

Intermediate Learning Activity 2: How do we know what we know? (Examining Evidence about Fort Point and the War of 1812)

Course Links: Course Links: Intermediate Social Studies (In Newfoundland and Labrador, Grade 8 History and Grade 9 Social Studies.)

Outcomes addressed:

Grade 8 History

SCO 1.1 The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of history:

- 1.1.1 Identify historical sources in their own community.
- 1.1.2 Examine how historical sources are windows into the past.
- 1.1.7 Infer an historical condition (e.g., economic role, social more, lifestyle, living conditions) from an historical source.

SCO 1.2: The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of how to find out about the past:

- 1.2.1 Distinguish between a primary source and a secondary source.
- 1.2.3 Formulate a key question that is supported by a given source.
- 1.2.4 Identify other sources that relate to the key question.
- 1.2.5 Gather information that is significant for the question.

Grade 9 Social Studies

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

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

Learning Goal and Description

Goal: To identify and examine primary and secondary sources as windows into the past and to infer historical conditions (economic roles, living conditions, and conflicts).

Brief Description: This learning activity focuses primarily on the interpretation of primary sources to piece together historical conditions. Students will examine

- a) Archival material from the period (e.g., maps, charts, paintings, correspondence, diaries)
- b) Artifacts and information gathered from Archaeological digs

They will use these sources to build the story of what happened and when. In doing this, students will consistently address the question: *How reliable are the sources?*

Planning and Preparation

Sources students will examine are listed in the *Teacher Notes for Connection Section* (see attachment).

Preparations: This Learning Activity exposes students to a substantial amount of information. It is not necessary for teachers to read and view all the information in advance. Teachers and students can assume an inquiry approach and, together, seek answers to the questions. It is important that teachers they make the materials

available (preferably electronically to reduce the use of paper).

- Teachers will guide students to the primary sources available virtually at the Trinity Historical Society Website.
- Teachers will ensure students have access to the **Question Sheets** and **Organizer** for this activity.

Strategies for Completion

Activation: (*approximately one class period; 50 to 60 minutes.*)

Teachers may begin by asking students: “*What is the difference between primary and secondary sources?*” (Students should understand that **Primary** sources are sources that come *from* the time period being studied. **Secondary** sources are any sources that come *after* the time period being studied. They should also understand the importance of primary sources.) Students will recall sources displayed at the Trinity Historical Society Website from Learning Activity 1; however, the important objective of this introduction is to have students recognize the variety of evidence available from this period in the history of Trinity.

Next, teachers may guide students to primary sources available virtually at the Trinity Historical Society Website. Teachers may note the organization of the website and key sections to help focus students’ search for information later in this Learning Activity.

Teachers may use the visuals and accompanying text from the Trinity Historical Society’s Website (Images 1, 11-14, text attachments) to highlight the increasing importance of Trinity as one of Great Britain’s main “colonial interests” in North America from 1700 through the mid 1800s. (As early as 1579, Sir Richard Whitbourne was promoting Trinity as an excellent harbour from which to engage in the Newfoundland fishery. The first Court of the Admiralty was held in Trinity in 1615. By 1700, Trinity was a strong year-round settlement and the main harbour for many British merchants, particularly from Poole. The rise in importance of Trinity was due to its large protected harbour with abundant land for mercantile premises, its proximity to the main shipping routes to Europe and the Caribbean, and its strategic location as a centre from which to establish fishing posts around Trinity Bay and along the Northeast Coast.)

Teachers may also take time to discuss reliability of Sources (see *Teacher Notes*)

- Is the source accurate?
- Can the sources be verified (corroborated)?
- Consider the five W’s (who? What? When? Where? Why?), with special consideration give to *who?* and *why?*
- What does the source add to the overall evidence about the inquiry question?

Teachers may use the time remaining in this instructional period to establish the small groups for the cooperative learning session to follow in the next class. This will include an examination of the **Inquiry Sheets** and the expectations of the cooperative learning exercise.

Connection: (approximately one class period; 50 to 60 minutes)

Students will work in small groups of three to five. Each group will be assigned one of the Inquiry Sheets (where class sizes permit, more than one group will be assigned the same Inquiry Sheet):

Inquiry A: War of 1812 and the Development of Fort Point

Inquiry B: French Invasion of 1762 and the Development of Fort Point

Inquiry C: Significant Periods of development at Fort Point

Inquiry D: Contributions of Archaeologists

Students will elect a group leader and a group recorder. They will then proceed to identify sources from the Trinity Historical Society Website to gather evidence about their question. Teachers will provide support to groups as they work with archival material (much of it created three centuries ago). Teachers will collect students' Inquiry Sheets (for assessment purposes) at the end of the session. Each member of each group will sign the completed Inquiry Sheet.

Consolidation: (approximately one class period; 50 to 60 minutes.)

This section focuses on the importance of good record keeping. Each group leader will be given the **Inquiry Sheet** from the previous session and asked to present the group's evidence. Students will listen to their peers and record their own notes in their journal (notebook). If the classroom technology permits (projection Unit, Internet access), group leaders should be encouraged to reference specific archival material from the Trinity Historical Society's Website, thereby becoming instructor for a time. Teachers may engage students in a class discussion about reliability of the primary sources they found. After the presentations and discussion, teachers may post the completed group **Inquiry Sheet** on the school or class website or on the classroom wall so that individual students may check their notes for accuracy and completeness.

Extension: (A challenge! This optional task may be completed independently outside of instructional time.)

Students may be asked to use primary sources to respond to the following question:

- *What role did Benjamin Lester play in the developments surrounding Fort Point in 1812?*

Students will quickly realize that Benjamin Lester died in 1802. Without benefit of historical perspective, they could easily suggest he had no role because he wasn't around. However, his role in the French invasion of Trinity in 1762 was substantial. Some say his actions saved much of Trinity. Others say he protected his interests at the expense of other merchants and Fort Point. Students may use **Organizer 4** to compile evidence from the period and then "make reasoned assessments" (judgments) about his role in influencing events that unfolded in 1812.

Assessment and Evaluation

For this learning activity, teachers may

- examine the detail and level of effort students demonstrate in the completion of their **Inquiry Sheets**;
- use a simple rubric to assess each student's engagement in the cooperative learning activities; and
- measure the level of detail provided by students in their journal (notebook) entries.

ORGANIZER # 4: Benjamin Lester and the French Invasion of Trinity.

Note: Lester's diary entries have many spelling and usage errors. The text attachment that accompanies each image will help pull the main points out of each entry.

Sources	My Summaries / Observations
<p>Lester's Diary (Friday-Saturday, July 16th – August 3rd) (Images 39-52)</p> <p>What items did the French want?</p> <p>What did they destroy?</p> <p>What role did Lester appear to play on a daily basis?</p> <p>How reliable is this source (a personal diary)?</p>	
<p>Lester's Economic Interests in Trinity, Trinity Bay, and Northeast Coast (Images 21-23)</p> <p>What role did Lester play in Newfoundland's migratory fishery?</p> <p>What influence did Lester have around Trinity Bay and the Northeast Coast?</p> <p><i>Note: Read text attachments carefully.</i></p>	
<p>Speculation as to Benjamin Lester's role in events surrounding Fort Point, 1812-1815.</p>	

Teacher Notes for *Activation and Connection* Section

Activation Section

Reliability: To focus students' attention on interrogating a source to determine accuracy, objectivity, completeness, bias, or prejudice, teachers are encouraged to remind students they should be always mindful of who wrote/produced the artifacts, the purpose or motive and whether the artifact "fits" the time period and is supported by other evidence.

At the end of the Connection section of this Learning Activity, teachers can return to the 1762 diary of Benjamin Lester and the 1775 Letter from de la Motte as examples of primary sources that bring with them personal and emotional considerations. In assuming the role of historians, students need to consider the social, political and historical context of the individual or group producing a source of evidence. They should consistently ask the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why?

Connection Section

The following is a list of potential Sources and references are available virtually at through the Trinity Historical Society's Website under Legacy of Fort Point. This will help teachers assist students who may have difficulty locating appropriate sources of information.

Inquiry A: What role did the War of 1812 play in the development of Fort Point, Trinity?

The artifacts students may examine from this period include:

- i. 1812 Engineer's Report on Admiral's Point (THS virtual Gallery, Image 90)
- ii. Text attachment for Image 89 (William Kelson)
- iii. A Brief Summary of Historical References to the Fort at Admiral's Point, Trinity, Newfoundland, March 20, 1987 (THS virtual Gallery, Images 8 & 9)

Inquiry B: What significant events took place at Fort Point and Trinity in 1762?

The artifacts students may examine from this period include:

- i. Excerpts from Diary of Benjamin Lester, July-August, 1762 (THS virtual Gallery, Images 39-50)
- ii. Letter from Chevalier de la Motte, Vauvert, February 22, 1775 (THS virtual Gallery, Images 59-63)
- iii. Cartographic Map of Trinity Harbour, 1762 (THS virtual Gallery, Image 31)
- iv. A Brief Summary of Historical References to the Fort at Admiral's Point, Trinity, Newfoundland, March 20, 1987 (THS virtual Gallery, Images 8 & 9)

Inquiry C: What were the significant periods of development for Fort Point, Trinity?

The artifacts students may examine include:

- i. Plan of the Admiral's Point, Trinity Harbour, 1740s & 1750s (THS virtual Gallery, Image 24, 25, 26, 27, 29 & 30)
- ii. Construction of Lighthouse, 1871-1874 (THS virtual Gallery, Images 97 to 105, including text attachments)
- iii. Site developments for tourist attraction (THS virtual Gallery, select Images 215-242)

Inquiry D: What contribution did Archaeologists make toward revealing the role of Fort Point, Trinity as a fortification?

The artifacts students may examine include:

- i. The Archaeological dig at Fort Point in 1969 (THS virtual Gallery, images 151-163)
- ii. The findings (1970 report by F. Bartovics, images 164-171).