

Military Heritage Project

Introduction and Lesson Overview

Unit: Saskatchewan Military Heritage

The Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport is proud to make available to teachers a series of videos of Saskatchewan Second World War veterans of all branches of service who recount personal stories about their experiences in the Second World War. These fascinating interviews promote awareness and understanding of the significant role Saskatchewan veterans played in supporting the war effort during the Second World War.

In addition, the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport along with support from the Ministry of Education is pleased to include a series of lesson plans that have been developed to support several outcomes from Social Studies, English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Arts Education (including dance, drama, music and visual art) for grades six to eight. These are a series of Second World War lessons geared to support a broad array of outcomes which require students to work through the inquiry process to discover the role the army, navy and air force provided with the sole goal of victory over Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Germany, and Tojo's Japan.

Each of these lessons is intended to support the curriculum at the teacher's discretion. This package is not intended to serve as a unit that requires the teacher to follow the lessons in a specific order. These lessons may be used at different intervals during the school year in order to support the curriculum at a time that best suits the individual teacher and their long range planning.

Several lessons have been made available each with a separate theme which will reflect the themes of the eight videos. The lessons are as follows:

1. All Branches: "Training and Preparing for War"
2. All Branches: "Price of Freedom"
3. Royal Canadian Navy: "HMCS Regina"
4. First Nations: "Prisoners of War" and "Aboriginal War Experiences"
5. Merchant Navy: "Supporting the Troops"
6. Air Force: "Soldiers Return Home"
7. All Branches: "Commemoration"

For each lesson there is a specific amount of research required beginning with the viewing of the videos. The research will vary from theme to theme and focus on either the geographic elements of the veterans' experiences or history of the events which the veterans were part of creating. Others will require research of the technological aspects of the war such as the types of equipment used or the purpose and operation of the equipment. As well, student research will focus on the men and women themselves and how they were trained.

The students will use their research to help them to create a final product for each lesson. There will be some opportunity for each teacher and/or student to select from a short list of possible products that are of a more creative nature and less of a "written report" format. These projects will use the research and will help the students to develop a greater understanding and appreciation for the contributions of the veterans whose stories have been told. In this way, outcomes of different subjects can be satisfied through the diversity of the culminating projects/activities and by the nature of the research suggested in the lessons.

The lessons are also designed so that the teacher may select an approach to use with his/her class as there is not one prescribed direction that each lesson must go. In all, the lessons emphasize inquiry right from the beginning by starting with KWL charts. As the students watch the video it is suggested that they use the accompanying Video Note Taking Guide. From there the lessons will vary. Some will suggest further research into the events of the Second World War, the role of the army, navy, or air force, or further research on another aspect of the war. Lessons will conclude with activities of some type where the teacher may select or the teacher may allow the students to select from the list in each lesson. These activities vary in nature to allow for differentiation. The activities also will provide the opportunity to link to curricula other than Social Studies and to support some outcomes in English Language Arts, Math, Science and Art.

Accompanying the lessons are suggested assessment tools for the teacher to use in evaluating the variety of projects that are offered in the lessons. These take the form of rubrics and may also be used by the teacher to help the student understand the expectations as they develop the final products.

Listed below are some of the types of activities that the lessons include:

1. All Branches "Training and Preparing for War"

- map the locations of training centers

- research the goals of Bomber Command and answer questions
- graph statistics of recruits by Province
- research the goals of the BCATP and answer questions
- create a training manual
- create a contextual drama and work in role as different members of the military training and preparing for war
- incorporate various drama strategies while working in role as members of the military training and preparing for war (e.g., still tableaux, monologues, diary entries, families saying goodbye, training camp improvisations)

2. All Branches: “Price of Freedom”

- create a timeline
- research and create an explanation
- write a letter of thank-you
- create a newspaper page
- create an electronic (Prezi/PPT) presentation and show it to the class
- create a 1940’s style radio broadcast

3. Royal Canadian Navy: “HMCS Regina”

- create a map
- write an explanation of buoyancy and how submarines work
- write a story
- write a comparison
- create/draw a graphic novel strip with narration
- create/draw a visual representation
- create a model
- create a dance composition to represent concepts such as buoyancy and submersion
- write letters home in role as a naval officer or sailor describing experiences to loved ones

4. Army/First Nations: “Prisoners of War” and “Aboriginal War Experiences”

- create a story and retell the story
- create a graphic story strip with narration
- create a children’s storybook
- map the travels of the veterans and represent the journey in role within drama episodes
- write a magazine article
- write a biography
- create a visual artwork to honour the heroism and sacrifices of First Nations and Métis veterans

5. Merchant Navy: “Supporting the Troops”

- create a data table/fact sheet
- draw a diagram with explanation
- graph data
- create a scrapbook
- create an electronic (Prezi/PPT) presentation and show it to the class
- create and perform music compositions to “support the troops”

6. Air Force: “Soldiers Return Home”

- write a summary of the role of bombers
- create a ‘Training Manual’
- create a pilot’s ‘Logbook’
- create a visual representation or scrapbook of bomber aircraft
- create a series of trading cards of aircraft
- create/draw a graphic story strip with narration
- create a map
- create a visual representation or booklet explaining how aircraft fly
- create a contextual drama and work in role as air force members leading up to and after the “return home”

7. All Branches: “Commemoration”

- create a timeline of the Second World War
- interview local veterans
- write a short speech of introduction
- write a speech of nomination
- write a magazine/newspaper article
- create a poster of commemoration
- create an electronic (Prezi/PPT) presentation and show it to the class
- create a series of trading cards of military medals
- hold a class tea for veterans
- create a design for a “commemorative monument” for a public space
- work in role as media reporters interviewing veterans about their experiences
- create a short video public service announcement to commemorate the contributions and sacrifices of veterans