**First Nations and Collective Rights Part 2 Lesson**

**Concept(s)** Historical Perspectives

**Prepared for Grade(s)** 9

**Province** AB

**By** Nzingha Austin-Joyner

**Time Period(s)** 1800-1900, 1900-present

**Time allotment** 3 x 50 minutes

**Brief Description of the Task**

Funding and support for the development of this lesson plan is the result of a grant from Alberta Education to support implementation of the K-12 Social Studies curriculum. Financial and in-kind support was also provided by the Calgary Regional Consortium ([www.crcpd.ab.ca](http://www.crcpd.ab.ca/)).

Students explore the multiple perspectives that existed at the time of the signing of various treaties and the Indian Act (circa 1876), and then create a political cartoon to demonstrate these various viewpoints. They will create a political cartoon on either a specific treaty or The Indian Act that shows the perspective of First Nations peoples, the government, and non-native Canadians. Students also provide an explanation of the message of their cartoon and the techniques they used to transmit this message, and peer review another student's cartoon.

**Required Knowledge & Skills**

After completing the lesson on First Nations and Collective Rights: Part I (also posted at the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking website) students should have background knowledge on Treaties 6, 7, and 8, and The Indian Act

Other resources for this lesson:

Bowman, M., et al. (2008). "Exemplars in Historical Thinking: 20th Century Canada" (Gini-Newman, G., & Misfeldt, C. Eds.). Vancouver: The Critical Thinking Consortium.

"Issues for Canadians." (2008). Toronto: Nelson Education Canada.

**Detailed Instructions**

1. Begin by selecting a political cartoon from the newspaper and analyze it with students. Explore the techniques used by the cartoonist to communicate his or her message. These techniques include:  
– captions — written information that concisely communicates a message  
– relative size — figures are drawn out of proportion from one another  
– use of shading — white, grey, and black used to create effect  
– symbolism — a sign or object that represents something  
– caricature — a distorted representation of a figure

2. Have students identify the techniques used in this particular cartoon, and then ask them to determine the meaning or the message being communicated in the cartoon based on their understanding of the cartoonist's techniques.

3. To give students a framework to help them analyze the cartoon, ask them to provide responses to the 5 Ws (who is in the cartoon, what is happening, where is this taking place, when does this take place, why is this happening).

4. Have the students critique the cartoon using Blackline Master 3: Techniques of Cartooning from "Exemplars in Historical Thinking" (full reference in Background Knowledge section). Alternatively, you could download the worksheet "How to Analyze a Political Cartoon" from the website of the Ontario History and Social Science Teachers' Association, at <http://www.ohassta.org/resources/generalresources.htm>. Provide a number of examples of political cartoons so that students can have sufficient practice. You may wish to have them create a basic four-column chart to record the name of the cartoon, the techniques used in the cartoon, the message the cartoon communicates, and the extent to which the cartoon is effective in communicating this message.

5. With the class, discuss that at the time the Indian Act and the treaties were created, people held different opinions about whether the documents were needed. In particular, First Nations communities, the Canadian government, and non-native Canadians had different perspectives or points of view about the documents. You may need to ask students to take out the previous notes they made on this issue, or have them read pages 124•138 of the Nelson text "Issues for Canadians." Based on this information, ask students in what way the three groups had different historical perspectives on the need for the documents?

6. Ask students to select one of the three groups: First Nations, the government, or non-native Canadians. Then lead the class through a discussion of what kinds of ideas and messages they might want to communicate to a reader from this group. Make sure the students make suggestions about kinds of symbols, captions, caricatures, labels, and methods of composition that could be used to depict these ideas and message.

7. Students will now be ready to create their own political cartoon. They are required to:

(a) Create a political cartoon about the Indian Act or one of the treaties.  
(b) Depict three different perspectives in the cartoon: First Nations, the Canadian government, and non-native Canadians.   
(c) Have an underlying message or opinion that is apparent in the cartoon.  
(d) Write an analysis of their cartoon. The analysis should explain the message they were trying to communicate and discuss how the various techniques they employed helped to communicate their intended message.

8. Once the students have completed their political cartoons, they are to share it with a peer. Their peer will critique the cartoon and the accompanying explanation.

According to The Critical Thinking Consortium ([www.tc2.ca/wp/](http://www.tc2.ca/wp/)), the critique must be:

– Respectful — comments should not be mean spirited, insulting, or condescending  
– Warranted — comments should not be trivial, exaggerated, or unfounded  
– Specific — comments should identify particular aspects of the cartoon, as opposed to being very vague remarks  
– Constructive — advice on how to improve is preferable to comments that merely note areas of strength and weakness

Students should use the rubric below to assess their peer's cartoon and provide feedback. In order to reinforce the idea of effective feedback, the students could be asked to assess their peers on how well the critique fit the above criteria.

**Outcomes**

Historical Thinking Objectives:

Students will be able to consider various historical perspectives of a particular historic event.

Alberta Social Studies Objectives:

9.S.2 Develop Skills of Historical Thinking:  
– Analyze selected issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a context of time and place

9.S.2 Develop Skills of Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking  
– Critically evaluate ideas, information and positions from multiple perspectives  
– Generate creative ideas and strategies in individual and group activities

9.S.4. Demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:  
– Propose and apply strategies or options to solve problems and deal with issues  
– Propose and apply new ideas and strategies, supported with facts and reasons, to contribute to problem solving and decision making

9.S.5 Demonstrate Skills of Cooperation, Conflict Resolution and Consensus Building:  
– Demonstrate a positive attitude regarding the needs and perspectives of others

9.S.7 Apply the Research Process:  
– Develop a position supported by information gathered during research

9.S.9 Develop Skills of Media Literacy:  
– Examine techniques used to enhance the authority and authenticity of media messages  
– Examine the values, lifestyles and points of view represented in a media message

9.1.7  
– How does the Indian Act recognize the status and identity of Aboriginal peoples?  
– How does legislation such as Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 recognize status and identity of Aboriginal peoples?