

The Character of our Canadian Military History Program

Afghanistan and KIM game: Afghan Culture

- Afghanistan/War on Terror -

Learning Objectives:

- ✚ Describe the event that triggered the War on Terror and Canada's involvement in Afghanistan.
- ✚ Give two examples of negative impacts on Canadian soldiers as a result of conflict in Afghanistan.
- ✚ Compare and contrast Canadian goals in Afghanistan and the reality faced by soldiers on the ground.
- ✚ Generate one military scenario which might result in unforeseen 'blowback'.
- ✚ Demonstrate the traits: communication; cooperation; courage; resilience; responsibility; thoughtfulness.

Character Traits Explored:

Communication, Cooperation, Courage, Resilience, Responsibility, Thoughtfulness

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**CONNECTING
CANADIANS
TO THEIR MILITARY
HERITAGE**

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Afghanistan and KIM game

Overview: Canada's recent experience in Afghanistan, including causes and challenges of the conflict, will be presented and discussed within a Canadian and a global context. A "Kim" (Keep in Mind) activity that presents Afghan culture (spices, heritage sites, etc.) closes the module. The culminating piece uses real images of a Canadian unit moving through an Afghan neighbourhood; students must identify hazards and potential threats on each photograph and determine which neighbourhood is safest.

History Learning Objectives

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Character Trait Development:

Communication, Cooperation, Courage, Resilience, Responsibility, Thoughtfulness

Total Time: 45-60 min.

Group Size: 4-6

Space: small, indoors with tables for each group

Age: 13 +

Materials:

Part A: Presentation

- PowerPoint: "Afghanistan"
- laptop with internet and projector

Part B: Activity (for per group)

- pencils and a non-transparent tablecloth or sheet
- 1 copy of "Afghanistan Handout"
- 1 copy of "Afghanistan – Items 1of2"
- 1 copy of "Afghanistan – Items 2of2"
- at least 4-6 of the following Afghan cultural items:
mini-Buddha, mini-Quran, rare earth elements, Afghan coins, pomegranates, basmati rice, chai tea, cardamom, turmeric, garam masala, almonds, examples of Pashtun language, cricket ball, samples of an Afghan rug, wheat.



Key Vocabulary

Infrastructure: roads, water, telephone, rail, etc. systems

C.I.A.: Central Intelligence Agency; the primary intelligence group mandated by the U.S. government

U.S.S.R.: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Casualty: a soldier who is removed from the fight due to injury or death

Blowback: unintended side-effects, repercussions, or consequences; the term was created by the C.I.A.

I.E.D.: a trick designed to mislead

Preparation (for the presentation and activity):

- For POWERPOINT presentation:
Setup laptop and projector for presentation of the slideshow: "Afghanistan". Make note of where the activity begins in the PowerPoint (slide 18).

• For the ACTIVITY:

1. First, set up the space. Find a working area where a station (table and chairs) can be setup for each group. Group stations should be separated as much as possible so that the groups cannot overhear discussions within other groups.
2. Next, prep the written portion by printing one “[Afghanistan Handout](#)” worksheet for each group and ensure that each group’s workstation has a pencil and that worksheet. The facilitator should have the worksheets cut into the appropriate pieces and be prepared to hand them out when necessary (see “Activity Instructions” below). The 4 images (last 2 pages of the handout) are for the 3rd and final round of the activity and should be presented to the participants at that point in time.
3. Print “[Afghanistan – Items 1of2](#)” and “[Afghanistan – Items 2of2](#)”, in colour preferably because they will not have the same impact if in black and white. Then trim the pages so that each image is its own individual piece of paper (paper sizes are not required to be the same).
4. For each group/table, arrange the paper items and the cultural items randomly. Then cover the table with the tablecloth so that the participants cannot see the items until the cover is removed.

Directions for Presenting the Module

A- PowerPoint Instructions:

(20 min)

Present the PowerPoint “[Afghanistan](#)” and follow the speaking notes as necessary.

B- Activity Instructions:

(20 min)

1. Follow the PowerPoint slides to introduce (slide 18) and describe the Activity (slide 19-20).

2. Explain the task:

“Working as a group, your first task will be to remember what you see, your second to determine what is missing, and your third to evaluate threat levels for 4 different neighbourhoods.

- **Round 1, Part A** (2 min): The facilitator will nominate one person from each group to carefully remove the cover from their table when given the go ahead. Then the participants will have 120 seconds to determine which objects are on the table and to commit them to memory. Once 120 seconds have elapsed, the items are covered once again, and the participants retreat to elsewhere in the room.
- **Round 1, Part B** (2 min): The facilitator provides the “Round 1” portion of the worksheet to each group. Then the participants are instructed to write a list of the items they saw on the table. They have 120 seconds to complete this task. At the point of expiry their lists are collected by the facilitator.

While the participants are working on writing their list, the facilitator selects 1-3 items that will be removed from each table (each group should have matching assemblages). They are removed carefully, and the covers left upon each set of items.

- **Round 2, Part A** (1 min): The process is the same as Round 1, Part A, except the participants have half the time and must identify what is missing. Once the 60 seconds have elapsed, the items are covered once again.

- **Round 2, Part B** (1 min): The process is the same as Round 1, Part B, except (i) the facilitator provides “Round 2” portion of the worksheet, and (ii) the participants have half the time to complete the task before their list is collected.
- **Round 3** (10-15 min): The process is similar to the first two rounds but this time, each group is given the “Round 3” worksheet along with the 4 images showing different Kandahar neighbourhoods. They are to assume that they are patrolling in a LAV and on the lookout for snipers, IEDs, suspicious behaviour, and other threats. Participants must compare and contrast the different images, discuss as a group, and identify what could be a perceived as a threat in each photo. Their ideas should be recorded on their worksheet. Finally, each group must complete an “Intelligence Report” that identifies (with 3 points) which location has the highest risk for the LAV patrol.

C- Scoring:

Rounds 1 and 2: Each correct answer is worth one point.

Round 3: This is more of a judgement call on the part of the facilitator. Most soldiers think that Location 3 is the most threatening. Many wonder what is going on at Location 4.

Whichever group has the highest score in Rounds 1 and 2 wins this module, but they **must have a reasoned case in Round 3**.

Options for increasing/decreasing difficulty:

The facilitator should always be listening in to each group’s discussions in order to gauge understanding and scaffold the participants as necessary.

1. Regarding rounds 1 and 2, the total # of items can be increased or decreased, and this will increase or decrease the difficulty of the activity respectively.
2. The items can be moved around on the table by the facilitator, either during the activity or in between round 1 and 2.

Debrief

Questions and Prompts:

(1-3 min each)

Debrief (slide 21)

Key Idea

To create a situation where the participants gain a better appreciation of effective situational awareness and the importance of soldiers being finely tuned-in to their surroundings in combat-possible contexts.

- *Ask: Thinking of Round 1 and 2, what did you find the most difficult? Why?*
- *Ask: Thinking of Round 3, what did you find the most difficult? Why?*
- *Prompt: Describe how your group worked together to complete the tasks.*
- *Prompt: Suggest some ideas for training people requiring high degrees of situational awareness.*

<ALL TRAITS can be explored here>