



THE

WAR
OF
1812

AN INQUIRY
GUIDE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message to Teachers and Introduction	Page 2
Analyzing Images and Other Sources from the War of 1812	Page 3
Inquiry Investigation Project of the War of 1812	Page 5
Activity Checklists	Page 6

Message to TEACHERS

This learning tool is designed to complement Historica Canada's introductory War of 1812 Education Guide and themed micro-guides. This guide asks students to examine the differences between opinion, fact, and primary and secondary sources when conducting research about the War of 1812.

The exercises included in this learning tool use the War of 1812 as a vehicle to develop historical thinking skills. Developed in line with the historical thinking concepts created by Dr. Peter Seixas and The Historical Thinking Project, these exercises challenge your students to think critically about history. Students are asked to examine the historical significance of the War of 1812 from different points of view and from different times in history using primary and secondary sources and research tools as well as their own creativity.

The ability to properly analyze primary and secondary pieces of historical evidence gives history students the chance to develop their own theories about the War of 1812. Through the use of the exercises in this learning tool, students can come up with an argument and then use the evidence at their disposal to defend their theories about the War of 1812 and its impact.

The War of 1812 is an exciting focus for these exercises as it remains a hotly debated topic among historians. Students will find a wide range of historical data to examine as well as many fascinating personalities whose roles in the War of 1812 are still studied and celebrated today.

A project of

Sponsored by



GET IN TOUCH!

Historica Canada
1-866-701-1867
info@HistoricaCanada.ca
www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812
Twitter: @1812Canada

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the War of 1812 and its place in Canada's history is an important part of a history student's education. Being able to recognize the different perspectives, experiences, and outcomes that resulted from the War of 1812 is also important. The skills taught in this learning tool are meant to be useful to students throughout their study of history.

The War of 1812 was many things to many people living in the geographic area that was Upper and Lower Canada including the British soldiers sent to defend a distant land that was a part of the British Empire, and their American counterparts.

Formerly known as **The Historica-Dominion Institute**, **Historica Canada** is the largest independent organization dedicated to Canadian history, identity, and citizenship. **Historica Canada** is committed to bringing forward the stories and experiences of Canada. This guide is made possible with the generous support of the **Government of Canada**.

The tools provided here are supplemented with additional activities and resources at www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812. We hope that this guide will assist you in teaching and learning about this important period of Canadian history in your social studies, geography, or history classroom.



THE BATTLE OF QUEENSTON 13 OCTOBER 1813 BY I. W. LAIRD, 1836. COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA.



ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE EXPULSION OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS FROM QUEBEC CITY, 1812 COURTESY MCCORD MUSEUM.

IT HAPPENED IN CANADA



IT HAPPENED IN CANADA BY GORDON JOHNSTON, 1979. COURTESY ESTATE OF GORDON JOHNSTON.

ANALYZING IMAGES AND OTHER SOURCES

The ability to analyze and weigh the importance of an image or document is an essential skill for a history student to have. Historians regularly use two groups of source documents for their research. **Documents created during the time period being studied are known as primary sources** and can include journal and diary entries or letters. Primary sources can also be public documents such as official correspondence, newspaper photographs, or political cartoons. **Documents created after the time period being studied that analyze, interpret, or offer an opinion about the historical period are called secondary sources.** Examples of secondary sources include biographies, textbooks, articles, or even movies about historical events.

Determining the meaning of political cartoons can be a fun activity because they often contain humour. You can find political cartoons in your local newspaper, both print and online editions.

Activity

Take a look at the cartoons below and analyze them by using the criteria in the chart to the right. You may find this easier to do with a partner.



◊ RE-ENACTORS ARGUE OVER THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR OF 1812
BY GRAEME MACKAY, 2012. COURTESY ARTIZANS.



◊ DEATH OF TECUMSEH: BATTLE OF THE THAMES 18 OCTOBER 1813
BY N. CURRIER, 1846. COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

WHAT TO CONSIDER

There are a few things to consider when analyzing a cartoon:

Source	Where did the cartoon come from? Who drew it?
Date/Occasion	When did it appear? Was it made for a particular occasion?
Subject	What issue does the cartoon address?
Symbols	Who or what is in the cartoon? Are there any symbols in the cartoon? For example, animals are often used—such as a beaver—to represent Canada.
Captions or Words	What is the caption or what do the characters in the cartoon say? Think about what that tells us.
Meaning	After considering all of the above, what is the cartoon attempting to say? A political cartoon usually makes a comment on the issue it is about.

CONSIDERING PERSPECTIVE

What perspectives are portrayed in the first cartoon? Which one is given the most importance? What would someone from the time of the War of 1812 think about these cartoons? Would they understand them?

FURTHER ACTIVITY

Review the political cartoons found in a newspaper in your area or look them up on the newspaper's website. Watch for a week and bring to class one that you like along with a written explanation of what the cartoon means. Use the criteria chart to help you analyze it.

◊ AMERICAN CULTURE ENCOACHES ON
CANADIAN 1812 WAR RE-ENACTMENT
BY GRAEME MACKAY, 2012. COURTESY ARTIZANS.

PAINTINGS

Analyzing sources such as paintings and sketches is also important. During the War of 1812 there was no photography, so no photographs exist of that time; although sketches and paintings were made during the War of 1812. Long after the conflict was over, many paintings depicting popular events of the War of 1812 were commissioned. This famous painting depicting the first meeting of Major-General Isaac Brock and Tecumseh in 1812 was painted around 1921.



DID YOU KNOW?

History is filled with amazing facts and stories. Events like the War of 1812 continue to be a great source of interest to historians and students today. Take some time to consider these fascinating incidents:

- The body of American Brigadier-General, Zebulon Pike, who died in the 1813 Battle of York, was packed in a cask of rum before it was shipped back to Sackets Harbor, NY. Oddly enough, most of the rum was found to be gone when the cask was opened. Where did it go?
- To avoid being enlisted in the militia, in 1812 and 1813, about 20 men hid in a cave near Lake Simcoe. They were eventually caught and sent to jail.
- In June of 1814, there were 4,500 British regular soldiers and 3,000 Aboriginal warriors fighting in the Niagara region of Upper Canada. To feed them for one month required 149 tons of flour and 960 head of cattle!
- The cost of transporting a barrel of flour 100 miles in a boat on Lake Ontario was 75 cents. To send the same barrel by land was \$5.00. This is one reason why control of the lakes was so important.
- In the CBC television show *The Greatest Canadian*, Tecumseh was 37th on the list while General Isaac Brock was 28th.

THE MEETING OF BROCK AND TECUMSEH BY LORNE K. SMITH. COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA.

Activity

Conduct a little research of your own to find an interesting fact from the War of 1812. Sometimes interesting facts come from our own time (see the example of *The Greatest Canadian*) while others will be from the period of the War of 1812.

Present your findings on an index card. One side could state the fact and, if you like, the other side could have an illustration.

Activity

Paintings and other images rarely have captions or words, so history students have to look closely at the details in the image to draw conclusions. Some questions you might ask are:

1. Who is in the painting?
2. How are the subjects portrayed?
3. What specific details stand out?
4. What was the purpose of the painting?

Consider the painting above with a partner. What message is conveyed about Brock and Tecumseh? Use the guiding questions above to help you.

200TH ANNIVERSARY, ISAAC BROCK ISSUED IN 1969. COURTESY CANADA POST CORPORATION AND LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA.



THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS BY PERCY MORAN. COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

SUGGESTIONS

Begin by researching specific people such as Isaac Brock, Joseph Brant, or Laura Secord—among the many figures from the war. Additionally, look through the index of any book about the War of 1812 and keep your eye out for interesting sub-topics. Look through www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812 and visit [The Canadian Encyclopedia](#) to begin your research. For an extra challenge, try to learn something about a lesser-known figure from the War of 1812.



LUNDY'S LANE, 25 JULY 1814 BY WILLIAM KIRBY, 1895. COURTESY ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO.

Memento of the unveiling of the Monument, 25th July, 1895.

"STAND FAST! STAND FAST!" (Poster: Lundy's Lane, July 25, 1895) "STAND UP YOUR RANKS! STAND FAST!" "Swarm up the hill where our brave colours fly."

INQUIRY INVESTIGATION PROJECT OF THE WAR OF 1812

The War of 1812 is an important and interesting episode in Canadian history. The personalities, battles, and concerns raised by the war continue to be topics of discussion more than 200 years later.

One way of learning more about a subject is to conduct your own research and investigation about a specific area of interest. This is often called an “inquiry project.” An “inquiry project” includes asking a question, and using your research to answer it, and presenting your findings in a “product” format. Visit www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812 for a downloadable checklist that will provide you with further guidance as you do your research.

QUESTIONS

In an “inquiry project” it is important that you develop good **questions** that are of interest to you. Here are some sample inquiry questions:

- Why is Laura Secord a hero? Is her story true?
- If the United States had more troops in North America than the British, why did they not win the war?
- Did the War of 1812 have an effect on my region?
- What was it like to live in British North America during the War of 1812?

Some questions may be easier than others to find answers. If you have difficulty, you can always choose another question. Above all, think of a question that is particularly interesting to you. Check out **Historica Canada’s** 1812 website for facts, stories, and pictures: www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812

GETTING STARTED

It might be a good idea to get into a group of four and develop a list of questions about the War of 1812. From there, you can decide what you want to **investigate** on your own.

DON’T FORGET!

Remember that your topic sentence should be an opinion, not a statement of fact. Ask yourself if anyone could disagree with your topic sentence. If the answer is yes, you know you have something that is an opinion.

When using evidence, be as specific as possible. Use statistics or quotations from your research to support your opinion. Consider including two good examples or evidence in your paragraph. A great source of evidence is primary sources. You can find links to a number of sources here: www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812

STEPS

1. Think about what **interests** you about the subject, in this case the War of 1812. Develop **questions** you would like answered. What is it exactly that you wonder about?
2. Make a list of **sources** you could use to help you answer your questions. This could include certain books and articles, websites, visits to historic sites, or people you know. Visit www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com or www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812 to get started.
3. Conduct your **investigation**. Make your research notes. Come up with an answer to your question.
4. Work with your teacher to decide on a “**product**”—the way you will present what you have learned. Will it be a poster board, map, timeline, a short written piece, a storyboard, song, cartoon, or speech? The number of products is unlimited, but you and your teacher should choose one that is right for you and your subject.
5. Share your **findings** and rough draft of your “**product**” to get feedback from classmates or the teacher.
4. **Improve** your “**product**” based on the feedback you receive.
5. **Present** the final version of what you learned.

WHILE INVESTIGATING

Keep a short journal of your experiences as you **investigate** your topic. Each day that you work on your project, note down successes, challenges, and any further **questions** that come up as you do your research.

AFTERWARD

When your research is complete, reflect on your learning experience. What was your greatest success? What challenges did you face and how did you deal with them? What conclusions did you draw about your subject? Write your observations in your journal.

CRITICAL THINKING: WRITING A POSITION PARAGRAPH

It is important to be able to express your opinion in writing. In this activity, you will have the chance to take a stand on an issue related to the War of 1812. First, let’s look at how a position paragraph can be set up.

PARTS OF THE PARAGRAPH	INSTRUCTION	EXAMPLE
Topic Sentence	The first sentence of your paragraph should say what your opinion is on the topic you have selected.	I believe the War of 1812 was a significant moment in Canadian history.
Evidence and Examples	In this part of your paragraph, you need to give one or two facts that help to support your opinion.	One of the reasons I believe this is because the outcome of the war meant British North America would remain British rather than becoming American.
Explanation	Give some analysis or explanation of the meaning of your evidence.	Had the war been lost, the United States could have controlled what is now Ontario and Quebec and possibly more territory.
Concluding Sentence	Tie it all together with a sentence concluding your paragraph.	The outcome makes it clear that the War of 1812 was a crucial moment in Canada’s past.

TOPICS (INQUIRY PROJECT CONTINUED)

Sometimes it can be a challenge to decide what to write about. Below are a few topics to get you started, but you can write about anything as long as you are taking a position on the topic.

- Evaluate the contribution of a historical figure. Was the contribution of that person significant? For what reason?
- What was the most important event in the War of 1812?
- Has a topic or person been overlooked? Explain why.
- Is it important to remember the War of 1812?

RESEARCH TIPS

Once you have your topic, it will be time for research. Here are a few research tips, along with suggestions on where to begin.

- Search topics or any of the figures from the War of 1812 online at **The Canadian Encyclopedia**. At the end of the main article on the War of 1812 is a list of links to further resources.
- Refer back to other Education Guides in the War of 1812 series from **Historica Canada**, available at www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812. Check out the Heritage Minutes on the War of 1812 online.
- Get a book from your school or local library. Use the index at the back or the table of contents to direct you to specific information.
- When taking notes, put them in point form and use your own words as much as possible. Any notes that you copy word for word should be in quotations marks and include the page number that you copied them from.
- Use the timeline on **Historica Canada's** War of 1812 website for an overview of events from before, during, and after the War at www.HistoricaCanada.ca/1812.

POSITION PARAGRAPH CHECKLIST

Use this organizer to help you track your progress in your position paragraph.

Here are the topics I am thinking about:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sources I have consulted or plan to consult are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My outline to present the results of my study is as follows:

1. Topic sentence:
2. Evidence:
3. Conclusion:

My rough draft was read by:

1. _____

Ways to improve my project before handing in the final version:

1. _____
2. _____

INQUIRY INVESTIGATION CHECKLIST

Use this organizer to help you track your progress in your inquiry investigation project.

Here are the questions I am thinking about:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sources I have consulted or plan to consult are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My rough ideas to present my topic include:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My teacher and I decided on this product:

1. _____

The rough draft of my product was presented to:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ways to improve my product before handing in the final version:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



**SURVIVORS OF
THE WAR OF 1812,
SHERIFF JARVIS'
LAWN, ROSEDALE,
TORONTO, ON, 1861
COURTESY MCCORD
MUSEUM.**

