

Connections to Canada

Lesson 3:

The Battle of Hong Kong: Two Soldiers' Stories

Lesson Description:

Learners will step into the shoes of two men from different backgrounds who suffered during WWII. By discovering George MacDonell and Patrick Metallic's stories, learners will have a greater understanding of The Battle of Hong Kong, the Prisoner of War (POW) experience, and the issues veterans face upon returning home. Although both of these men fought for their country bravely and valiantly, they experienced much different outcomes post war. Through an interactive activity called "paper toss" learners will have the opportunity to experience both these men's lives and examine their privileges. George and Patrick are representative of a greater group of peoples i.e. white persons and indigenous persons. The "paper toss" activity will be deconstructed in a group discussion.

Core question(s):

- Why did two men who fought and suffered the same amount for their country have such different lives?
- To learn about The Battle of Hong Kong
- Learn about the struggle's veterans face
- Explore how privilege & race effects a person's outcome in life

Learning Goals:

Competencies: Historical Thinking

| Historical Significance | Cause & Consequence | Continuity & Change | Historical Perspective |
|---|---|---|---|
| Using primary and secondary sources | Through inquiry | Through inquiry | Through inquiry |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Determine & explain the importance of people, events/developments or ideas <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assess the impact of the past and on the present <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate how importance may shift for various people and over time | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identify various causes using one or more accounts of the event or development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Explain both intended and unintended consequences <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assess the relative influence of various causes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evaluate the impact of various consequences | <input type="checkbox"/> Compare what has changed and what has stayed the same over a period of time (explain why) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Determine using sound inferences from multiple sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assess how an event may involve progress for some people or groups and decline for others | <input type="checkbox"/> Explain reasons for then and now ideas and beliefs <input type="checkbox"/> Infer past viewpoints using varied sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Analyze how and why of ideas and beliefs in a particular time and why they may be different from today (context) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Analyze the tension that can exist between conflicting past and present-day viewpoints about history (presentism) |

Materials

- PowerPoint Presentation
- World Map [handout](#)
- Heroes Remember Presents: The Battle of Hong Kong [\[video\]](#)
- Paper Toss [guide](#) and [que sheet](#)
- Remembering a Mi'kmaw Soldier [\[video\]](#)
- Veteran Testimonies [\[video\]](#)

Materials Extension

- Savage Christmas: Battle of Hong Kong 1941 [\[video\]](#)
- Film study [worksheet](#)
- One soldier's Story 1939 – 1945 From the fall of Hong Kong to the Defeat of Japan [book]
- Oral History George MacDonell [\[video\]](#)
- The Memory Project: [George MacDonell](#)

(All videos in this lesson require access to wifi)

| Activity | Grouping | | | Approach (Pedagogy) | Materials |
|--|----------|---|---|---|--|
| | W | S | I | | |
| Activity 1: World Map Activity | ✓ | | | Ask learners to find Hong Kong on map of Asia. Once concluded show slide of where Hong Kong is. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute handout of map of Asia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint Presentation • World Map handout |
| Activity 2: The Battle of Hong Kong Through Two Soldiers' Eyes | ✓ | | | Introduce George MacDonell and Patrick Metallic – Two individuals who fought in the battle and survived POW camps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the short bios of both men pre WWII – One white Canadian male and one indigenous Canadian male | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint Presentation |
| Activity 3: George and Patrick's Story | ✓ | | | Telling the history of The Battle of Hong Kong through the eyes of two men from different backgrounds. Both experienced very similar if not exact fates during the battle and captivity. <p>Possible Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have learners heard about The Battle of Hong Kong? <p>Critical Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did Canada send troops? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Political ◦ Loyalty to the crown ◦ Colonialism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint Presentation |
| Activity 4: George and Patrick Return Home | ✓ | | | Group Discussion – What are the effects of war and captivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask learners what they think are some of the effects of war? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Take a few answers ◦ Reveal slide of some of the effects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint Presentation • Heroes Remember Presents: The Battle of Hong Kong [video] |

| Activity | Grouping | | | Approach (Pedagogy) | Materials |
|--|----------|---|---|---|--|
| | W | S | I | | |
| | | | | <p>Discuss George and Patrick's Return home with fellow "C" force members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scars of war • Redress and reconciliation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Refer to complexities of redress lesson for more information <p>Critical Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why didn't the veterans have better support? • Why was the Japanese Imperial Army so brutal? <p>Juxtapose George and Patrick's lives once returning home</p> | |
| Activity 5: Paper Toss | ✓ | ✓ | | <p>Learners will experience George and Patrick's post war lives. The activity will highlight privileges that the men received or did not receive based on who they are and what they looked like. Although we are stepping into the shoes of two persons, both persons represent a larger group of people.</p> <p>Prior to implementing the activity it is advised to play the video interview with Patrick's daughter. Hopefully it will give some insight into the Canadian indigenous experience. Link provided in materials.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint Presentation • Paper Toss guide and que sheet • Remembering a Mi'kmaw Soldier [video] |
| Activity 6: Paper Toss Deconstruction | ✓ | | | <p>Follow prompts on the PowerPoint Presentation and ask learners Q's, have a group discussion regarding the activity and go deeper into privileges people receive based on numerous societal factors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint Presentation • Paper Toss guide |

(W) Whole group (S) Small group (I) Individual

Extension Learning Activity: Open-ended Inquiry Project

Film Study

- Savage Christmas: Battle of Hong Kong 1941 [\[video\]](#)
- Film study [worksheet](#)

Thinking Questions for further inquiry:

1. Why did Canada send troops?
2. What other groups are affected by privilege?
3. Why do veterans of war suffer so much?
4. What are the effects of trauma?
5. Do social services exist for veterans and are they easy to acquire?

Extension Learning Activity: Open-ended Inquiry Project

Other Resources

- One Soldier's Story 1939 – 1945 From the fall of Hong Kong to the Defeat of Japan [book]
- Oral History George MacDonell [\[video\]](#)
- The Memory Project: [George MacDonell](#)
- Veteran Testimonies [\[video\]](#)

Bibliography

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TvxdVL9hA5K6u5F4g32YoVubrLa30a7YfsKl8JMcTJg/edit?usp=sharing>