

Learning Activity 5: Cause and Consequence

A change in a single action or condition and an important event might have turned out differently.

Course Link: Newfoundland and Labrador studies 2205

Outcome addressed:

SCO 1.0 - The student will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of how the arts may be used to express ideas related to culture, heritage and identity

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.

Learning Goal and Description

Goal: To examine the potential consequences of a single change or condition on the larger course of history. This Learning activity is designed to challenge students who may think that history is a series of “givens” and that all that happened in the past was inevitable (simply met to happen). Students will be asked to question, to ask “What if...?”

Brief Description: Students will be provided several scenarios and asked to speculate about the longer term consequences, based on their study of actual events of the historical periods.

Planning and Preparation

Sources:

- a) For the **Organizer #11** option, teachers may refer students back to
 - Cartographic Map of Trinity Harbour, 1762 (Image 31)
 - Excerpts from Lester’s diary, July-August, 1762 (Images 39-50)
 - Chevalier de la Motte’s letter, February 22, 1775 (Images 59-63)
- b) For the **Organizer #12** option, teachers may refer students back to Buchan’s letters to the Magistrates of Trinity District and their Responses, 1813 (Images 92-95)
- c) For the **Organizer #13** option, teachers may refer students to the following sources:
 - The Canadian Encyclopedia:
<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/privateering-during-the-war-of-1812>
 - D. W. Prowse’s History of Newfoundland, page 389
<http://books.google.ca/books?id=typhCoyd1S8C&pg=PA389&lpg=PA389&dq=american+privateers+,+Newfoundland&source=bl&ots=RdeWxBzGl&sig=JC2tnULk50Z477REkWcFAWFyJJo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=zdyCUemTPjXK4AOQkYCIDA&sqi=2&ved=0CFcQ6AEwBw#v=onepage&q=american%20privateers%20%2C%20Newfoundland&f=false>

- Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website
http://www.heritage.nf.ca/exploration/rev_long_impact.html

Preparations:

- For the **Consolidation** section, teachers may direct students to read several entries in Benjamin Lester’s Diary in the days between June 27th and August 2nd (the days leading up to the French invasion and the period of the invasion). This will help students understand the communication system during the period.
- Teachers will ensure students have access to the **Organizers** for this activity.

Strategies for Completion

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

Teachers may engage students in a brainstorming session using the following quote: *“Change one thing and you change everything.”* Teachers may start the brainstorming with two or three examples of actions and/or conditions that have changed the course of history or “our place”. Examples may include:

- During the Battle of Quebec, the General James Wolfe and the British Forces defeated General Louis Montcalm and the French forces on the Plains of Abraham in 1763. What if Montcalm’s forces had defeated the British?
- Regardless of competing claims of victory in the War of 1812, Canada was successful in maintaining all her territory. What if Canada (and the British) had lost that war and control of all the Canadian land?
- The Newfoundland Regiment in 1916: Many argue that one half hour of battle in Beamount Hamel, France, on the morning of July 1, 1916 changed the course of Newfoundland history forever. Within that half hour almost 700 (80 percent) of the Regiment (young Newfoundlanders) were killed, wounded or went missing – 310 died on the spot. The entire population of Newfoundland at that time was approximately 240,000. What if the battle had never taken place?
- Sir William Ford Coaker is credited with changing the economic, political, and social landscape of Newfoundland. What if Coaker had never existed?
- Hurricane Igor: one morning of very heavy rain and extremely high winds changed the physical landscape of entire communities in Trinity Bight. It also changed the way people in Trinity Bight think about how and where to build; about how to protect against an enemy of an entirely different kind.

Next, teachers may encourage students to think quietly for three minutes about possible actions or conditions they experienced, heard about, or read about that were “game changers” in the life of an individual or in the history of some place. After they make jot notes, students may discuss with a peer the possible outcome(s) if the event had never happened or had turned out differently. Following the peer share, teachers may call upon several students to share their story with the class. This session should stimulate students’ thinking about the fact that **historical events are not givens**. Causes and consequences could have been influenced.

Teachers may ask students to take five minutes to think back over the events that unfolded around Trinity and Fort Point between 1700 and 1815 with the following question in mind: *What consequences would a change in one single action or condition have had on the larger course of events?* Students may be asked to write down one of two instances where a single change in the actions or conditions might

have had a significant impact on the subsequent history of the period. Students may place their notes in their portfolio for consideration and reflection later under the **Consolidation** section of this Learning Activity.

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

Students may be asked to work in pairs to complete one of the following:

Organizer 11: The French did not capture Trinity, 1762

Organizer 12: A Signaling Station was established a Trinity, 1813-1815

Organizer 13: American Privateers take Trinity, 1812

Teachers may select several pairs and ask them to present their speculations.

(Teachers should ensure that responses to all three scenarios are presented and discussed in class.)

Consolidation: *(15 minutes of instruction and question and answer; students will then complete this task independently; presentations may be incorporated into their social studies course or some other aspect of their school year.)*

Students may select their own action or condition from the earlier brainstorming session within the **Activation** section – or an entirely new one (with teacher approval). Students may then speculate how a change in that action or condition might have changed the course of history for Trinity and for Newfoundland. Their mode of response should make use of the arts to express their ideas. For example, their response may be one of the following:

- a short (three to five minute) speech delivered as a warning in the House of Lords in London
- a dramatic dialogue between two individuals across time periods (e.g., 1762 and 1812)
- an enactment where the student assumes the role of an individual from the period and presents a dramatic monologue that begins with the words, *What if...*

Extension: *(to be completed independently outside of class time)*

Using information provided in entries in Benjamin Lester's Diary between June 27th and August 2nd, students may explain the role **communication** played in the invasion of Trinity and the destruction of the Fort in 1762 (which had a significant impact on the decision to re-establish fortifications at Fort Point in 1812). Students may then consider the following questions:

- What if the merchants and personnel stationed at Admiral's (Fort) Point had all the modern methods of communication (satellite tracking, mobile phones, twitter, facebook, Internet)?
- How would the situation in Trinity in 1762 have unfolded?

Students may develop a Plan of Action (including monitoring) that could have been established using modern communications technology to respond to the threat from the French. (Students may include both the explanation of communication in 1762 and the Plan of Action in their portfolios.)

Assessment and Evaluation

For this learning activity, teachers may

- examine the levels of detail and effort students demonstrate in the completion of their **organizers**;
- assess each student's engagement in pair group work; and
- measure the depth of thinking / reflection provided by students in their responses to the task assigned under ***Consolidation***.

ORGANIZER # 11: *What if*, Cause and Consequence

Instructions: *Carefully read the scenario in the left column and the “What if” questions addressing the scenario. On the right column, speculate on the short-term and long-term consequence of the change in action / condition.*

What If	Then
<p>Action / Condition In his 1895 <i>History of Newfoundland</i>, Judge Daniel Woodley Prowse stated the following: “Feriland [Ferryland], Carboniere [Carbonear] and Trinity Harbours had each an officer of artillery with about 18 or 20 men and an officer of Foot and 30 men. There were 200 small arms at each place for the use of the inhabitants. If these defences had been kept up, the French would not have succeeded in capturing these places in 1762.” (THS virtual Gallery, Image 5)</p> <p>What if Prowse was correct?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would the history of Trinity have looked like if the French had been stopped at the entrance to Trinity Harbour in July, 1762? 	<p>Short Term Consequences</p>
<p>Consider questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would Trinity have looked like by the 1800s? • What would have been the impact on Trinity during the War of 1812? Would there have been a War of 1812? 	<p>Long Term Consequences</p>

ORGANIZER # 12: *What if*, Cause and Consequence

Instructions: *Carefully read the scenario in the left column and the “What if” questions addressing the scenario. On the right column, speculate on the short-term and long-term consequence of the change in action / condition.*

What If	Then
<p>Action / Condition</p> <p>In 1813 Judge David Buchan, on behalf of the Governor of Newfoundland, wrote two letters to magistrates of the District of Trinity regarding the possibility of Fort Point as a site for a signaling station system for Trinity Bay. A signaling station was never established at Fort Point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What if Trinity had become a signalling station?• What impact would such a station have had on Fort Point?	<p>Short Term Consequences</p>
<p>Consider questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What impact would such a development have had in changing the course of history for Trinity and for Newfoundland?	<p>Long Term Consequences</p>

ORGANIZER # 13: *What if*, Cause and Consequence

Instructions: *Carefully read the scenario in the left column and the “What if” questions addressing the scenario. On the right column, speculate on the short-term and long-term consequence of the change in action / condition.*

What If	Then
<p>Action / Condition American privateers had a huge impact on British merchant shipping during the War of 1812, often seizing and sinking ships in traditional English trade routes. This disrupted the Newfoundland fishery and severely reduced the profits of merchants in places such as Trinity. There were fears that American Privateers would seize Trinity – fears that grew out of experiences during the American Revolution (1775-1783) and led to the re-fortification of Fort Point in 1812.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What if Trinity had been captured by American Privateers sometime between 1812 and 1815?• What impact would such an invasion have had on Fort Point?	<p>Short Term Consequences</p>
<p>Consider questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What impact would such a development have had in changing the course of history for Trinity and for Newfoundland, especially if Canada and the British had been defeated during that time?	<p>Long Term Consequences</p>