

## **Elementary Learning Activity 4:** Write a history based on primary sources

*Writing History!*

**Course Links:** Elementary Social Studies (In Newfoundland and Labrador, Grade 5 Social Studies.)

### **Outcomes addressed:**

*Grade 5 Social Studies*

SCO icp.0 – The student will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in utilizing concepts and processes from the social sciences

- icp.1 Use an inquiry model to explore and resolve significant questions
- icp.2 Apply intellectual tools to analyze events, ideas, issues, patterns and trends
- icp.3 Make reasoned assessments based on appropriate criteria

*Unit 1: Exploring the Past*

1.0 - Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of how we learn about the past.

- 1.4 write a history based on primary sources

### **Learning Goal and Description**

*Goal:* To commence writing a history based on primary sources.

*Brief Description:* Students will use the concepts and processes from the social sciences (an inquiry model and the tools of the historian to analyze events, ideas, and issues) in order to write about some part of their history (their family or their community) preferably reaching as far back as the period of conflict that encompassed the War of 1812.

### **Planning and Preparation**

*Sources* and references will vary according to student's choice of topic. The emphasis will be placed on the search for and utilization of primary sources.

*Preparations* will include:

1. Student access to **Organizer #10** for planning and for recording their list of primary sources (which will be placed in their Portfolio).
2. Access to local sources, including resources available virtually, where possible and appropriate.

### **Strategies for Completion**

**Activation:** (30 to 40 minute brainstorming, instructional session.)

Teachers may begin with the question: *How would you start to write a history of your family or community? How would you go about collecting information?* A ten to fifteen minute brainstorming session should prompt students' thinking about primary and secondary sources that could inform their family or community history. From the session, students should become aware of the most important primary sources of information – older family members or community elders who lived through previous generations; photographs and documents maintained by the immediate and extended family or by community members/organizations; church

and community records, census documents; etc.

Teachers may then move to a discussion of how a family or community history may be organized. Teachers may ask: *What would an outline of topics look like? What would be the most important information to include?* This part of the lesson should take another ten to fifteen minutes of brainstorming and class discussion. This discussion should reveal main points around the 5 W's. Who comprises the family or community? Where did the family(ies) come from? When did the ancestors come to their present location? Why? What are the most significant family or community stories (events)?

Teachers may then review the components of **Organizer #10** in preparation for their work during the next class (the **Connection** section).

**Connection:** (30 to 40 minute group activity followed by a sharing session.)

Teachers may arrange students in pairs so that they may have a partner for discussion about the components of the task. Teachers may ask students to complete **Organizer #10**, through discussion with their partners and by reflecting on the discussions about primary sources in the previous class. At the end of the activity, teachers will collect the completed **Organizer #10** from each student for assessment and to provide feedback to inform students' next steps.

**Consolidation:** (Students will complete this activity independently.)

Students may write a journal entry that begins as follows: *As I write my family (Community) history, I plan to...* The objective of the entry is to have students reflect on and refine the possibilities as to what will be included and how it will be presented.

**Extension:** (Optional.)

Design a standard form or series of questions that may be used in letters, emails, or telephone calls to individuals (family members, elders, experts) who may have primary sources or may serve as primary sources of information.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

For this learning activity, teachers should

- Examine students' completed **Organizer #10** (assess level of detail).
- Examine students' journal entries. Look for strategies (intellectual tools) the student intends to use and the degree of insight into the project (and enthusiasm).
- Provide feedback to encourage students to continue the construction of their family or community history in the years to come.

## ORGANIZER # 10: Writing History

My Family/Community History	
Considerations	Notes
<b>A: Information I need to gather</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People I will talk to...</li><li>• Documents I will look for...</li><li>• Images I will look for...</li><li>• Images I will construct...</li></ul>	
<b>B: How I will analyze and organize my information</b>	
<b>C: How I will share (present) my information</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A book with images?</li><li>• Annotated family tree?</li><li>• A video?</li><li>• A website?</li><li>• A Facebook entry?</li><li>• A Blog?</li><li>• A diary/journal?</li><li>• A combination of forms?</li></ul>	
<b>D: Questions that will guide my research</b>	