’s a concrete example of the way that our Nation has always worked in collaboration with the Inuit Nation.”* Have students brainstorm ways they would protest a similar threat to their community or land. Is there a symbol or object or method of transport similar to the canoe that they would use? Does this story show the potential success that may be had with nonviolent actions? Discuss peaceful non-violent strategies, their effectiveness, etc.
7. ***Reflection Activity***: After brainstorming the above, have students write a brief journal response to what they have learned. Students who would prefer to visually represent their learning may be accommodated.
8. ***Canoe Paddle***: Ask students who have access to canoe paddles (esp. if teaching in northern community) to bring one from home tomorrow.

Extensions:

Activity: A birchbark canoe kit that contains models of traditional tools and materials is available from the Prince of Wales Museum and can be reserved. Teacher should order this far enough in advance so that it is ready for subsequent lessons.