

CURRICULA

LESSON 2: GOVERNANCE AND CANADA'S NORTH



Introduction:

Students will draw on the information they learned in Lesson 1 about the Inuit and their stewardship of Canada's North, (See March/April 2010) and learn more about the struggle for sovereignty in the North (for example, why it is of such interest currently). They will be introduced to the goals, challenges and limitations of international law. They will explore the concept of sovereignty as an evolving one and the implications of this as countries vie to stake their claim to territory in the Arctic, the "last frontier." The project engages students in learning more about the structures currently in place to establish governance of the Arctic, assessing Canada's current activities there, and then working together on a project to evaluate and assess the international structure set up to manage these disputes and suggest alternative rules of governance.

Materials Required:

Computers with Internet access

Detailed map of Canada's North:

<http://maps.nationalgeographic.com/maps/atlas/north-america-geophysical.html>

Writing paper and utensils

Expectations/Outcomes:

Students will:

- demonstrate understanding of Canada's political, social and economic systems in a global context;

Key Concepts and Issues:

Students will explore the concept of multiculturalism and how it connects to issues surrounding Canada's North.

Subjects:

Multiculturalism and Canada's North

Grade Level:

Grades 9 to 12

Duration:

5 to 8 classes

Curriculum Links:

Social Studies, World History
World Geography

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Canada



- recognize the purpose of laws within the Canadian, and international, context;
- demonstrate an understanding of an international issue affecting Canada;
- recognize the achievements of Aboriginal organizations (e.g., Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami) in gaining recognition of the rights of Aboriginal peoples in Canada;
- recognize possible differences in perspectives on issues of significance to Canadians;
- apply the concept of stewardship and sustainability to analyse a current national or international issue;
- evaluate the role of government in maintaining sovereignty in the North, and identify possible courses of action necessary for achieving this outcome;
- distinguish between primary and secondary sources of information;
- evaluate the credibility of sources and information; and organize and record information gathered through research.

Background

The North is becoming of increasing interest to various countries because global warming is melting ice, opening previously ice-covered waterways in the Arctic region. The result is more accessibility. Many countries are now expressing interest in the region as they recognize its potential for resource exploitation and development, and as a route of passage across the top of North America. Some are claiming sovereignty over portions of the Arctic seabed; many are claiming rights of access through the Northwest Passage.

The country that establishes sovereignty in this region will derive significant benefits. Canada's traditional sovereignty in the north is being challenged by many countries, including the United States, Russia, Iceland, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. Canada is asserting that the Northwest Passage represents internal waters; other countries are arguing that these are international waters. Canada has been defending its authority over the North diplomatically, and it has been making promises to increase its presence in the region. Its commitments include building a deep-water port and supplying a fleet of limited range Arctic patrol boats. So far, however, these promises have not been delivered.

There is some general agreement about how to address some of these disputes. Because most of the region at issue is not land but impermanent ice, it falls under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), a convention ratified by 150 nations. The convention states that nations have the right to control the belt of shoreline along their coasts, that is 12 nautical miles (22.2 km). Some Arctic waterways are as much as 100 km wide, however, due to increased ice loss as a result of climate change. This is providing widening shipping lanes, increasing foreign ship traffic. Some scientists predict the Northwest Passage could be ice-free by 2040. This makes these waters very attractive to commercial shipping interests from Europe and the Far East, as well as cruise shipping. In addition the receding ice removes barriers to exploring for oil, natural gas, diamonds, gold, and iron ore.

Canada is claiming these waters are internal and not open to foreign ships without permission. Canada, and other countries, are claiming governance over sections of the seabed (for example, Russia claims sovereignty over the Lomonosov Ridge, a huge undersea mountain chain that stretches across the Arctic Ocean from Siberia to Ellesmere Island and Greenland). The UNCLOS requires these disputes be resolved through presenting

scientific evidence proving areas claimed are geographically linked to the country, or its Arctic islands. Several, including Canada, are undertaking extensive mapping in order to comply. Ironically, Canadian, Russian, American, and Norwegian scientists are working together to collect the necessary data to further their own interests.

Step One: Teacher-Led Discussion

Begin with a general discussion about governance and what that means. Ask students why there are national laws and give some examples of these. Ask them why there are international laws (traditionally, to deal with conflict between states). To supplement their discussion, tell them that international laws develop in several ways, for example

- they arise out of international treaties and agreements between states;
- they begin as practices that become customary over time and end up as laws;
- they arise out of a commonality of principles in various states that become part of the accepted body of international law; and,
- they are recommended by international legal scholars and accepted by political leaders.

Point out that because much of international law is based on practices already followed by states, it is often adhered to; frequently there is no mechanism in place to enforce international laws that are not adhered to. There are some international (or supranational) institutions to help maintain international laws, such as the International Court of Justice, the European Court of Justice, and the International Criminal Court.

There are international laws that deal with economic law (trade and commerce), security law, diplomatic laws, environmental law, the law of war, and human rights law.

Tell students that the Arctic has been called “one of the last global frontiers” and ask what they think that means, specifically, what that might mean for Canada. Have students supplement what they’ve learned by reading the following:

- In a 2007 article in the Epoch Times, Cindy Drukier states: “In terms of land claims, it is an accepted geopolitical fact that the British ceded the 36,500 plus island Arctic Archipelago to Canada in 1880. Our claim to maritime sovereignty, however, is more shaky.”
- There are disputes about who has governance over regions in the North. There is a dispute over the Lomonosov Ridge. Russia claims sovereignty over this huge undersea mountain chain that stretches across the Arctic Ocean from Siberia to Ellesmere Island and Greenland. In 2007, they planted a flag on the North Pole seabed to stake their claim.
- Canada also claims this section of the seabed. According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) an area has to be geographically linked to the country, or its Arctic islands, making a claim for it. Canadian and Danish scientists worked together to provide evidence that the Lomonosov Ridge is an extension of the North American continent. Russia has also presented its own study however. The deadline for further evidence is 2013.
- There are other disputed areas as well.
- Denmark claimed uninhabited Hans Island and put up a flag there in 2002. Canada disputed this claim and removed the flag.
- Canada claims the waters of the Arctic Archipelago, including the Northwest Passage, as inland waters. Other states, including the United States, claim they are not. They claim navigational rights here, allowing them the right of transit passage.
- Canada and the United States dispute a border in the Beaufort Sea. There are petroleum reserves in the area that would be affected.

Step Two

Tell the students that this part of the lesson will focus on a conversation about the North as both homeland to the Inuit and a region over which Canada wishes to maintain governance. Ask them to reflect on what they learned in Lesson 1 and suggest whether they can see how these two statements might signify either conflict or common purpose.

Review with the students the current accepted concept of sovereignty as the responsibility of a country to protect, and have authority over, its territory and to be perceived as protecting it and having authority over it. As the students have discussed in Lesson 1, sovereignty is also thought to include stewardship over the territory. Have two volunteers then define sovereignty in their own words and record these definitions on the board.

“Sovereignty is a question of exercising, actively, your responsibilities in an area.” – former Canadian National Defence Minister Bill Graham

“Canada has a choice when it comes to defending our sovereignty in the Arctic; either we use it or we lose it.” - Prime Minister Stephen Harper, 2007

Read students the above quotes, and ask them whether they believe Canada has stewardship over the North and is “using” the region. Recall with students what they have learned about the land and culture of the Inuit in Lesson 1, and suggest that the issue of governance in the North is of great importance to the Inuit. Mention that Canada often points to the presence of the Inuit in the North as evidence of Canada’s “use” of the region. Tell them that the Arctic Archipelago is a vast region, representing 40 per cent of Canada’s territory. Remind them that the Arctic Archipelago is policed by the Canadian Rangers, an army reserve unit made up of Inuit who patrol with snowmobiles and rifles, “controlling” the land surrounding the disputed waters. This is known as Operation Nunavut, Inuktitut for “Land that is ours.”

Next, tell students you are going to read them excerpts from speeches by two different people (or have a student read the same). Read this first one aloud. (It is from a speech by Mary Simon, President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami).

“There are three key messages that I would like to give you today...”

“The first is that the Arctic is a region of Canada whose time has come. Sovereignty, environmental, economic development and social policy factors all support this conclusion.”

“The second is that Sovereignty begins at home. Canada cannot successfully assert its national agenda in the Arctic while ignoring the state of civil society in the Arctic.”

“The third is that the key to sustainable Arctic policies and creative policy making in Canada must be anchored in establishing a constructive partnership with Inuit.”

After making sure the students understand her points, read the students this excerpt. (It is from a speech made by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in August 2006 in Iqaluit, Nunavut.)

"... [Y]ou can't defend Arctic sovereignty with words alone. It takes a Canadian presence on the ground, in the air and on the sea... I am here today to make it absolutely clear there is no question about Canada's Arctic border. It extends from the northern tip of Labrador all the way up the East coast of Ellesmere Island to Alert. Then it traces the western perimeter of the Queen Elizabeth Islands down to the Beaufort Sea. From there it hugs the coasts of the Northwest Territories and Yukon to the Canada-U.S. border at Alaska. All along the border, our jurisdiction extends outward 200 miles into the surrounding sea, just as it does along our Atlantic and Pacific coastlines."

"No more. And no less..."

"... [The] government's first obligation is to defend the territorial integrity of its borders. And this will become more important in the decades to come - because northern oil and gas, minerals and other resources of the northern frontier will become ever more valuable. The technologies used in Arctic resource extraction and transport are increasingly sophisticated and affordable. And the Northwest Passage is becoming more accessible every year: Some scientists even predict it will be open to year-round shipping within a decade."

"In short, the economics and the strategic value of northern resource development are growing ever more attractive and critical to our nation. And trust me, it is not only Canadians who are noticing. It is no exaggeration to say that the need to assert our sovereignty and take action to protect our territorial integrity in the Arctic has never been more urgent."

"The North is poised to take a much bigger role in Canada's economic and social development. It is attracting international attention, investment capital, people, and commercial and industrial development."

"Therefore the Government of Canada has an enormous responsibility to ensure that development occurs on our terms."

"In particular, we must ensure the unique ecosystem of the North, and the unique cultural traditions of the First Peoples of the North, are respected and protected."

After making sure they understand the points in this speech, ask them to guess who the speakers are, and explain their reasons. After the discussion, tell them the names of the speakers.

Step Three

Have students review the current governance system in place in the North to assess what Canada must do in order to prove its sovereignty in the Arctic. Begin by reviewing the definition of sovereignty and encouraging students to pick out the key points that Canada needs to prove (it is patrolling and protecting the North, establishing a presence in, or "using," the North; other governments must recognize Canada's sovereignty). Have them do some research to learn more about:

- Canada's history in the North
- the promises made by governments about securing the North
- the promises made by governments to the Inuit about their role in the North
- how Canada is currently policing the North (including Radarsat-2)
- how Canada is currently handling decision-making in the North
- the scientific evidence that Canada is preparing to bolster its territorial claims in the North

After the students have had a chance to do research, meet as a class and engage the students in an evaluation of Canada's position and make suggestions about how the country might strengthen its claims to the North while following the existing laws and conventions.



Step Four

Tell the students they will assess the existing structure that is in place to resolve disputes about sovereignty in the “last frontier” and, if they believe it necessary, suggest alternatives to some parts of it or the whole structure.

First, have them do some preliminary research to find out more about other international bodies or international laws. Have them find out what types of behaviour are governed internationally, why, and how the rules or laws are upheld. Suggest that they think about what limitations there are to these laws and courts, but also have them look for examples where these laws are helping prevent, or reduce, conflicts and disputes.

Meet as a group and discuss what they have learned. Now have them reflect on their new project – evaluating the governance system in place in the Arctic and suggesting alternatives – and together, arrive at some key questions that will help them in their analysis, such as:

- What do we already know about how disputes about sovereignty in the North are being resolved? (examples: UNCLOS is requiring countries to provide scientific proof of geographical links to undersea regions; there is an accepted definition of sovereignty which requires policing, and maintaining a presence in, the North, as well as a common perception that this is being achieved)
- How did this governance system come about? Do all countries accept it? (example: the United States has not ratified UNCLOS)
- What are advantages of this governance system? (examples: based on custom and precedent; because there are no written rules about some of the verification methods, this respects the integrity of all countries, forces them to take a big-picture look at the situation, and avoids them becoming entrenched in bickering about minor letter-of-the-law points and minutiae; so far, this governance system seems to be helping countries avoid direct conflict)
- What are possible difficulties with it? (examples: there is no set-in-stone process for confirming sovereignty, for example, how do countries agree on their “perceptions” about whether or not another country is maintaining a presence in the North; how do countries which disagree express their grievances?; does it offer a foolproof failsafe method for avoiding conflict as the stakes become higher?)
- Is this the best system of governance for tackling the issues? What elements might you want to change, and why? What alternative form of governance would you set up, and why? (What advantages or difficulties might it present?)

Step Five

Provide pairs of students with sufficient time to reflect on research they have already done and to conduct any additional research required. Remind them of the importance in using accurate sources, and suggest that they keep track of all the sources they use. Review the difference between primary and secondary sources and their respective values.

(You may wish to refer them to the model negotiation statement prepared in 2008 by two teams of non-governmental experts; they made recommendations about navigation in northern waters to the American and Canadian governments:

<http://byers.typepad.com/arctic/model-negotiation-on-northern-waters.html>.)

Evaluate the research work of each individual student when completed.

Step Six

When their research is complete, have the students gather as a class to discuss their evaluations. Ask: Who decided the governance structure in place is adequate? Who decided it needed changes?

If there are students who decided the governance structure is adequate, have them be first to share their evaluations. Have the other pairs of students share next.

Encourage the class to discuss similarities and differences in evaluations and summarize the various points of view. If possible, have them reach a consensus on their views.

Optional Extension Activities:

- Students may research if any countries are making a claim to sovereignty over the North Pole and if not, why not.
- Pairs of students can look up, and read, *A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the North*. (Some of them may have read section 1 as an extension activity for Lesson 1.) They can summarize the main points and prepare a poster, presenting the views of this group of Inuit on "Action for the North."
- In his 2006 speech in Iqaluit, Nunavut on the topic of Canada's North, Prime Minister Harper said: "Canada's Arctic sovereignty is firmly anchored in history. Almost 100 years ago, in 1909, a plaque was installed on Melville Island by famed Quebecois seaman Joseph Bernier, captain of the Canadian government ship Arctic. It proclaimed, on the ground for the first time, Canada's sovereignty over the entire Arctic Archipelago. From the 1920s through the 1940s, the great Canadian navigator Henry Larsen patrolled our Arctic waters aboard the famous RCMP schooner St. Roch. Larsen's many voyages upheld the first principle of Arctic sovereignty: Use it or lose it." Verify Prime Minister Harper's statements about history, and after conducting research, make a timeline showing other Canadian activity in the North that bolsters Canada's claim to "using" it.
- Students can investigate the Arctic Water Pollution Prevention Act, for example, when it was enacted and why, and, in particular, assess reasons for renewed political interest in the law.
- Students may research the Radarsat-2 and its impact on Canada's North. In particular, they can look at why the government blocked the sale of the satellite (in April 2008) and what mechanism allowed this government action. (This was the first time Canada blocked the sale of a domestic firm to a foreign buyer.) Have them investigate other examples of government intervening in international deals.
- Students may write a letter to the prime minister suggesting the implementation of measures they believe the Canadian government should be pursuing in order to maintain sovereignty in the Arctic while following the existing laws and conventions of governance. Remind them to write in a formal style, to check their

sources and the accuracy of any facts they present, and to provide supporting evidence for their comments. Suggest that they ask for a reply.

Assessment and Evaluation rubrics:

General

Discussion

Level 1—Did not participate or contribute to the teacher-directed discussions

Level 2—Participated somewhat in the teacher-directed discussions

Level 3—Active participation in the teacher-directed discussions

Level 4—Made a significant contribution to the teacher-directed discussions

Content

Level 1—Demonstrated limited understanding of concepts, facts and terms

Level 2—Demonstrated some understanding of concepts, facts and terms

Level 3—Demonstrated considerable understanding of concepts, facts and terms

Level 4—Demonstrated thorough understanding of concepts, facts and terms

Written Work

Level 1—Written report had many grammatical errors, is poorly structured and confusing

Level 2—Written report was generally clear but has numerous grammatical errors

Level 3—Written report was well-structured and clear but has a few significant errors

Level 4—Written report was very clear, well-organized with few errors

Oral Presentation

Level 1—Oral report was confusing, lacked emphasis and energy with no discussion resulting

Level 2—Oral report was clear but lacked energy and emphasis with little discussion resulting

Level 3—Oral report was clear and vibrantly presented but lacked some emphasis and energy with a good discussion resulting

Level 4—Oral report was clear and enthusiastically presented with energetic discussion resulting

Team Work

Level 1—1 or 2 members dominated the team, very little cooperation

Level 2—Majority of the group made a contribution with some recognition of individual strengths but cooperation was superficial

Level 3—Most members made a significant contribution with a good level of cooperation

Level 4—All members made a significant contribution, individual strengths were recognized and used effectively, excellent cooperation among group members

Specific**Step One**

Student demonstrated a poor understanding of governance

Student demonstrated a basic understanding of governance

Student demonstrated a good understanding of governance

Student demonstrated an exemplary understanding of governance

Step Two

Student demonstrated a poor understanding of sovereignty and its implications

Student demonstrated a basic understanding of sovereignty and its implications

Student demonstrated a good understanding of sovereignty and its implications

Student demonstrated an exemplary understanding of sovereignty and its implications

Step Three

Student exhibited a poor understanding of measures that could strengthen the government's claims to the North

Student exhibited a basic understanding of measures that could strengthen the government's claims to the North

Student exhibited a good understanding of measures that could strengthen the government's claims to the North

Student exhibited an exemplary understanding of measures that could strengthen the government's claims to the North

Step Four

Student demonstrated a poor ability to suggest key questions to aid analysis

Student demonstrated a basic ability to propose key questions to aid analysis

Student demonstrated a good ability to propose key questions to aid analysis

Student demonstrated an exemplary ability to propose key questions to aid analysis

Step Five

Student demonstrated poor research skills

Student demonstrated basic research skills

Student demonstrated good research skills

Student demonstrated exemplary research skills

Step Six

Student exhibited a poor ability to evaluate existing Arctic governance structure and suggest alternative
Student exhibited a basic ability to evaluate existing Arctic governance structure and suggest alternative
Student exhibited a good ability to evaluate existing Arctic governance structure and suggest alternative
Student exhibited an exemplary ability to evaluate existing Arctic governance structure and suggest alternative

Resources:

General info on Canadian International Law:
<http://www.canadianlawsite.ca/international.htm>

Inuit rights in the North and Arctic Sovereignty (article)
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/fund-inuit-not-canadian-arctic-sovereignty/article1256334/>

Canadian Arctic Sovereignty (information about Canada's role in the North, Jan 2006):
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/library/PRBpubs/prb0561-e.htm>

Research Backs Canada's Claim on Northern Sovereignty (article): <http://www.canada.com/topics/news/world/story.html?id=b7be4e45-1244-478e-864e-a6150b0bf679>

Canadian sovereignty (article):
<http://en.epochtimes.com/news/7-7-12/57562.html>

Challenges in policing the arctic (article):
<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ci-rc/reports-rapports/cs-sc/index-eng.htm>

Arctic Water Pollution Prevent Act (article):
<http://www.thestar.com/article/486259>

Radarsat (article):
<http://www.walrusmagazine.com/articles/2008.06-technology-for-sale-arctic-sovereignty-radarsat-mda-michael-byers/>

North American Integration and the Militarization of the Arctic (article):
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=6586>

The Race to the Arctic and International Law (blog):
<http://itssjournalunclos-lost.blogspot.com/2008/05/httpwww.html>

China Prepares for an Ice-free Arctic (article):
<http://books.sipri.org/files/insight/SIPRIInsight1002.pdf>

The Danish Continental Shelf Project (website):
http://a76.dk/lng_uk/main.html

UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea):
<http://www.unclos.com/>

Oceans and Law of the Sea:
<http://www.un.org/Depts/los/index.htm>