

Learning Activity 1: Establishing Context

Trinity, ".....the best and largest harbour in all the Land."(Whitbourne, 1620)

Course Link: Newfoundland and Labrador studies 2205

Outcomes addressed:

SCO 2.0 - The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of economic, political and social issues related to Newfoundland and Labrador, both past and present.

SCO 4.0 - The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the peopling of Newfoundland and Labrador to the mid-1700s.

SCO 5.0 - The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of how the fishery influenced Newfoundland and Labrador from the mid-1700s to the late 1800s.

Learning Goal and Description

Goal: To demonstrate the geographical features and strategic location of Trinity Harbour and Fort Point that made it a substantial military and economic interest for European countries.

Brief Description: An examination of the location and the special features of Trinity Harbour and Fort Point will quickly demonstrate why Britain and France would see the area as one of importance in their quest for dominance in North America. It will also become clear why the location would be of significant interest to the Americans as had occurred during the American War of Independence.

Note to Teacher:

The American War of Independence (from Great Britain) lasted from 1775-1783. American privateers were privately owned, armed merchant ships that were authorized by the American government to attack foreign ships and other foreign interests. Between 1775 and 1783, American privateers caused a major disruption in the commercial fishery in Newfoundland, including Trinity Bay and the shipping routes from Trinity to Europe and the Caribbean.

For an indication of the impact American Privateers had on the Newfoundland fishery and commercial interests during the American War of Independence, see "Long Term Impact of the Revolution at http://www.heritage.nf.ca/exploration/rev_long_impact.html.

Also note the reference to American privateers in "A Brief Summary of Historical Reference to the Fort at Admiral's Point, p.5 (Image #9 in the Trinity Historical Society (THS) virtual Gallery).

Planning and Preparation

Sources and references will include

1. *Google Earth* or maps of the globe
2. Map of Trinity Bay
3. Maps and diagrams of Trinity Harbour and Fort Point from Trinity Historical Society's (THS) Virtual Gallery: #s 31, 29, 25, and 11

Preparations will include:

1. Providing students with access to *Google Earth* or maps of the globe
2. Accessing (for viewing) a map of Trinity Bay
3. Accessing the images from the THS virtual gallery
4. Providing students with the **Organizer #1** for recording their observations about the features and the military and economic advantages the location afforded (which will be placed in their Portfolio)

Strategies for Completion

Activation: (half hour instruction)

Teachers may begin by asking students how they could investigate the features of a river, bay, or harbor in Canada. What sources might they use? What technology is available to assist them in their study? (The questions are intended to get students thinking about the tools or sources for such investigations. Later, they may be asked to compare the sources and tools available today with those available in the 1700s and 1800s.)

Teachers may then introduce the purpose of the Activity: Understanding the features of Trinity Harbour and Fort Point that made the location a strategic military and economic centre during the 1700s and 1800s.

Teachers may use *Google Earth* to engage students in a preliminary look at Trinity, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador. Alternatively, teachers may ask students to find Trinity Bay on a map of the world and, subsequently, Trinity Harbour within Trinity Bay.

Connection: (half hour pair activity)

Students may work in pairs to examine visuals of Trinity Harbour and Fort Point. Using **Organizer #1** provided, students may record the features of Trinity Harbour and Fort Point. (See list of visuals under Planning and Preparation.)

Teachers may highlight the point that, while today we have satellites and other advanced technology to map and guide us, captains and commanders of the 18th and 19th centuries had only a spyglass (monocular) and instruments such as a compass, sextant and rough maps. They were never able to “look down” on Trinity Harbour. (As an alternative approach, teachers may use “flipped instruction” here, to encourage independent investigations. Teachers may provide **Organizer #1** along with the links to Google, maps, and the Trinity Historical site. Students may come to class with their **Organizer #1** completed and class time would then be spent sharing students’ investigations and questioning for clarification.)

Consolidation: (one hour student work at home or in class)

Students may choose one of the following options to demonstrate their understanding of why the features of Trinity Harbour might be considered as having military and economic importance:

- A letter to the King of England or France arguing the case for developing Trinity as a key military and economic stronghold in the British colony.
- A speech to the merchants of London or Paris outlining the strategic location and security of Trinity as a place to develop business.
- A multi-media presentation (allowing static images to be infused) that provides a fictitious argument for why the United States should use Trinity as their base of operations as they take control of Newfoundland and Labrador and make it another American State.

Extension: (optional)

Sometime after they have examined more primary and secondary sources related to Fort Point, students may take a field trip to the site. Teachers will need to organize a half day visit in order that students have adequate time to tour the various components of the Fort and examine the information at the Visitor's Centre.

Students may be asked to respond to the following question: What would Trinity and the surrounding areas (that comprise Trinity Bight) look like if Trinity had continued to be one of the most important centres on the Island and had become the capital of Newfoundland and Labrador? In responding to this question may

- briefly examine the major features of capital cities across Canada (using *Google Earth* and Internet sites), focusing on what are the major features of a capital city (using a chart to record their investigations); and then
- write a journal entry in which they describe Trinity as the capital of Newfoundland and Labrador and Trinity Bight as a metropolitan area.

Assessment and Evaluation

For this learning activity, teachers should look for completion of **Organizer #1** provided and measure the degree of detail in responses and the depth of the thinking regarding the important economic and military advantages of Trinity, as a base for a commercial fishery and protection against enemies. Teachers may use a simple point system rubric (that measures skills/strategies as well as quality of content) to provide feedback on the students' choice of response under **Consolidation**.

ORGANIZER #1

Analysis Sheet: Trinity and Trinity Harbour	
Considerations	Observations
Size and Shape of the Harbour	
Location and shape of Fort Point	
Location and size of Harbour Entrance	
Surroundings (e.g., mountains for shelter and protection; land for commercial and agricultural use)	
Other	