



1. Analyze ideas and information from multiple sources
 - Determine the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability;
 - Evaluate personal assumptions and opinions.

Date: _____

Dene Resistance to Colonialism: The Berger Inquiry (Personal Reflection)



Social Studies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read this Acknowledgement before the start of this lesson to respect the knowledge that is being shared and the Land of the People where the knowledge originates.:

This lesson plan builds upon the knowledge Dene Nations in Denendeh and their long relationship to their lands and waters, and their resistance to colonialism in its many forms.

This lesson comes from the Yellowknives Dene First Nations peoples of Chief Drygeese Territory Treaty 11. The Yellowknives Dene live on the traditional territory of Dettah and Ndiłı́ located near Yellowknife NT. The Dene have lived on the land that surrounds Great Slave Lake where they harvest medicines and hunt to provide for their communities. This history of the Dene shows their migration routes during different seasons where they would fish on the land in the summer and migrate north to hunt for caribou in the tundra. The Dene in this region have lived on and with their land since time immemorial and remain on their traditional land where they continue to pass down their traditional knowledge to generations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this lesson plan, students will be able to:

1. Analyze ideas and information from multiple sources
 - Determine the validity of information based on context, bias, sources, objectivity, evidence or reliability;
 - Evaluate personal assumptions and opinions.
2. Understand diverse historical and contemporary perspectives within and across cultures, and develop reasoned arguments supported by historical and contemporary evidence.
2. Understand diverse historical and contemporary perspectives within and across cultures, and develop reasoned arguments supported by historical and contemporary evidence.
3. Develop and express an informed position on an issue
 - Use research tools and methods to investigate issues;
 - Consult a wide variety of sources, including oral histories, that reflect varied viewpoints on particular issues.
3. Develop and express an informed position on an issue
 - Use research tools and methods to investigate issues;
 - Consult a wide variety of sources, including oral histories, that reflect varied viewpoints on particular issues.

Origin

**Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning
Yellowknife
Northwest Territories**

Learning Level / Grade

**Youth (up to age
30)**

Also: 11, 12, Post-Secondary



150 mins

Related Subjects

History

LIST OF ACTIVITIES

1. Individual Reflection

MATERIALS

DESCRIPTION

This lesson plan is a continuation of the group work in a related lesson plan on the Berger Inquiry (see 'Related Lesson Plans'), but this could be a stand-alone lesson plan, too. It teaches critical thinking and analytical skills with Indigenous content. In this lesson plan, students will learn about the history of the Dene Nation's resistance to the 1970s MacKenzie Valley Pipeline Project and the Nation's participation in the Berger Inquiry. Using key documents with an opportunity to conduct their own research on differing positions on northern development in the 1970s, and exploring these positions in current development initiatives, students will come away with an understanding of the history of the Berger Inquiry and contemporary implications.

Activity includes:

1) Introductory Lecture/Context Setting/Videos (it is recommended that, if this lesson plan is undertaken without the related lesson plan with the group project, students watch (either in class or on their own) videos that are posted below in 'Where Can I Find Additional Information?')

- Documentary: The Berger Inquiry (filmed in 1976)
- Video: 2015 lecture by Justice Thomas R. Berger marking the 40th anniversary of the Inquiry
- Other videos available through websites and other resources listed

2) Personal Reflection on Critical Sources

HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been developed with a focus on:

- Language and Culture
- Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders
- Relationship with family, ancestors
- Personal reflection time (connecting with thoughts and feelings)

TEACHERS' GUIDE

Background/Foundational Information

- In 1974 oil and gas exploration in the Canadian north had boomed after the discovery of a large pool of oil at Prudhoe Bay in Alaska, resulting in industry pushing for infrastructure developments that would facilitate the shipment of petroleum south to markets. The proposed pipeline would cut through the MacKenzie Valley.

During this period, Indigenous organizations in the north were gathering momentum in resistance to the 1969 White Paper which proposed to eliminate the Indian Act and the specific rights of Indigenous peoples. The Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories (later the Dene Nation) filed a legal caveat claiming an interest in 450,000 square miles (1,000,000 sq. km.) of the Northwest Territories claiming that Indigenous peoples retained rights to the area of the MacKenzie Valley. With conflict between Indigenous rights and legal title developing, Jean Chretien, Canada's Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) asked Justice Thomas Berger of the Supreme Court of British Columbia to lead the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry.

This inquiry was to determine the feasibility of this pipeline project. Berger travelled to every community that would be effected by the pipeline, accompanied by expert witnesses, researchers, and an reporting team that translated broadcasts into 6 Indigenous languages each night.

The Inquiry's final report was released on May 9, 1977. Berger recommended a 10 year moratorium on the pipeline project, and no pipeline has been built since.

The Berger Inquiry is a significant moment in Canadian history where the Canadian state recognized the authority of Indigenous Nations to determine the economic and resource development in their territory. The

Berger Inquiry also led to significant changes in the NWT, where Indigenous individuals and nations had a platform to fully represent themselves rather than having the state act on their behalf.

This lesson plan is designed to offer students the opportunity to conduct their own research into different perspectives on the MacKenzie Valley Pipeline Project. They will then be asked to share with the class, and reflect personally on why different parties had different perspectives on the pipeline project.

ACTIVITIES

1 - Individual Reflection

Purpose

This activity is intended to allow students personal time to reflect on what they learned from the group project and bring it into the contemporary context.

Note: The time allotted for this activity is just an estimate. The introductory lecture may take one or two class periods. The students' research and preparation of their reflection project may be assigned as homework with some additional class time dedicated to reviewing progress, fielding questions, etc.

Time: 90 mins

Activity Instructions

1. If the related lesson plan (entitled *Dene Resistance to Colonialism: The Berger Inquiry*) with the group project has not been taught, the instructor can choose to give an introductory lecture, invite a guest speaker, and/or require students to watch the various videos and read about the Inquiry.
2. Students are then instructed to choose a resource extraction project currently taking place in Canada, research it, and create a reflection on the following questions:
 - Is there a debate over this project? Why or why not?
 - What are the positions?
 - What voices are being heard? Why?
 - If you were to take on the role of Thomas Berger for this project, what would you need to know in order to make a ruling? How would you design your own inquiry?

This reflection can take the form of a collage, multi-media project (for example, a podcast or video) using the open source materials available on a) the Berger inquiry and b) contemporary Indigenous resistance to resource extraction or other incursions in their territories.

This activity is designed to connect with learners with these learning styles...

- Spiritual (e.g., Relational) Learners
- Intellectual (e.g., Rational, Logical) Learners
- Emotional (e.g., Feeling, Intuitive) Learners

... in the following ways:

This personal reflection is meant to allow different types of learners to engage and reflect on their understanding of both a historic event (the MacKenzie Valley Pipeline and Berger Inquiry) and contemporary Indigenous resistance. Blending both analytical skills and emotional learning, students are asked to both empathize with Indigenous land-based resistance, and understand how law and policies influence Indigenous peoples.

TEACHING NOTES

ASSESSMENT









This section contains information for assessing progress in students' learning. While Indigenous approaches to assessment may be highlighted, conventional assessment methods may also be discussed.

Educator may assess the willingness of students to engage with integrity with positions that may not reflect their own, and represent the interest of the communities they are responsible to. Educator may also assess the creative ways that students are able to engage with, and represent positions or perspectives other than their own.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.

To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.

Resource Title	Type
Berger- Letter to Minister	Link 
Letter from Berger to Minister summarizing the report.	
Berger Inquiry Retrospective	Link 
2015 Lecture by Thomas Berger on the Inquiry on the 40th anniversary of the 1975 Inquiry.	
Video: Dene Chief Frank T'Seleie - Mackenzie Valley pipeline/Gas Project in 1975	Link 
Video of Chief Frank T'Seleie's testimony during the Inquiry.	
Webpage: CBC- Digital Archives on the Berger Inquiry	Link 
All sorts of materials are available on this webpage for background information and resource materials for student research.	
Journal Article by Justice Thomas R. Berger: The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry	Link 
Berger, Thomas R.. "The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry." Osgoode Hall Law Journal 16.3 (1978) : 639-647. http://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/ohlj/vol16/iss3/5	
Berger Report Volume 1: Northern Frontiers, Northern Homeland: The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry	Link 
This is the full report, volume 1 (published 1977).	
Berger Report Volume 2: Northern Frontiers, Northern Homeland: The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry	Link 
This website has the full text of volume 2 of the report.	
Documentary Film: The Berger Inquiry	Link 
The documentary was filmed in the summer of 1976, during the final months of the Berger Inquiry. It features interviews with many key figures in the Inquiry, as well as footage from the community hearings at Rae (Behchok) and Colville Lake. length: 1 hour 27 minutes	

HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been

developed with a focus on:

Language and Culture**Relationship with family, ancestors****Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders**

Were Elders or Knowledge Holders involved in the development of this Lesson Plan? No
Can Elders or Knowledge Holders be invited to help teach part of this lesson plan? Yes

Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders**Personal reflection time (connecting with thoughts and feelings)**

The primary activity for this lesson plan is the student opportunity for personal reflection.

OTHER DETAILS

This Lesson Plan aims to meet curriculum expectations or outcomes for: Northwest Territories Yes

RELATED LESSON PLANS

- Résistance des Dénés au colonialisme : L'enquête Berger
- Dene Resistance to Colonialism: The Berger Inquiry

CONTRIBUTORS

Name	Role/Job Title	Place
------	----------------	-------

QUESTIONS/MORE DETAILS

For Questions contact: [Dechinta \(admin@dechinta.ca\)](mailto:admin@dechinta.ca) for more information.