

Who/What is a Canadian? - The Story of Everchanging Identity

Courses	Big Ideas	Content	Curricular Competencies	Core Competencies
Social Studies 10	Historical and contemporary injustices challenge the narrative and identity of Canada as an inclusive, multicultural society.	Canadian identities  discriminatory policies and injustices in Canada and the world, including residential schools, the head tax, the Komagata Maru incident, and internments	Compare and contrast continuities and changes for different groups at particular times and places (continuity and change)	I ask and respond to simple, direct questions  I can understand and share information about a topic  I can analyze my own assumptions and beliefs and consider views that do not fit with them
Political Studies 12	Understanding how political decisions are made is critical to being an informed and engaged citizen	methods used by media, governments, or political groups to influence public opinion  current and future public policy	Assess the significance of political issues, ideologies, forces, decisions, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (significance)  Compare and contrast continuities and changes for different political institutions and organizations at particular times and places (continuity and change)	I can tell the difference between facts and interpretations, opinions, and judgments  I understand that learning is continuous and my concept of self and identity will continue to evolve  I understand that my identity is made up of many interconnected aspects (such as life experiences, family history, heritage, peer group)
Law Studies 12	A society's laws and legal framework affect many aspects of people's daily lives	the Constitution of Canada and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms  structures and powers of the federal and provincial courts and administrative tribunals	Analyze continuities and changes in legal systems or codes across jurisdictions (continuity and change)  Assess and compare the significance and impact of legal systems or codes (significance)	

First People's Principles of Learning:

- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors

Tags:

- Canadian Identity
- World Sikh Organization
- Multiculturalism
- Nationalism
- Anti-Racism
- Colonialism

Essential Questions/Understandings:

- How does Canadian identity evolve and change to different times and circumstances?
- How can the power of storytelling change how we view the past?
- How is Canadian identity still changing?
- Who gets to define who is 'Canadian'?

Included in this lesson:

- Lesson Plan
- Sorting Cards
- Graphic Organizer

## Part 1: Introduction - What/Who is a Canadian?

1) Starting question: If you were to create a list of the 10 best countries in the world, what are some defining characteristics that you would look for?

- Groups of 3-4
  - Brainstorm a minimum of 5 characteristics that these countries would have
  - Suggested guiding questions:
    - What values do the best countries in the world have?
    - What do the best countries in the world strive to achieve?
- Full group
  - Share out and create a top 5 for the class

2) [Best Countries Ranking Full List | US News Best Countries](#) or [Best Countries 2021 \(worldpopulationreview.com\)](#)

- What are some characteristics that were used in this ranking?
- Do you agree with the ranking for Canada? Why/why not?

3) This is how the world sees us. How do we see ourselves?

- Students break out into groups and discuss questions + what it means to be Canadian/ what is Canadian?
- Share out loud/share answers on the board
- Follow up question:
  - When thinking about Canada, and what defines a Canadian, how can one consider the impact that 'defining' Canadian's can have on Indigenous peoples, communities, and nations located in what is known as today's Canada?
- What does being a Canadian mean to others?
  - Ottawa Citizen Article "Canada Day: what does it mean to be Canadian?" June 2, 2016

3) What parts of the definition of what it means to be a Canadian connect with how you view yourself?

## Part 2: Stories of Canada and Canadians

1) Two Sides of Canada's stories – Heritage Minutes

a) Split the class into two groups and assign each group one of the following lists of resources.

b) Guiding questions

- i) What is the image of Canada that is portrayed through these clips?
- ii) Is this an accurate image of Canadian history?

c) Resources

i) Group 1

- (1) [Vimy Ridge | Historica Canada](#)
- (2) [Jacques Cartier | Historica Canada](#)
- (3) [Terry Fox | Historica Canada](#)
- (4) ["Boat People" Refugees | Historica Canada](#)
- (5) [Sir John A. Macdonald | Historica Canada](#)

ii) Group 2

- (1) [Vancouver Asahi | Historica Canada](#)
- (2) [Acadian Deportation | Historica Canada](#)
- (3) [Jennie Trout | Historica Canada](#)
- (4) [Chanie Wenjack | Historica Canada](#)
- (5) [Activists want statues of Sir John A. Macdonald removed. What do you think? | Article | Kids News \(cbc.ca\)](#)

- d) Discussion Questions
  - i) What themes emerged from both sets of videos?
  - ii) How did the definition of Canadian/Canadian identity change over time?
- 2) Canada's identity has constantly been changing and evolving
  - a) Colonialism/White Settler Canada → Multicultural Canada
  - b) Discussion:
    - i) How has this happened?
    - ii) Is this a process that has completed? Is Canada now an accepting, Multicultural nation or is there more work to be done?
  - c) Canadian Identity has constantly changed and evolved to get to where we are now.

### Part 3: Discrimination + Sorting Activity

- 1) Can we still see something like the idea of "White Settler Canadian" even now? Are there people/groups that we tend to exclude from the vision of "Canadian"? Or, are there people who we discriminate against?
  - Indigenous People
  - Minority groups
  - Religious groups
  - New Immigrants
  - Undocumented Canadians
  - Asylum Seekers
  - Refugees

- 2) Sorting activity: What do these people have in common?

[character description cards that say age, gender, and state some defining characteristics,]

- Baltej Singh Dhillon (turban)
- Lt Pritam Singh Jauhal (turban)
- Moise Amsellem (sukkahs)
- Gurbaj Singh Multani (kirpan)
- Sikh motorcyclist who wears turban while riding motorcycle (Dhillon)
- Muslim woman from BC who wears a hijab in Driver's license photo
- Sikh employees at Saskatchewan hospital not allowed to wear kara under jewelry policy

Commonality: they are people who were not allowed/restricted to practice their religion in some way and the World Sikh Organization stepped in to provide legal counsel/fight cases up to the supreme court of Canada

- Why? What were they not allowed to do?
- Can you think of any other examples that are similar to this?
- What are some other ways that Canadians have challenged the notions of what is and is not acceptable?

Purpose:

- Canadian identity is constantly changing through individuals who choose to challenge the existing challenge the existing notions of what is acceptable and what isn't.

### Extension: Jigsaw

1) Link: [Jurisprudence - worldsikh2](#)

- This link details 9 different cases the World Sikh Organization has taken to the courts – most of these have set precedent for other cases
- Students should be split into pairs or threes
  - Each pair should choose one of the links and create a one – pager that records key facts and findings as well as the precedent it has set
  - Should use the WSO website, the link provided for the ruling as well as news sources

2) Share this information with classmates

- Carousel – share info with the rest of the class
- Graphic organizer to collect this info
- Purpose: awareness and critique of the idea that Canada is an inclusive and accepting nation

### Resources/ Extra Information

- [World Sikh Organization of Canada](#)
  - [Legal - worldsikh2](#)
  - [Jurisprudence - worldsikh2](#)
- [Best Countries Ranking Full List | US News Best Countries](#) or [Best Countries 2021 \(worldpopulationreview.com\)](#)
- Ottawa Citizen Newspaper article: [Canada Day: What does it mean to be Canadian? | Ottawa Citizen](#)