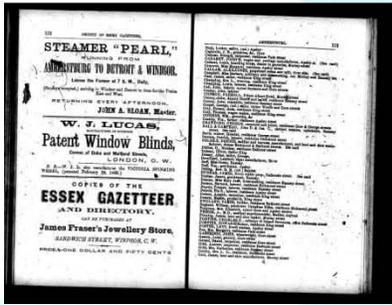




BREAKING THE CHAINS



Levi Foster

ESSEX COUNTY

Grade/ Subject /Strand:

Grade 3 Social Studies – Early Settlements in Upper Canada; Grade 7 History – British North America; Grade 8 Geography - Patterns in Human Geography

Curriculum Developer:

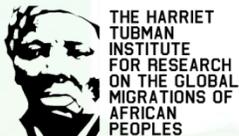
Natasha Henry, Education Specialist, Harriet Tubman Institute, York University

Website

Breaking the Chains: Presenting a New Narrative for Canada's Role in the Underground Railroad
www.yorku.ca/tubman/breakingthechains

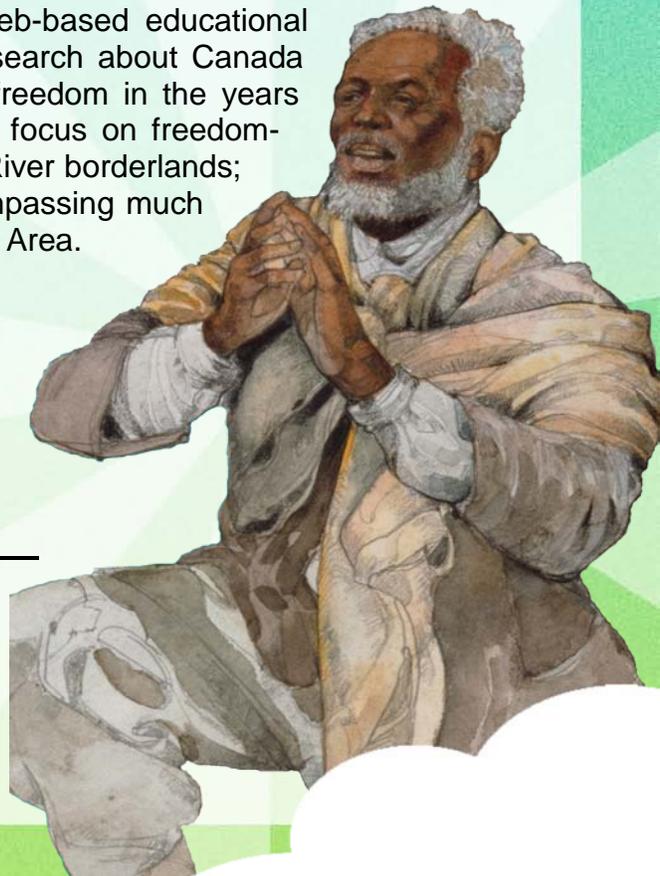
The Website

Breaking the Chains: Presenting a New Narrative for Canada's Role in the Underground Railroad is a groundbreaking new web-based educational project. Its purpose is to develop and share new research about Canada and the brave people who came here in search of freedom in the years before the American Civil War. There is a particular focus on freedom-seekers who settled in the Niagara River and Detroit River borderlands; the Queen's Bush, a vast unorganized territory encompassing much of modern Wellington County; and the Greater Toronto Area.



Instructional Objectives

- Read and analyze census returns from the 1850s to gain insight into the African Canadian population.





- Understand the importance of Blacks acting on their own behalf and of African Canadian community development initiatives.
- Describe the issues facing formerly enslaved Africans.

The Activities

Description

First, students will read the Levi Foster Narrative and view the Levi Foster augmented reality vignette. Students will then analyze and interpret historical statistics, complete a worksheet, and discuss their conclusions in class. Students will read the historical background of the True Band Society. They will then be organized so as to simulate a meeting of the True Band Society. Once the activity is completed, students will write a reflection of their opinions of the importance of self-determination in early African Canadian communities.

Getting Organized

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Students should be familiar with the concept of democracy, the election process and the idea of 'majority rule.'

ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Print out and photocopy the student assignment and activity sheets as needed.
- Review all materials prior to teaching the lesson.
- Book computer time for the class.

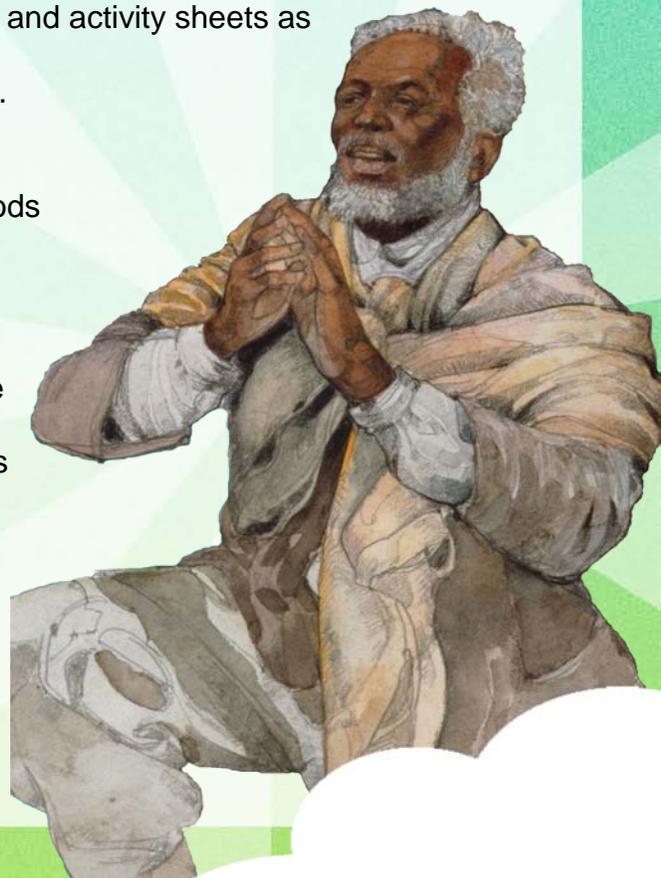
REQUIRED TIME: Approximately 8 to 10 class periods

First Class:

1. Read the Levi Foster Narrative and view the Levi Foster augmented reality vignette.
2. Review the features of a census. Ask students to complete the Levi Foster census activity.

Second and Third Classes:

1. Read the True Band Society background. Discuss the main objectives of the





BREAKING THE CHAINS

organization. Ask students to look up and define any unfamiliar words.

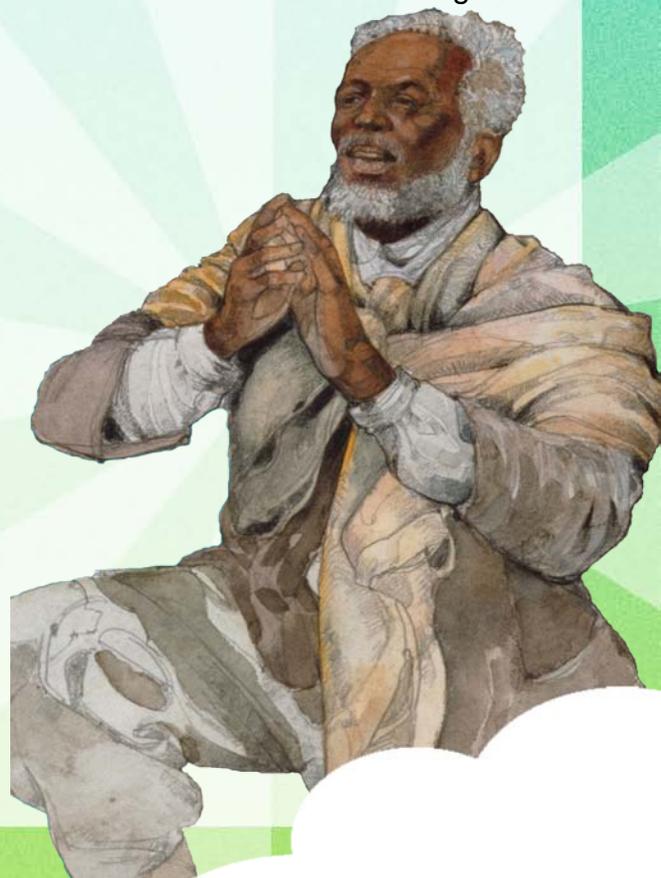
2. If you feel it suitable, and depending on the grade of your students, ask them to read the following articles for more information on the formation of the True Band Society:
 - *Minutes and proceedings of the General Convention for the Improvement of the Colored Inhabitants of Canada, held by adjournments in Amherstburg [sic], C.W., June 16th and 17th, 1853.* (Windsor, C.W.: Bibb & Holly, 1853).
 - “The Amherstburg Appeal,” *Provincial Freeman*, June 30, 1855.
 - “Report of the True Band of Amherstburg,” *Provincial Freeman*, December 29, 1855.
 - “Report and Circular of the True Band of Amherstburg, C.W.,” *Provincial Freeman*, April 7, 1855.
 - “A Movement in the Right Direction”, *Provincial Freeman*, June 23, 1855.
 - Letter from Levi Foster to Mary Ann Shadd, *Provincial Freeman*, June 30, 1855.
3. Talk to the class about what a non-profit is today and how a non-profit organization is formed – the organization must have board members, must be legally registered, must have a constitution and by-laws, etc.
4. Inform the class that the learning activity for this lesson involves the class simulating a True Band Society (TBS) monthly meeting in 1856. First, officers of the TBS need to be elected. Explain the role and responsibilities of each officer (see Handout). Then ask the class to bring forth nominations for the following positions:

- 1 President
- 1 Vice-President
- 1 Treasurer
- 1 Recording Secretary
- 1 Corresponding Secretary
- 2 Auditors
- 5 Board of Managers (also called directors)

5. The remaining students will make up the General Membership. Display the list of nominees.

Fourth Class:

1. Hold elections for the officer positions (Use ballot template to make ballots for your class by adding the names of nominated students).





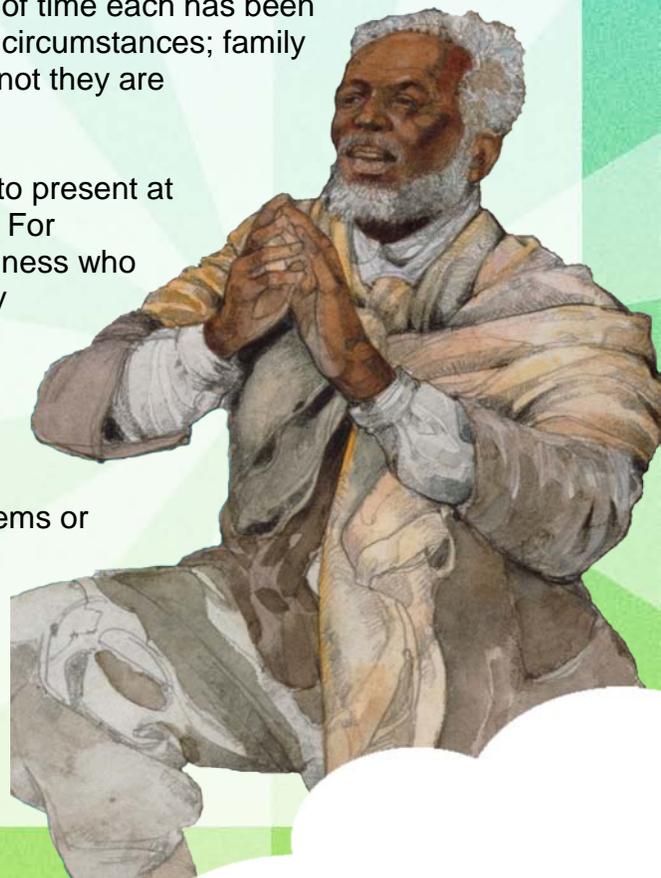
BREAKING THE CHAINS

2. Ask students to tabulate and display results.
3. Provide each officer with the description of his or her responsibilities.

Fifth Class:

Ask students to prepare for the meeting.

1. The corresponding secretary, with the feedback and assistance of the executive committee officers, should make an ad (poster or newspaper ad) to advertise the meeting. Meetings are to be held on the first Tuesday of each month.
2. Give the treasurer the pre-made Treasurer's Report that he or she will then present to the membership. The treasurer should review the Treasurer's Report in the *Provincial Freeman* of December 29, 1855, to gain an understanding of how much financial assistance was paid out to needy individuals and how it was allotted.
3. Create the agenda for the meeting. The recording secretary must ensure that every member receives a copy of the agenda. Provide the students working on the agenda with the agenda template. Officers (except for the recording secretary) can assist in going through the agenda during the meeting. Sections can be assigned to specific officers.
4. If you feel it is suitable for your class, you can assign roles for students who are part of the general membership or ask them to create their own identity profiles. For example, individual students might represent a free Black business owner, a female widow with children, former fugitives who have lived in Canada for a long time, a female teacher, etc. Consider the length of time each has been in Canada and what that might imply: economic circumstances; family composition; skills and abilities; and whether or not they are landowners.
5. Create fictitious scenario cards for the students to present at the meeting on fugitive requests for assistance. For example, one is a young man with a particular illness who needs to see a doctor. Another could be a family consisting of a husband, wife, and five children who need winter clothing. Another example is two fugitives who have just arrived and need to rent a room for a place to stay. In the meeting, students can offer suggestions on how much money should be allotted to each one or what items or goods should be given. They should come to an agreement on the presented scenarios.





BREAKING THE CHAINS

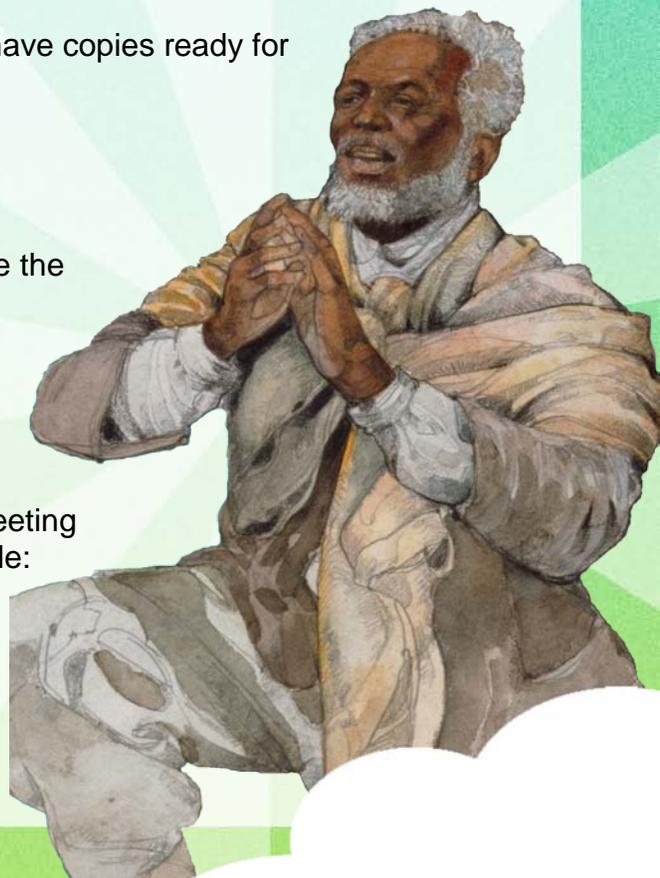
6. Based on the Historical Background, the students who make up the general membership should come up with a list of issues that they feel should be put on the agenda for discussion and to be put to a vote. Issues should include begging; fugitive assistance (specific items of clothing, specific food items, rent assistance); education; support for the sick; burial cost assistance; childbirth; the death of an infant, the elderly, or the family breadwinner; and future lecture topics.
7. Another possibility is to have students create cards that will represent their membership fees for the month. Simulated money or real money can also be used. They can pay their dues at the beginning of the meeting to the Treasurer as they line up to take their seats in the meeting. The Treasurer can then calculate the amount collected while the meeting is called to order and include the calculation in his/her report. The membership fee for men in the Amherstburg True Band Society was .13 cents and the membership fee for women is .07 cents. Students may also discuss why there might be a discrepancy between fees for male and female members of the society.
8. Set ground rules for the large discussion.

Sixth Class:

1. Hold the meeting.
2. Both secretaries should record the minutes of the meeting.
3. For adequate amounts of fugitive assistance, suggest a range of .50 cents to \$1.50.
4. Voting on agenda items should be done by a show of hands. Majority wins. Adjourn until the next class.
5. The secretaries should type out the minutes to have copies ready for the next class.

Seventh Class:

1. Continue the meeting.
2. Start by having the general membership approve the minutes.
3. The secretary can announce the date of next month's meeting (the first Tuesday of the month).
4. The president or vice-president should officially adjourn the meeting.
5. Debrief. Talk to students about the simulated meeting and their opinions of the experience. For example: What do the officers think about how the actual officers executed their duties at a time without telephones, computers, e-mail, social media,





cars, etc? Do students agree with the TBS's focus on education, temperance, etc?

6. Have students write a reflection that examines why the True Band members believed it was important not to solicit charitable donations from outside the community on behalf of fugitives. Students can share their responses in small groups or with the larger class.

Eighth class:

If time permits, ask students to design a logo for the True Band Society that reflects the ideals and beliefs of the organization.

PLANNING NOTES:

- Locate and bookmark suggested online materials and other useful websites.
- Find a job description online and share it with the class prior to assigning the writing activity to students.
- Prepare some guiding questions you may need to ask to help keep the True Band meeting on track.
- Prepare questions for debriefing.

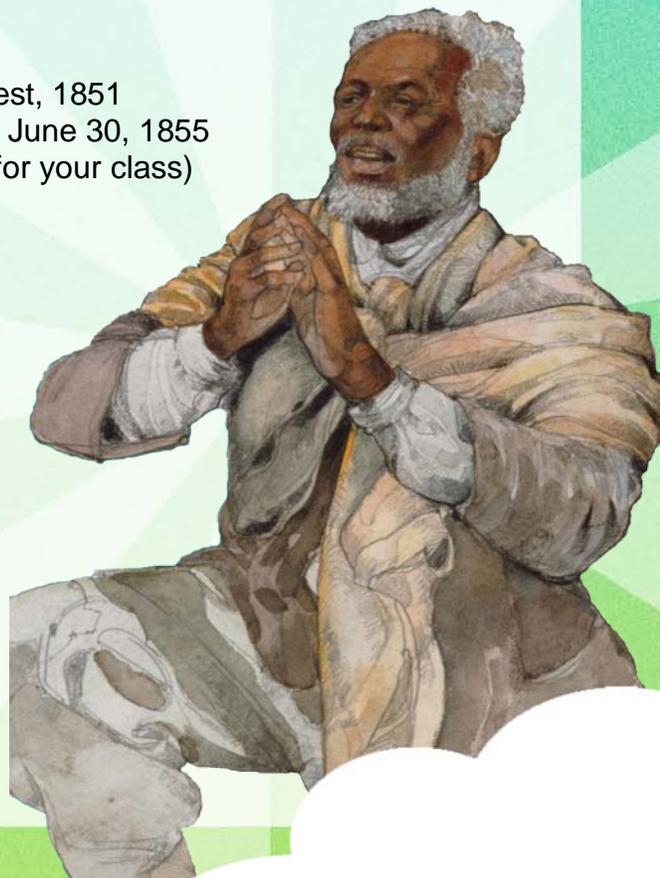
MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR TEACHER:

1. Levi Foster Narrative
2. Student worksheets
3. Census of Canada for Amherstburg, Canada West, 1851
4. "The Amherstburg Appeal," *Provincial Freeman*, June 30, 1855 (include other newspaper articles if appropriate for your class)
5. A calculator for the treasurer

ACCOMMODATIONS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Readings can be done out loud as a class or in small groups.
- The census activity can be completed as a class using an overhead.
- Pair students to complete tasks if needed.

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION DESCRIPTION:





1. Active participation in group activities (simulated meeting) and class discussions.
2. Completion of worksheets.
3. Production of reports by identified students.
4. True Band Society logo design.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Students will accomplish the instructional objectives by:

- Reading the Levi Foster Narrative
- Viewing the augmented reality vignettes and primary and secondary source documents, and completing the worksheets
- Writing a descriptive paragraph
- Discussing the history of the True Band Society and the importance of Black activism during the 1850s
- Working cooperatively to complete the Student Task
- Analyzing historical data
- Conducting online research
- Participating in the simulated meeting
- Writing a reflection
- Designing a logo for the True Band Society (TBS)

EXTENDED ACTIVITIES: (if any)

Ask the students to form a committee as an extension of the TBS that will encourage them to become involved in their community. One example is to have them share African Canadian historical facts with their class or the school (PA announcements, posters, etc.).

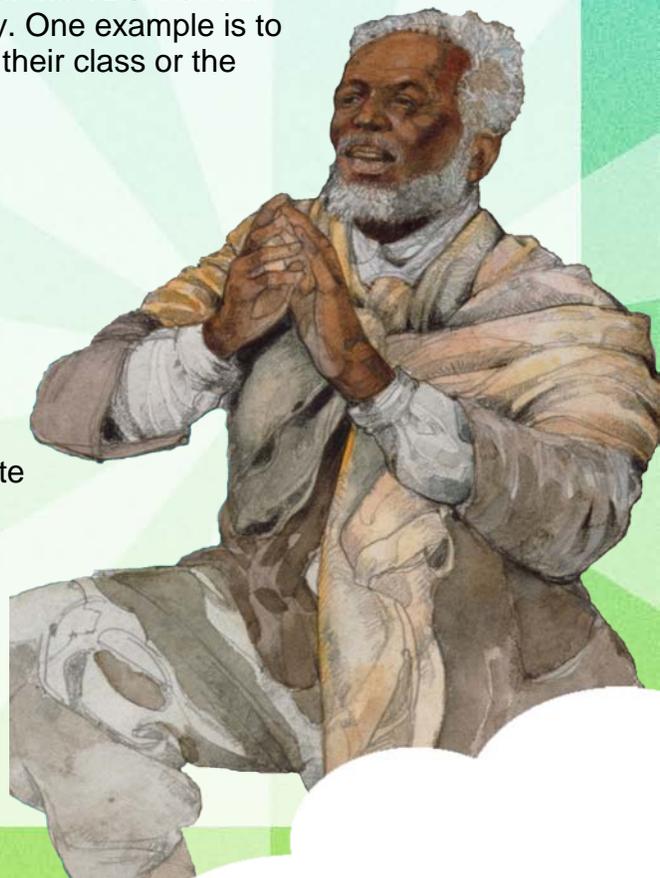
ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES: (if any)

Design a True Band Society logo.

Art: Create illustrations to accompany Levi Foster's livery stable ads.

Art: Make a model of Levi Foster's livery stable and write a description of a livery stable.

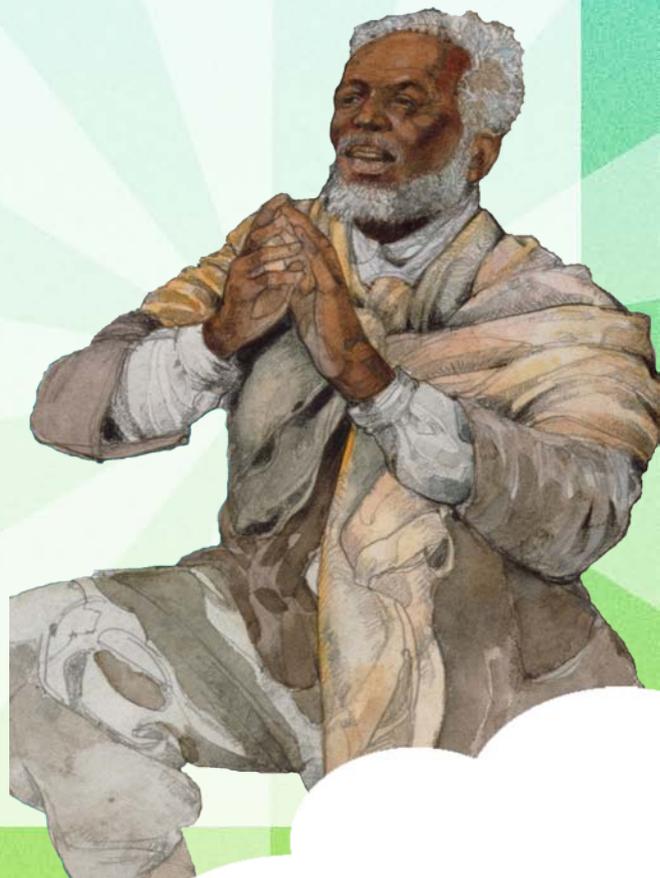
INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:





- Harriet Tubman Institute “Breaking the Chains : Presenting a New Narrative for Canada’s Role in the Underground Railroad” - Online Exhibit

Website address: www.yorku.ca/tubman/breakingthechains





Historical Background:

THE TRUE BAND SOCIETY

The True Band Society was officially formed in 1854. Its beginnings stemmed from a convention that was held on June 16 and 17, 1853, in Amherstburg to discuss how the Black community should organize itself to make sure all of its members and incoming fugitives were provided for. The 1850 Fugitive Slave Law was the impetus for the massive African American immigration wave that came into Canada West at that time. Thousands of formerly enslaved and free Blacks entered Canada because no person of African descent in the United States was safe from being returned to slavery or being sold into slavery.

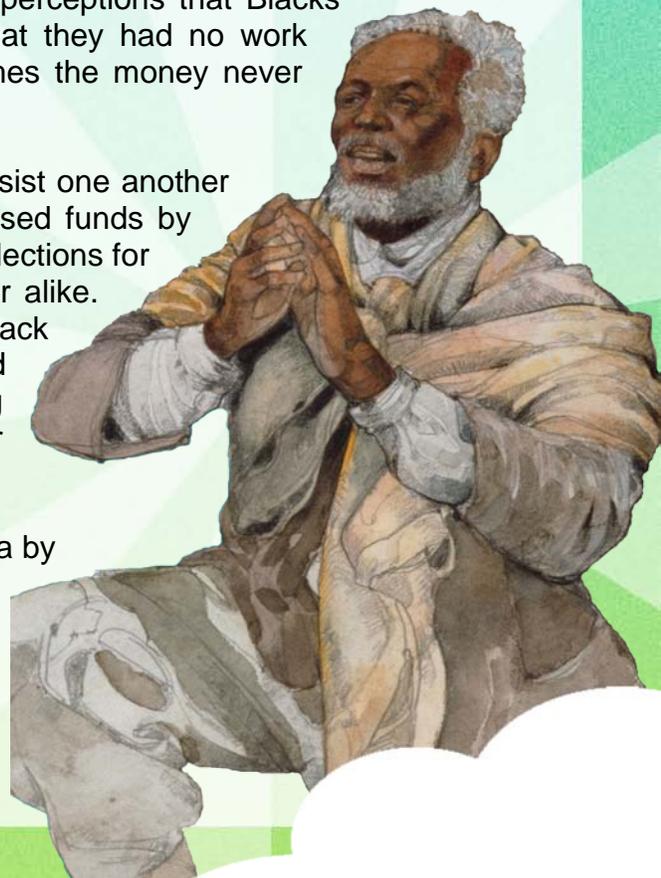
The True Band was to be a province-wide social organization for African Canadians. Levi Foster and Major Stephens played very important roles in spearheading the organization. The group encouraged self-help and community building through economic development initiatives and education. The True Band Society also provided direct financial support for refugees and community members who fell on hard times.

Fourteen branches were established in major towns in Ontario within two years. True Bands were formed in Chatham, Toronto, and other areas with large fugitive populations. Membership grew quickly to about six hundred men and women. The True Band Society had several objectives. It denounced 'begging,' whereby people acting as agents on behalf of fugitives who had settled in Canada West went around the province and parts of the United States asking for donations of money and clothes to help the fugitive slaves living in Canada. The True Band Society believed that begging ruined the reputation of hardworking Blacks and reinforced the perceptions that Blacks were incapable of taking care of themselves and that they had no work ethic. Not all the agents were honest either; oftentimes the money never reached the intended recipients.

The True Bands encouraged African Canadians to assist one another instead of seeking outside help. The organization raised funds by collecting monthly membership dues and taking up collections for anyone who was in need, members and non-member alike.

The funds were used to help members of the Black community purchase books and paper for schools and to assist families in buying food, clothing, and paying for shelter. Financial support was also provided for burials.

The True Band Society promoted emigration to Canada by freedom-seekers from the southern United States and free Blacks from the North. The organization encouraged Blacks to acquire their own farms as a way of both achieving personal success and helping





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to sustain the larger community. The True Band Society believed farming and farmers were important for supplying food to their immediate regions, and also permitted settlers to become self-sufficient. This removed Black Canadians from the oversight of white employers, and encouraged them to work for themselves.

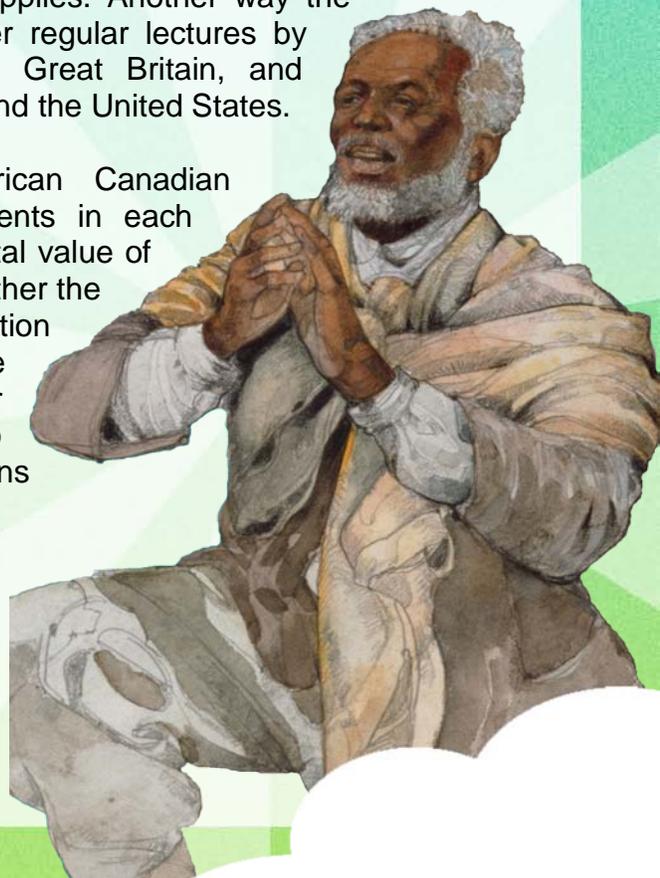


Drinking alcohol was discouraged. This was called “Temperance”. The temperance movement was a popular social improvement campaign in the mid-1800s. Temperance advocates argued that consuming alcohol and visiting bars stifled productivity, and discouraged the self-improvement on the part of the individual and community. The True Band Society also argued that incidents of intoxication made whites lose respect for Blacks.

Education was important for African Canadian uplift. The True Band Society encouraged fugitives to send their children to school. It also encouraged parents to obtain an education, for many of them had been prevented from learning to read and write while they had been enslaved. They also were to become educated about the laws of the land, to vote, serve on jury duty, and to participate in civil society. The organization helped to pay for school tuition and supplies. Another way the True Band Society supported education was to offer regular lectures by noted figures, often clergymen from the US and Great Britain, and especially abolitionists visiting Canada from England and the United States.

The True Band Society kept statistics on African Canadian communities, including the number of Black residents in each village, town, or city; where Blacks were living; the total value of property owned by Blacks; the state of education (whether the local schools were segregated or not; levels of education accessible to Blacks); the number of churches; the number of social organizations and associations; other initiatives in the community that provided relief to fugitives; and the kinds of occupations and professions held by people of African descent living in Canada.

Conflict resolution between members of the Black community was supported by the organization. A special committee was formed to mediate disputes. The True Band Society worked to nurture church





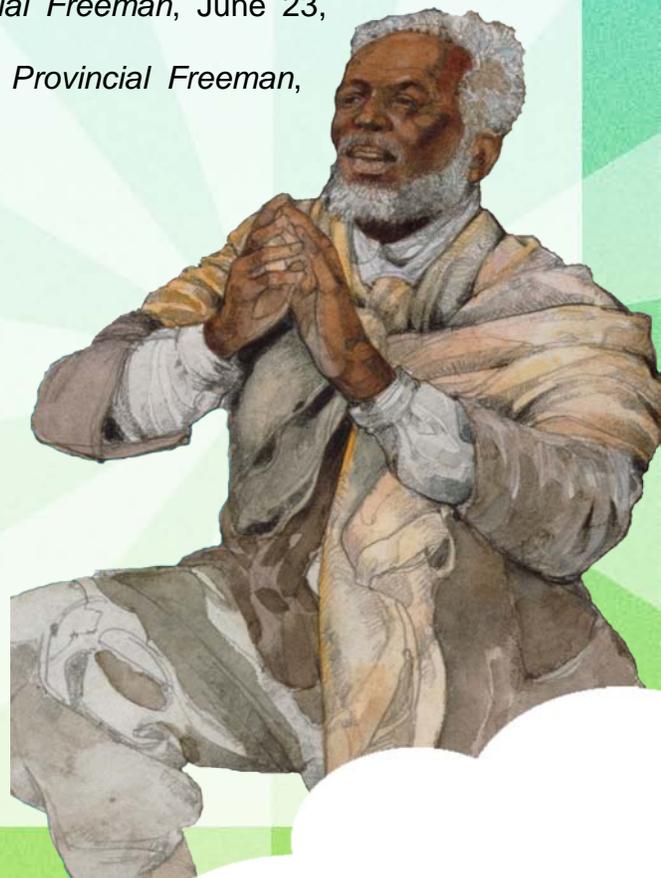
unity between all denominations, to repair divisions that had already taken place, and to prevent any further splits. They knew that, as the most important Black-led institution, the stronger churches were collectively, the more successful African Canadians would be as a community.

Lastly, the True Band Society encouraged Blacks to become politically active by learning about the laws and politics in their new country and to become involved in politics by voting and running for office.

The name of the social organization represented its members' shared idea that they honestly advocated on behalf of the interests of former slaves and the Black community at large, unlike "begging" agents. Furthermore, their common goal was to bind the community together morally, spiritually, and legally.

Bibliography

1. *Minutes and proceedings of the General Convention for the Improvement of the Colored Inhabitants of Canada, held by adjournments in Amherstburg [sic], C.W., June 16th and 17th, 1853.* (Windsor, C.W.: Bibb & Holly, 1853).
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5. "A Movement in the Right Direction," *Provincial Freeman*, June 23, 1855.
6. Letter from Levi Foster to Mary Ann Shadd, *Provincial Freeman*, June 30, 1855.



Worksheets

African Canadians in Early Censuses: The Foster Family

QUESTIONS:

1. What is a census?
2. What information was collected in the 1861 census? Look at the headings.
3. How many adults were listed in the Foster family? What were their ages?
4. How many children were in the Foster family? What were their ages?
5. Who might Julia Harris be?

Census Legend:

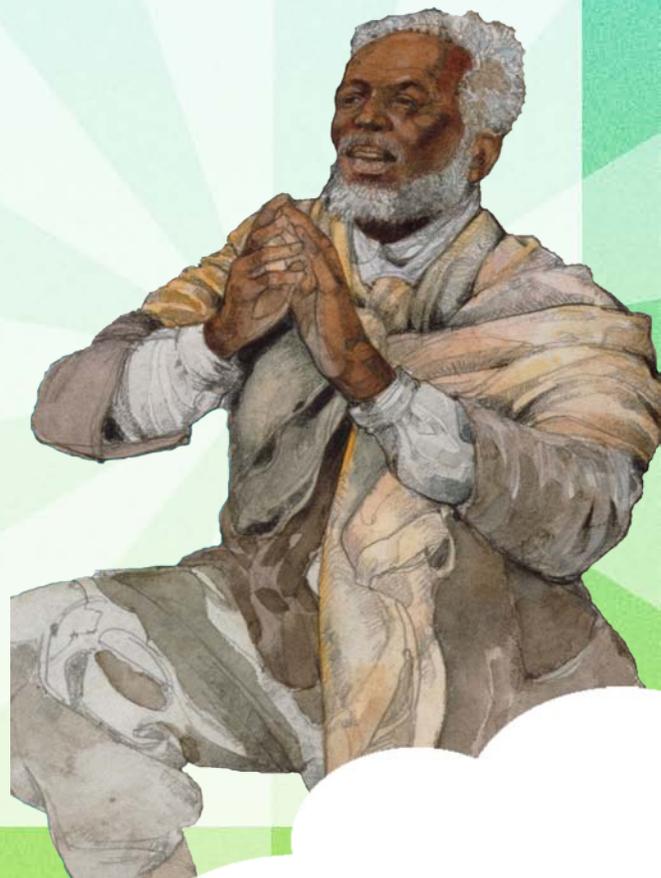
Sex
Male
Female

Places of Birth
U.C. – Upper Canada/Canada West (Ontario)
U.S. – United States

Religion
R. Catholic – Roman Catholic
W/ WM – Wesleyan Methodist
EM – Episcopal Methodist
M – Methodist
J.C. - ???
B – Baptist
E – Church of England, Anglican
CS – Church of Scotland

Marital Status
S – single
M- married
W – widow

Other
Do – ditto (the same as above)





Student Task:

The class will organize and conduct a monthly meeting for the True Band Society in 1855. Several tasks must be completed before the meeting can be held:

- Elect the executive committee officers
- Create an advertisement (poster, newspaper ad) to advertise the meeting. Remember, the ad should answer the 5 W's (who, what, when, why, and how).
- Create personal profiles for general members
- Identify agenda issues
- Prepare meeting minutes
- Write a reflection
- Design a logo for the True Band Society

Reflection Prompt: Why did True Band members believe it was important not to ask for money on behalf of fugitives?



True Band Society Executive Committee and Members' Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Committee

PRESIDENT:

- Presides over all of the meetings
- Maintains the order of meetings and keeps the meeting moving through the agenda
- Starts and adjourns meetings according to schedule
- Delegates responsibilities and authority
- Guides the board to make sure the interests of the general membership are served through programs and activities

VICE-PRESIDENT:

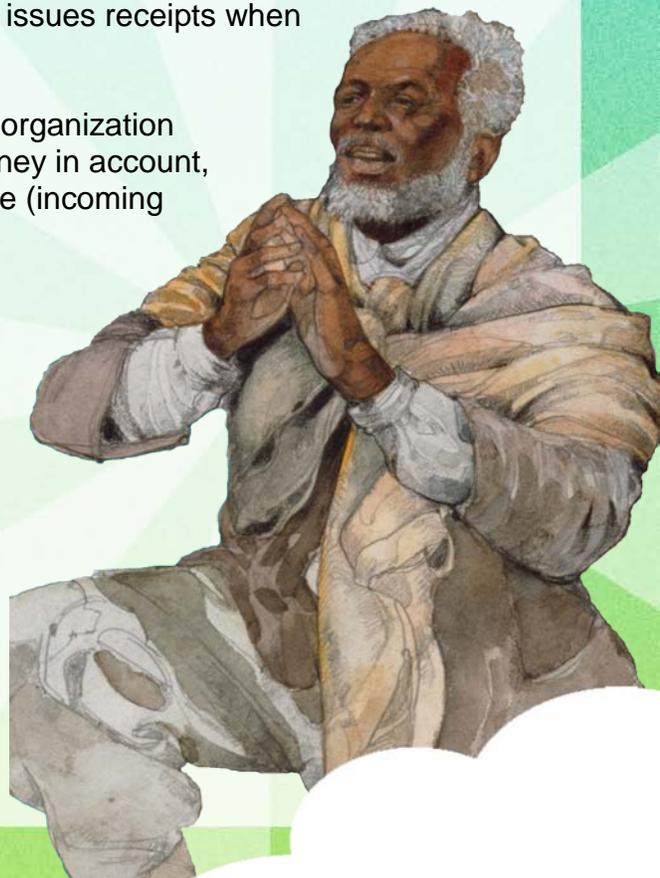
- Knows the responsibilities of the President and fills in when the President is absent
- Assists the President wherever possible

TREASURER:

- Receives all money due (membership fees) and issues receipts when needed
- Pays bills
- Provides a cash float for any events held by the organization
- Reports to members at meetings about total money in account, bills that were paid, expenses, and other revenue (incoming money such as donations, etc.)
- Prepares financial reports and budgets

RECORDING SECRETARY:

- Takes minutes (notes) of all meetings, provides copies of minutes to all board members, gets minutes approved at next meeting
- Sends announcements of meetings to executive and/or general members
- Keeps current list of all members
- Filing





CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:

- Handles all official correspondence (communication) of the organization between the organization and the public such as the mail, newsletters, etc.
- Gives a summary of all correspondence received and issued at meetings

AUDITORS:

- Ensures the organization's finances are kept according to proper accounting rules, the rules of the organization, and the law
- Reviews the records kept by the treasurer
- Conducts investigations of financial records as needed
- Reports to the board

BOARD OF MANAGERS (also called Board of Directors):

- Sets and enforces the rules of the organization
- Represents the interests of the general membership and the general public that receives the services and support of the organization
- Assists in recruiting new general members
- Serves on committees as needed

GENERAL MEMBERS

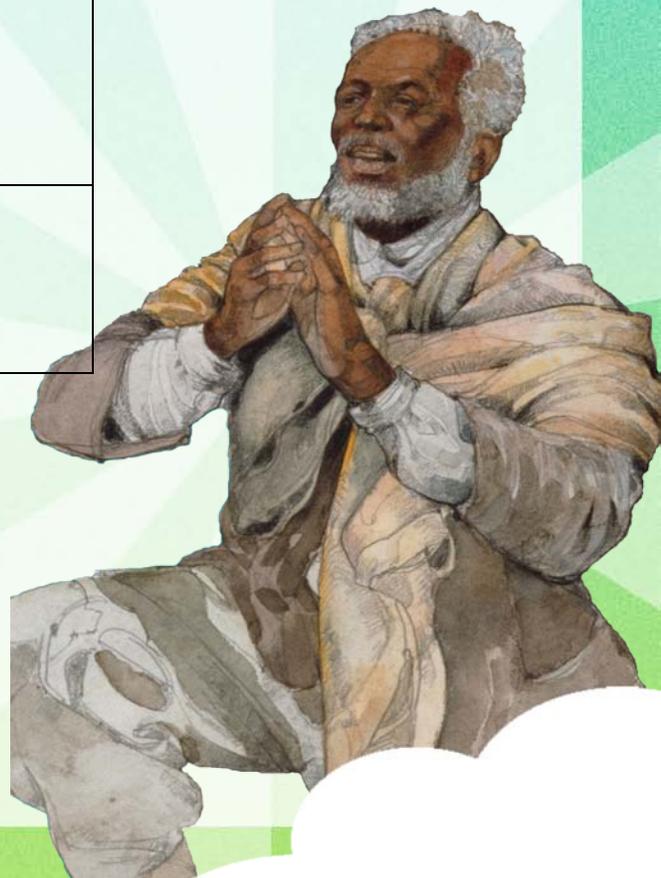
- Shares the beliefs and aims of the organization
- Participates in current and future activities of the organization for the period covered by their paid membership
- Has access to the programs and services of the organization through paid membership
- Pays monthly dues (membership fees)
- Attends general members' meetings





Ballot

PRESIDENT	VICE-PRESIDENT
TREASURER	RECORDING SECRETARY
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY	AUDITOR #1
AUDITOR #2	DIRECTOR #1
DIRECTOR #2	DIRECTOR #3
DIRECTOR #4	DIRECTOR #5



Meeting Agenda Template

True Band Society Monthly Meeting

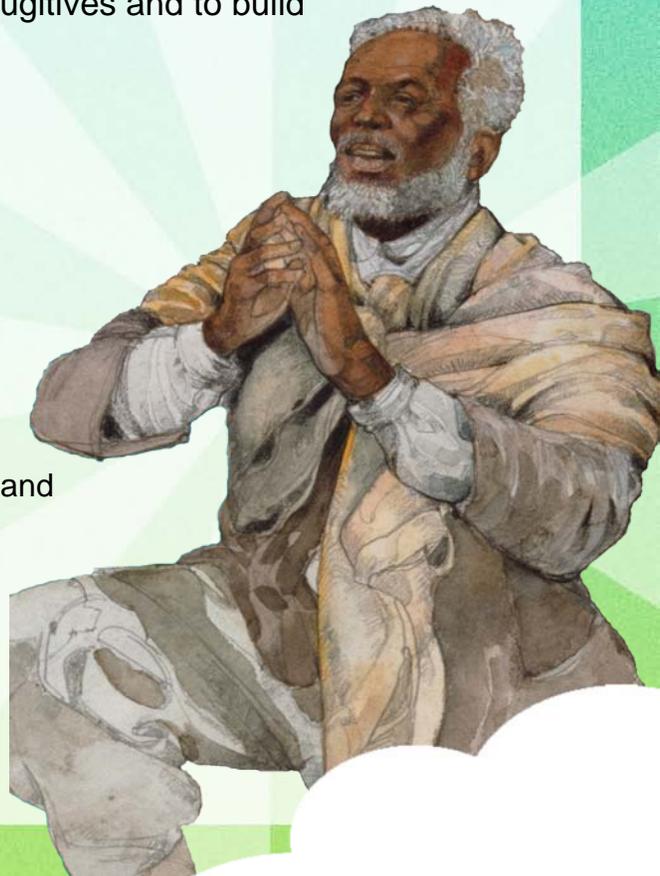
Date:

Location:

1. Membership dues collection
2. Calling to order of the meeting
3. Introduction of the executive officers
4. Introduction of the general membership (a general acknowledgment of the general members' attendance)
5. Officer's Reports
 - Treasurer's Report
6. Fugitive assistance requests
7. Proposed programs – ideas on how to help fugitives and to build the community
8. Meeting adjourned.

The Treasurer's Report

There is a balance of \$ _____ in
the treasury. This includes the past balance of 105.00 and
\$ _____ that was collected today in
membership dues.



Ontario Curriculum Expectations

This lesson plan correlates to:

Heritage and Citizenship: Grade 3 - Early Settlements in Upper Canada Overall Expectations

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

- Describe the communities of early Black settlers in Canada West in the 1850s.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

- Identify the countries of origin of the people who settled in Canada West in the 1850s (e.g., United States);
- Identify the areas of early Black settlement in Upper Canada (e.g. Essex County, Toronto, the Queen's Bush, and the Niagara Region);
- Describe the major components of an early African Canadian settlement (e.g. school, church) ;
- Describe the various roles of male and female settlers (e.g. farm worker, church minister, teacher, merchant, blacksmith, seamstress, laundress, homemaker).

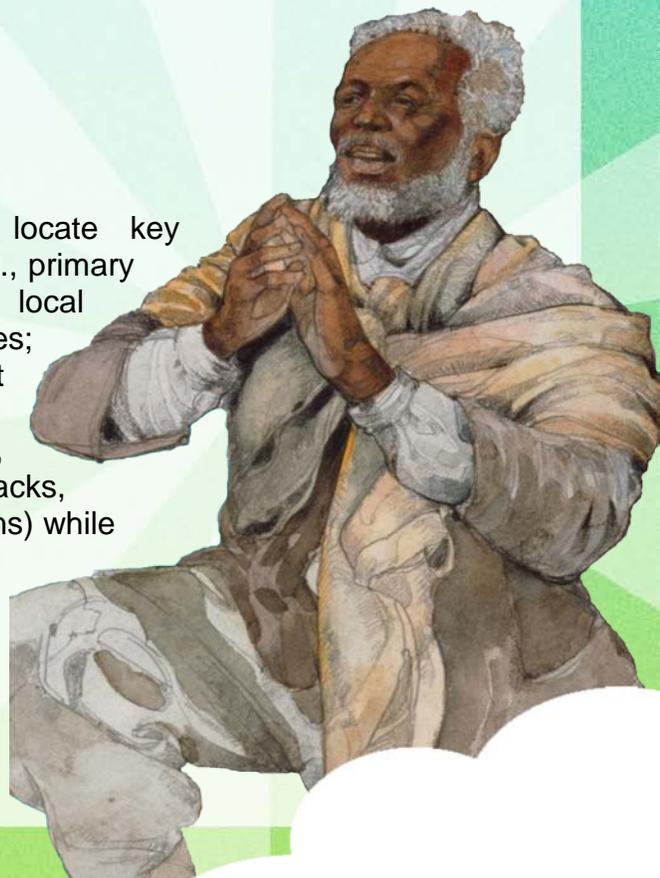
SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

- Use primary and secondary sources to locate key information about early settler communities (e.g., primary sources: diaries or journals, information at local museums, early settlers' houses, forts, villages; secondary sources: maps, illustrations, print materials, videos, websites, CD-ROMs);
- Use appropriate vocabulary (e.g., pioneer, settlers, enslaved, freedom seekers, free Blacks, settlement, doctor, blacksmith, African Canadians) while making their inquiries and observations.

History: Grade 7 - British North America





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OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

- Explain the origins of English settlement in British North America after the fall of New France and describe the migration and settlement experiences of settlers of African origin;
- Use a variety of resources and tools to gather, process, and communicate information about the beginnings and development of the new colonies of British North America.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

- Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to locate relevant information about how early settlers met the challenges of the new land (e.g., *primary sources*: artifacts, journals, letters, statistics, field trips, interviews, period documents and maps; *secondary sources*: maps, illustrations, print materials, videos, CD-ROMs, Internet sites);
- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information (e.g., why did enslaved African Americans run away to Canada?).

Application

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

- Illustrate the historical development of their local community (e.g., its origins, key personalities, and the contributions of various cultural groups), using a variety of formats (e.g., a heritage display, posters, a drama skit or role play, a brochure, a web page).

History: Grade 8 - Confederation

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Knowledge and Understanding

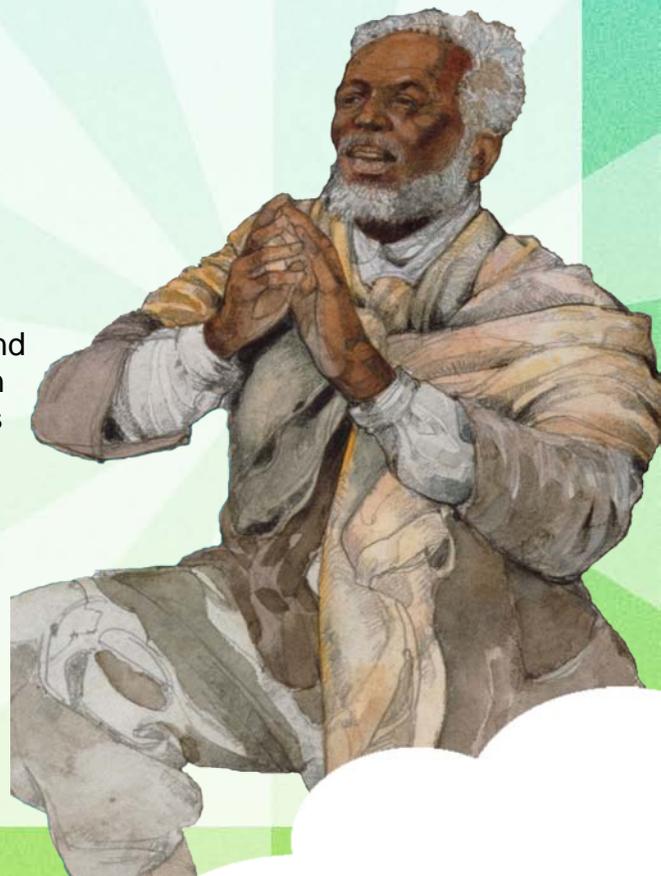
By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- Identify key social, political, economic, and physical characteristics of African Canadian communities in British North American colonies between 1850 and 1870.

Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information;





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- Communicate the results of inquiries for specific purposes and audiences, using media works, political cartoons, oral presentations, written notes and descriptions, drawings, tables, charts, and graphs.

Geography: Grade 8 - Patterns in Human Geography

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- Locate relevant information from a variety of primary and secondary sources (e.g. statistics, occupation);
- Use appropriate vocabulary.

Geography: Grade 8 - Migration

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- Identify factors that affect migration and mobility, describe patterns and trends of migration in Canada, and identify the effects of migration on Canadian society;
- Connect the real experiences of Canadians to information about the causes and effects of migration.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- Identify the push and pull factors that influence people to move (e.g., *push*: lack of freedom, discrimination; *pull*: freedom, security, opportunities).

Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- Use appropriate vocabulary (e.g. migration) to describe their inquiries and observations.

Application

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- Investigate the migratory roots of early African Canadians and relate them to Canada's cultural development.

