

CURRICULA

LESSON 1: MULTICULTURALISM AND CANADA'S NORTH



Introduction:

The goal is for students to reflect on their understanding of multiculturalism and learn how it connects to Canada's North, including Canada's sovereignty in the north. Students will explore the role of the Inuit and Aboriginal peoples as stewards of Canada's north and share ways to support and enhance this role. By participating in this activity, students will research to learn more about the culture of these fellow Canadians. They will gain a better understanding of how they have been the traditional stewards of Canada's North and reflect on whether they may be best equipped to continue as the stewards of Canada's North.

Project North Graphic Novel: Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic is structured in sections to mirror the themes and issues in the four lessons. It follows the progress of Alex and ZaZi as they work to help their country by finding a solution to protecting Canada's sovereignty in the North. They are discovering information and putting together a white paper to submit to an online summit on Sovereignty in Canada's North. As students in class complete a challenge, pages of the graphic novel are then 'unlocked' so students can follow along with the story. Familiarize yourself with the graphic novel before beginning the lessons with the students. Assign the relevant pages as they explore each lesson.

Materials Required:

computers with Internet access detailed map of Canada's North: <http://maps.nationalgeographic.com/maps/atlas/north-america-geophysical.html>
writing paper and utensils

Key Concepts and Issues:

Students will explore the concept of multiculturalism and how it connects to issues surrounding Canada's North.

Subjects:

Multiculturalism and Canada's North

Grade Level:

Grades 9 to 12

Duration:

5 to 8 classes

Curriculum Links:

Social Studies, World History
World Geography

Expectations/Outcomes:**Students will:**

- increase their knowledge of Canadian history and geography
- analyze major issues involving the rights, responsibilities, roles, and status of individual citizens and groups in a local, national and global context
- explain, analyze, and compare the effectiveness of various methods of influencing public policy
- explore the concept of protecting Canadian identity and sovereignty
- examine one or more aspects of multiculturalism in the Canadian context

Background

The concept of sovereignty is an evolving one. It has traditionally focused on the rights of a country to control a territory (the land and its inhabitants) legitimately without interference from other countries. Now, instead of focusing on rights, sovereignty is being considered in terms of responsibilities, especially the responsibility of a country to protect, and have authority over, its territory and to be perceived as protecting it and having authority over it. Sovereignty is also thought to include stewardship over the territory.

For thousands of years, Canada's North has been home to Inuit and Aboriginal peoples. Their unique culture, one of many within Canada, is a reflection of their northern environment and their close relationship with the land.

"The concept of the land included not just the earth itself, but all of nature: plants, animals, water, ice, wind and sky. Nature and Inuit are one. They have depended on each other for centuries and any and any change or alteration to just one aspect can unbalance the whole."
– Innuuqatigitt curriculum, page 31

While climate change in the North is affecting the way of the Inuit people in a detrimental way, it is also drawing international attention to the North as a possible North-West passage is emerging. Thus, what is detrimental to the culture and even survival of the Inuit may be of economic benefit to others.

Step One: Teacher-Led Discussion

Begin with a general discussion about multiculturalism and what it means. Explain that Canada has an official policy of multiculturalism. It was announced in 1971; it acknowledged the diversity within the country and it encouraged cultural pluralism, instead of assimilation. It suggested the Canadian identity was based on an acceptance of ethnic difference. In 1982, multiculturalism was mentioned in section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It states: "This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians."

Remind students that Canada is a land of immigrants, and that people have been coming to live in Canada for hundreds of years. Draw their attention to a map of Canada and indicate the Arctic regions. Ask the students who were the first inhabitants of this land. Discuss the word Inuit, and tell students it means "the people." Ask them to share anything they already know about the Inuit, their culture, their daily lives, their traditional system of governance, and their contemporary way of life.

Step Two

Tell students that Canada's North, ancestral home of the Inuit, has become an area of interest to many countries. They are eyeing its natural resources (uranium, natural gas, diamonds) with interest and, as global warming is causing the northern ice to melt, they are becoming interested in the possibility of a North West passage through the area. They are challenging whether this land, and its people, are actually within Canada's political sphere. (The students will learn more about this in Lesson 2.) Explain that the four of the lessons in this program will be investigating different aspects of this issue.

Also, explain to students that, throughout these four lessons, they will be reading a graphic novel "Project North: Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic." Have them read the first pages of the novel. As well as being introduced to the general concepts surrounding sovereignty issues in the North, they will gain an understanding that

- the North is home to the Inuit
- and the Inuit are vitally important to the region.

Step Three

Tell students that the focus of steps 3 and 4 of this lesson is on answering these questions:

- Are the Inuit uniquely equipped to be stewards of Canada's North and, if so, why?
- What does this mean to them, and to Canada?
- How does this influence the challenges to Canada's traditional role in the Arctic?
- How can you educate students within your school about the Inuit to help raise their profile as fellow Canadians and enhance their role as stewards of the North?

First, have the students define the word "steward" (one who protects or looks after nature, public property, or money; one who manages another's property or affairs). Have them look for the more recent definition of environmental "stewardship." (Environment Canada defines it as "being the act of entrusting the careful and responsible management of the environment and natural resources for the benefit of the general community.) Discuss reasons why Canada's North needs stewards.

Read them this excerpt from a speech called "Inuit and the Canadian Arctic: Sovereignty Begins at Home" made by Mary Simon (President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, which in English means "Inuit are united in Canada").

"The Arctic is in urgent need of attention by all Canadians and, indeed, by the world community. ... As leader of the national Inuit organization, I am determined to generate public interest and galvanize political attention on Arctic issues....

Canada is an "Arctic nation." The Arctic ... is a vital part of our country, and its peoples contribute to the cultural and social diversity that we value so dearly. ...

Together we must build robust and sustainable northern communities. A healthy, confident and prosperous Inuit population will create the foundation for keeping the Arctic firmly within Canada. ...

For us, the Inuit, it is our homeland – our special place on Earth. But for all Canadians, the Arctic must become part of our shared sense of who and what we are, of what defines us, and what we are accountable for – not just a remote region with beautiful icescapes and polar bears.

Part of that accountability is accepting that the Arctic is a place where people live, where families are raised, where problems need solving, and where resources exist that will continue to nurture human development, and help finance this wonderful place called Canada."

Discuss Mary Simon's comments, for example:

- Why might some people have difficulty accepting that the Arctic is a place where people live?
- What does she mean by "accountability"?
- Why do you think she mentions resources as a source of financing for the country?
- Why do you think her speech is called "Sovereignty Begins at Home"?

Think about Simon's biases and why she might hold these views. For example, how might it benefit her and the Inuit to generate public interest? Also, consider whether you think all Inuit share her views.

Now remind the students that the land has special meaning to the Inuit. They are connected to the land. It sustains them, and they feel a responsibility to care for it. Scientists believe climate change will be more pronounced in high latitudes. The change in temperatures is causing changes in the natural environment, for example, there is a longer sea-ice free season, there are more insects, more pronounced windstorms, and shorter snowmobile seasons over sea-ice.

Read this quote from Sheila Watt-Cloutier, President of Inuit Circumpolar Conference (Canada), speaking in Ottawa, in 2002:

"Inuit are not prepared to be seen, to be treated, or to act as powerless victims of external forces over which we have no control. In fact, Inuit are involved in every aspect of life that affects us, from the science to the policy, in the communities, in Canada, in the circumpolar Arctic, and globally. Unfortunately, the federal government seems to think our role is to adapt to climate change. But that is only part of our role. We intend to bring our concerns, interests, and perspectives, and those of the Arctic more broadly, to the attention of international decision-makers. We must give climate change in the Arctic a human face -- an Inuk face -- and we must show climate change negotiators that impacts in the Arctic foreshadow impacts around the globe. We want to do this in co-operation with the Government of Canada and other Arctic states."

With the students, discuss these questions:

- Are the Inuit particularly vulnerable to climate change, as a people, compared to other Canadians?
- How does climate change threaten the survival of the Inuit as a people?
- How does this connect to the role of the Inuit as stewards of the North?

Last, explain to them that one theory of sovereignty states that demonstrating use of the North gives legitimacy to a country's claim to the region. Read them the following quote:

"The Inuit have been using the Arctic for thousands of years. It's their historic use and occupancy of the sea-ice that provides the basis for Canada's claim in the Northwest Passage. It's they who have given us all that they have, in pursuit of a quintessentially Canadian dream." – Michael Byers and Jack Layton, in "How to Strengthen Our Arctic Sovereignty" in The Tyee, Sept 2007



Have the students gather in small groups and tell them they are now going to synthesize the information they have just been exploring as they work to answer these questions:

- Are the Inuit uniquely equipped to be stewards of Canada's North and, if so, why? Has the policy of multiculturalism played a part in this, and if so, how?
- What might it mean for the Inuit themselves to be considered "Canada's stewards of the North"?
- How might demonstrating that the Inuit are Canada's stewards of the North influence the challenges to Canada's claims to Northern lands?

Allow the students time to do individual research, seeking out, in particular, Inuit perspectives on all these questions, and then write responses. Have each group do a brief oral presentation of their answers to the class.

Step Four

Remind the students that the Inuit had no written history until recently; they have a tradition of oral history, passing down stories, information, and wisdom through stories and narrative. Tell them they will create a presentation for students at school that includes an oral element and addresses this final question:

- How can you educate students within your school about the Inuit in order to raise their profile as fellow Canadians and enhance their role as stewards of the North?

Encourage them to brainstorm suggestions, such as hosting an assembly, putting on a play for students, doing presentations in each classroom, and so on.

With your assistance, have the students discuss and then choose one idea. Give them time to set a goal for themselves, to formalize the idea into a plan, and to create an agenda (or a step by step process) for accomplishing the plan and assigning duties. During the discussion, help focus their thinking by asking, Do you think this will educate students within your school about the Inuit in order to raise their profile as fellow Canadians and enhance their role as stewards of the North?

Allow students time to research for their presentation. Guide them toward sources that convey a breadth of information of the Inuit past and present, including online newspaper articles, reports of circumpolar summits, and the website of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. Remind them that they will need to educate other students on the concept of stewardship and offer evidence that the Inuit are "stewards of the North." They will need to briefly describe Canada's traditional political role in the North and how it is currently being challenged. Encourage them to relay Inuit points-of-view, using their own words directly, whenever possible.

Help make arrangements for them to visit other classrooms or host other classrooms in a specified location.

Step Five

When the scheduled day(s) for the presentation arrives, provide help as needed for the students.

Step Six

Discuss as a class the results of the presentation. Help the students evaluate the process they created, and establish whether their final goals were met, and how they know. Have them think about what they might do differently next time.



Optional Extension Activities:

- In her Globe and Mail article, Marie Wadden writes: "How can Canada claim to "own" the Arctic when it can't provide adequate housing, health care and schooling for our Inuit, who number only in the tens of thousands (about 40 000 in the Arctic) but live in 26 communities stretched out over more than 4000 kilometres, from Nunatsiavut on the Labrador Sea to the Inuvialuit homeland of the western Arctic. Instead of soldiers "guarding" our Arctic borders, we should have Inuit citizens who feel truly a part of this country, who are respected and given the necessary tools to succeed in the 21st century. ... Let's stop funding Canadian Arctic sovereignty and, instead, fund Inuit Arctic sovereignty. If we're lucky and do the right thing, they may let us call them 'Canadian Inuit'." Explain how you think Wadden's view is different than, or similar to, Simon's view. Write a short first-person narrative from the perspective of someone who believes Canada may be trying to take advantage of the Inuit people in order to keep the North.

- There may be people who still believe that all Inuit live in permanent igloos and hunt by dog sled. Have students create a poster showing two contemporary scenes: one of an Inuit family living on the land in a traditional lifestyle, and one of an Inuit family living in the city of Iqaluit in a modern lifestyle. They can add a heading for each scene, captions, and title the poster: Inuit Myth Buster!

- "I used to be able to predict the weather, but now I often get it wrong."
– Akumalik, 73, Arctic Bay, Nunavut, through translator

Pose the question again: In what ways are the two issues -- climate change in the North and difference of opinion about Northern sovereignty – connected? Interested students can do further research to learn about climate change in the North, in particular, its effects on the Inuit peoples. Have them look for personal Inuit accounts of changes to the northern ecosystem, as well as evidence as to who is trying to solve this problem and whether the experience and knowledge of the Inuit people is being taken into account.

- Students can research to find all the countries where Inuit traditionally live. Have them mark these locations on a world map. Then have them look up, and read, A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the North. Have them discuss, in partners, section 1: Inuit and the Arctic. (They will look more closely at the rest of the document in Lesson 2.) Ask them to think about why the Inuit felt it necessary to convene and create these statements.

Assessment and Evaluation rubrics:

Rubric - General

Discussion

Level 1—Did not participate or contribute to the teacher-directed discussions

Level 2—Participated somewhat in the teacher-directed discussions

Level 3—Active participation in the teacher-directed discussions

Level 4—Made a significant contribution to the teacher-directed discussions

Content

Level 1—Demonstrated limited understanding of concepts, facts and terms

Level 2—Demonstrated some understanding of concepts, facts and terms

Level 3—Demonstrated considerable understanding of concepts, facts and terms

Level 4—Demonstrated thorough understanding of concepts, facts and terms

**Written Work**

Level 1—Written report had many grammatical errors, is poorly structured and confusing

Level 2—Written report was generally clear but has numerous grammatical errors

Level 3—Written report was well-structured and clear but has a few significant errors

Level 4—Written report was very clear, well-organized with few errors

Oral Presentation

Level 1—Oral report was confusing, lacked emphasis and energy with no discussion resulting

Level 2—Oral report was clear but lacked energy and emphasis with little discussion resulting

Level 3—Oral report was clear and vibrantly presented but lacked some emphasis and energy with a good discussion resulting

Level 4—Oral report was clear and enthusiastically presented with energetic discussion resulting

Team Work

Level 1—1 or 2 members dominated the team, very little cooperation

Level 2—Majority of the group made a contribution with some recognition of individual strengths but cooperation was superficial

Level 3—Most members made a significant contribution with a good level of cooperation

Level 4—All members made a significant contribution, individual strengths were recognized and used effectively, excellent cooperation among group members

Specific**Step One**

Student has a poor understanding of multiculturalism

Student has a basic understanding of multiculturalism

Student has a good understanding of multiculturalism

Student has an exemplary understanding of multiculturalism

Step Two

Student poorly communicated a summary to a partner
 Student adequately communicated a summary to a partner
 Student communicated a summary to a partner well
 Student communicated a summary to a partner in an exemplary manner

Step Three

Student has a poor understanding of the concept of Inuit stewardship
 Student has a basic understanding of the concept of Inuit stewardship
 Student has a good understanding of the concept of Inuit stewardship
 Student has an exemplary understanding of the concept of Inuit stewardship

Step Four

Student exhibited poor participation in the planning of the presentation
 Student exhibited basic poor participation in the planning of the presentation
 Student exhibited good participation in the planning of the presentation
 Student exhibited exemplary participation in the planning of the presentation

Step Five

Student exhibited poor participation in the class presentation
 Student exhibited basic participation in the class presentation
 Student exhibited good participation in the class presentation
 Student exhibited exemplary participation in the class presentation

Step Six

Student demonstrated a poor ability to evaluate the presentation
 Student demonstrated a basic ability to evaluate the presentation
 Student demonstrated a good ability to evaluate the presentation
 Student demonstrated an exemplary ability to evaluate the presentation

Resources:

Diversity Watch (info about Inuit): <http://www.diversitywatch.ryerson.ca/backgrounds/inuit.htm>

The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective : Inuuqatigitt curriculum http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/Divisions/kindergarten_g12/curriculum/curriculum_Services/INUUQATIGIIT%20Curriculum/INUUQATIGIIT.pdf

<http://www.stewardshipcanada.ca/>

Mary Simon's Speech: "Inuit and the Canadian Arctic: Sovereignty Begins at Home" http://www.tvos.org/theagenda/resources/pdf/MarySimonSpeech10_2A1370.pdf

A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the North: Go to <http://www.itk.ca/publications/circumpolar-declaration-sovereignty-arctic> and click on the attachment

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami:
www.itk.ca

Unikkaaqatigiit: Putting the Human Face on Climate Change -- Perspectives from Inuit in Canada:
<http://www.itk.ca/publications/canadian-inuit-perspectives-climate-change-unikkaaqatigiit>

climate change and the Inuit: <http://www.canada.com/vancouversun/story.html?id=50c89709-aa8f-4da9-bef8-27e051d2cfc8&k=26596>