

Canadian History in the Twentieth Century

Academic

Diary Entries: Experiences of a Twentieth-Century Canadian

The Task

Students were presented with the following scenario: a television producer is making a documentary about the impact of technological developments and economic conditions on the lives of individual Canadians during a particular historical time period in the twentieth century. As part of her research for the film, the producer is trying to locate first-person accounts of life during this period.

Each student was then asked to assume the role of a fictional Canadian living in a historical time period specified by the teacher. Each student was instructed to write three diary entries that together spanned the period and that each explained the impact of a technological development and economic conditions on the fictional individual. One other development (e.g., a social issue) also had to be described in each entry. Students could follow the changing impact of the same economic, technological, and other developments through all three diary entries or select different examples to be discussed in each entry. Although the characters in the diary were to be fictional, the information provided had to be based on historically accurate facts and details.

Students were encouraged to use the worksheets and organizer provided (see the appendices to the Teacher Package, reproduced on pages 49–51 of this document) as they progressed through the task.

The final product consisted of three intermittent diary entries totalling at least six hundred words. The entries were to be accompanied by a title page that included the biographical facts from the Getting Into Character worksheet, and a bibliography that included all sources used by the student in completing the necessary research for the task. (The bibliography was not assessed as part of the final product.)

Expectations

This task gave students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the following selected expectations from three strands: Change and Continuity; Social, Economic, and Political Structures; and Methods of Historical Inquiry.

Students will:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the impact of technological developments on Canadians;
2. evaluate how and why changing economic conditions and patterns have affected Canadians;
3. analyse and evaluate information when researching historical topics or issues;
4. demonstrate competence in research and writing (e.g., gathering information, building an argument, supporting the argument with evidence, writing clearly, editing);
5. make reasoned generalizations or appropriate predictions based on research.

Prior Knowledge and Skills

To complete this task, students were expected to have:

- experience in library and Internet research (if available) and note taking
- experience in self- or peer assessment
- practice with organizers and checklists
- the ability to distinguish fact from opinion and to detect bias
- knowledge of the history of the selected time period
- an understanding of the format of a diary entry
- experience in preparing a bibliography

For information on the process used to prepare students for the task and on the materials, resources, and equipment required, see the Teacher Package reproduced on pages 47–51 of this document.

Task Rubric – Diary Entries: Experiences of a Twentieth-Century Canadian

Expectations*	Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Knowledge/Understanding					
The student:					
1, 2	– demonstrates an understanding of technological developments and economic conditions in the specified time period	– demonstrates limited understanding of technological developments and economic conditions	– demonstrates some understanding of technological developments and economic conditions	– demonstrates considerable understanding of technological developments and economic conditions	– demonstrates a thorough understanding of technological developments and economic conditions
Thinking/Inquiry					
The student:					
1, 2, 3	– demonstrates the ability to select and analyse information appropriate to the chosen character (e.g., selects and makes connections between pertinent details) – accurately and effectively evaluates how and why technological developments and changing economic conditions affect the chosen character	– demonstrates limited ability to select and analyse relevant information – evaluates these cause-and-effect relationships with limited accuracy and effectiveness	– demonstrates some ability to select and analyse relevant information – evaluates these cause-and-effect relationships with some accuracy and effectiveness	– demonstrates considerable ability to select and analyse relevant information – evaluates these cause-and-effect relationships with considerable accuracy and effectiveness	– demonstrates a high degree of ability to select and analyse relevant information – evaluates these cause-and-effect relationships with a high degree of accuracy and effectiveness
Communication					
The student:					
4	– demonstrates competence in writing diary entries (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the form of writing, writes clearly, edits writing)	– demonstrates limited competence in writing diary entries	– demonstrates some competence in writing diary entries	– demonstrates considerable competence in writing diary entries	– demonstrates a high degree of competence in writing diary entries

Expectations*	Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Application					
	The student:				
5	– creates diary entries that convey an authentic sense of history (e.g., includes, in each entry, one additional development that occurred during the specified time period, creates a historically plausible character, uses language and details appropriate to the period)	– creates a limited sense of historical authenticity	– creates some sense of historical authenticity	– creates a considerable sense of historical authenticity	– creates a strong sense of historical authenticity

*The expectations that correspond to the numbers given in this chart are listed on page 12.

Note: A student whose overall achievement at the end of a course is below level 1 (that is, below 50%) will not obtain a credit for the course.