

LESSON PLANS & STUDENT ACTIVITIES

D-DAY SERIES: RCN & OPERATION NEPTUNE

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will:
 - Engage in historical thinking
 - Define and contrast 'the past' and 'history'

ACTIVITY:

Using the *D-Day Series: RCN and Operation Neptune* video as a prompt, teach the difference between 'history' and 'the past':

1. Have students take notes, make a word cloud, or create a web of information based on what they see and hear in the video. Encourage them to collect facts, figures, dates, and names of people, excluding any opinions or editorial comments. Emphasize capturing quantity over quality. In this exercise, the jumble of information this will create is a representation of **the past - everything that has ever happened or existed**.
2. Have students write a short paragraph (5-7 sentences) in answer to the following question:

What impact did the actions of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) prior to and on June 6th, have on the outcome of D-Day?

In this exercise, this structured narrative in response to the question is a representation of **history – an organized but changeable story constructed from selected items from the past that are considered to have meaning in the present**.

3. Encourage students to share their paragraphs in small groups or choose a selection of students to share in a large group setting. Have them compare answers. Did students interpret the facts differently at all? Did they take different perspectives or come up with varied answers?
4. Ask students what they think the difference is between the past and history using their notes/word cloud/web as compared to their structured paragraph as an analogy for the two concepts. Come up with definitions of 'the past' and 'history' as a class, or in small groups. Use the definitions in bold above as a guide for the teacher or facilitator of this activity.
5. Through this discussion, shape student learning so that they understand the following:
 - History is always selective and incomplete because the past can never be fully recounted
 - History is the creation of a story or narrative that comes about when the past is examined
 - The narrative historians create depends on what is meaningful in the present
 - The past cannot change, but history is always changing
 - Not all historical narratives are of equal value. The value of a historical narrative is how accurately it represents the past to serve a purpose
 - History can and should be questioned. "Doing" history means critically assessing and creating/recreating historical narratives

Objectives:

Our Intention is to educate Canadian Citizens so that they:

- » *Appreciate the role of our military heritage in protecting Canadian interests, values and beliefs.*
- » *Understand the role our military history has had in shaping our country and the world.*
- » *Are inspired to be engaged and well-informed participatory citizens of Canada.*

Historical Era:

Second World War (1939-1945)

Intended Student Body:

Grades 10 – 12

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- D-Day video clip:
(<http://valourcanada.ca/video-documentaries/dday-series-rcn-and-operation-neptune/>) (16 minutes))