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Social Studies Toolkit

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Level and Theme

Grade 8 is the targeted scholastic level, however the supplementary materials provided below could be adapted for a younger audience if need be.

The theme is culture in Atlantic Canada, specifically how culture can be influenced by the government and people within the wider society. The actions and reactions of society affects the ways that culture develops and changes, whether it is by those who are a part of said culture or those who are not. The being said, this toolkit focuses on specifically Africville and the gentrification of the North End in Halifax and the relocation of Africville and its people, over the years.

Objectives

**Grade 8 Social Studies Curriculum: Atlantic Canada and the Global World, 1998.**

Outcomes Pertaining to Unit 2: Culture

The student will be expected to…

2.3.8 Understand that politicians make decisions that may affect the development of the culture of a selected region. (p. 42)

2.5.1 Define prejudice, discrimination, social injustice, ethnocentrism, stereotype, racism, multiculturalism, and anti-racism. (p.46)

**Toolkit objectives:**

The student will be expect to…

* Engage in discussion about the relocation of certain ethnic and socio-economic groups in a selection region.
* Reflect on the implications and ramifications of forced relocation on the culture and identity of an ethnic and socio-economic group.
* Describe examples of racist, discriminatory, and unjust government policies directed at ethnic groups.

*N.B.: These objectives could be fulfilled with a range of social histories. Though I have chosen to focus on this particular marginalized group, this could be recreated with the High-Artic Relocation, Residential School, Japanese Interment during WWII to name a few.*

Arts-Based Lesson Plan

**Lesson Topic:** Relocation and resistance: Africville, NS

**Date:** **Length:** 90 minutes (2 periods) **Level:** Grade 8

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| --- | --- |
| Necessary Material:   * Drawing paper, pencils * SMART Board * Copies of graphic organizers * Link to film, “Remember Africville” | Resources Used:  -National Film Board:  <https://www.nfb.ca/film/remember_africville/> |

**Learning Outcomes: “Atlantic Canada in the Global Community”**

Students will be expected to…

* 2.3.8 Understand that politicians make decisions that may affect the development of the culture of a selected region. (p.42)
* 2.4.9 Select one Afro-Canadian cultural group in Atlantic Canada and examines ways in which its members expresses their identity. (p.44)
* *Examine the reasons why Halifax City Council forcibly relocated the residents of Africville.*
* *Reflect upon what the effect the decisions the Halifax City Council in 1964 had on the culture of the residents (and their descendants) of Africville.*

**Procedure:**

1. Ask students the question: “Do the choices of people in power affect your lives? What examples of this have you experienced? ”
2. Have students discuss their responses with a peer.
3. Ask those who wish to share their responses with the class.
4. Ask students if they have ever heard of “Africville”; if so, what do they know? (Assume they will know very little about the topic.)
5. Distribute drawing paper, and pencils. Ask students to create a sketch of what the word “Africville” means to them and what culture would prominent there.
6. Tell students that as a class that we are going a film called “Remember Africville”.
7. Ask students to pay attention to: Who had the power to make decisions? ; Who was affected by the decisions? ; And why did this event happen?
8. Hand out graphic organizer for students to keep track of ideas and responses.
9. Watch the film as a class.
10. After the film, ask students to reflect on and answer the previous questions.
11. Facilitate a class discussion based on the questions.
12. Ask students to look back at their drawings of “Africville”.
13. Ask students: “Is the space and culture different than what you imagined it to be?”
14. Have students redraw their image of Africville now that they have watched the film.
15. Display students’ art work of both visions of Africville around the classroom so that they everyone in the class has the opportunity to have their work shown.

Supplementary Texts for Students

The texts which are described below are meant to facilitate and encourage discussion about the themes within the toolkit.

**Yee, Paul. (2008).**Learning to fly**. Victoria, BC: Orca Books Publishers.**

Jason is a recent immigrant from China and because of this barrier, he is an outsider. He lives with his mother and younger brother in a small town in Ontario. Jason is faced with responsibilities at home, and helping his mother in her deli after school. Jason desperately wants to fit in, in his new environment but he falls in with a group of students who are deemed “the wrong crowd”. Jason ends up in trouble with the police. Then he meets “Chief,” a First Nations teen who also feels alone and like an outsider. After Jason is arrested for drug possession and Chief’s sister dies from a drug overdose, the two outsiders learn to lean on each other to make it through the difficult times.

**Olsen, Sylvia. (2008).**Middle Row**. Victoria, BC: Orca Books Publishers.**

**Raedawn and Vince are teens in love, but the racial boundaries in their small town are still deeply entrenched; some people do not agree with a “Native” girl and a White boy dating.** When a school friend of theirs, Dune, goes missing Raedawn launches an investigation to find him and what has happened to him. Raedawn and Vince come up against ignorance and hate, as they track Dune down and find out that he is in more trouble than they imagined. A marijuana grow op, racial tensions, and mixed families abound in this story about love and the power of family and community.

*N.B.: Summaries and further information and resources can be found on, https://canlitsocialjustice.wordpress.com/novels/junior-highsecondary/.*

Online Resources

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/africville/>

This website can help provide background information on Africville. Specifically, this site can help orient teachers and students alike, so that they become familiar with the concept of people how this community was created (a “slum” on the fringes of a predominantly White city), as well as how and when Africville and its residents were forcefully removed and relocated, and what effect that event had on the culture within the community. It could be used as a source when students are gathering information about the Black Nova Scotian experience in very general terms.

<https://www.nfb.ca/film/remember_africville/>

This 35 minute film, produced in 1991, uses archival footage and photographs from Africville to retell the events that transpired in the 1960s, when the city of Halifax decided to demolish the community in the name of urban renewal and business ventures. This film incorporates interviews from people who lived through the upheaval and their descendants. It examines how the city of Halifax decided to “relocate” the 400 African Canadians who lived on the shores of Bedford Basin and what happened to the people who were abruptly ripped from their homes. This film would be very useful for students to watch before during the unit to help them reflect on the impact that local and provincial governments and big business shape the lives and culture of people, in this case, the residents of Africville.

<https://www.nfb.ca/film/journey_to_justice/>

In this 47 minute long film, produced in 2000, the stories of Black civil rights activists in Canada are shared. It documents a long expanse of time, from the first Black Loyalists arriving in Canada in the mid-eighteenth century, all the way to the twentieth century, when people like Viola Desmond stood up for their rights. Though this film covers different themes than the previous film mentioned, it would be a great addition to any unit on Empowerment (Grade 7 in New Brunswick) or for an introduction to Black History month. For the purposed of this toolkit, the film speaks to the discrimination and racism and injustice that Black Canadians have faced and how they have fought gain their civil rights.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/black-history-month/>

CBC has a plethora of news articles, radio shows, and information, in this case, about Black History month. Through this link, there are interactive profiles of key Black Canadians throughout history. This site would be a very complimentary research tool for those who may be interested in delving deeper into certain profiles of people whom students saw on the film “Journey to Justice”. This CBC site is clear and easy to navigate; it very easily could be adapted for younger or older students than those in Grade 8.

<http://africvillemuseum.org/>

The name of this website seems fairly self-explanatory, in so far as it is the Africville Museum website. The site offers general information about Africville and the people who were forced out of their homes by the city of Halifax. The site offers visitors the chance to learn about the initiative to build an interpretive centre and the museum itself. The website has links to educational resources and archival photographs among other links that students may find useful in their projects.

<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-february-21-2018-1.4543540/call-it-what-it-is-white-ignorance-gentrification-frays-the-social-fabric-in-halifax-s-north-end-1.4543545>

Though this link is to a specific news article from CBC, it highlights the importance of being cognisant of the effect that a city’s desire to expand and attract certain types of people and business have on the landscape of said city. Halifax is the largest city on the East Coast of Canada and the “trendy” North End is the historically poorer side of the city. People who have lived there all their lives, sometimes in utter poverty- as did the residents of Africville, are yet again being forced to move out. This article highlights the present day issue of gentrification in Halifax, but if students were interested in following this lead elsewhere, cities like San Francisco’s Bay Area is perfect example of how big businesses change the culture of a place and those who live there.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/teens-halifax-north-end-municipality-gentrification-1.3557028>

This is another link to a specific CBC article, however it still holds a lot of potential in a Social Studies classroom. The article details the way in which a group of young people have tried to raise their voices about the gentrification in Halifax’s North End. Again, this article was written in 2016, yet the point remains that this group of 18 year olds have the desire to affect change in a positive way in their city. This article could be used as a spring board in demonstrating to students that they too have a voice and civil rights that allow them to try to make the world (or their city/ town) a better place for them to live. It also underscores the fact that governments, whether municipal or higher have a lot of power when it comes to creating a vision of the future for a city.

Follow-Up Project Description

**Create an original piece of art** (word map, painting, cellfilm, spoken word, collage, etc.) that represents how **students in the classroom have responded to and reflected upon** the key issues in this unit, such as: **Racism, Multiculturalism, Prejudice, Stereotypes** or **Social In/Justice**. Students should choose one of the topics however if students have understood the intersection of these terms, student should be encouraged to follow those leads when they are storyboarding. Students should be encouraged to be as creative as possible, drawing on their lived experiences as individuals or as a community. Students should be asked to engage with the “unpleasant” aspects of what these concepts represent and mean for society.